

Jesus isn't qualified to TEACH people

Most rabbis, or teachers, of Jesus' day learned from teachers before them in rabbinical schools. In these schools of higher learning (like our seminaries) they would study to master the Torah (Mosaic law) and the Jewish traditions passed down from earlier teachers (oral law). Though Jesus likely learned scripture from his earthly father Joseph, as well as in the Temple like any young Jewish male, he didn't study at any formal school (Duet. 11:18-21; Luke 2:41-47). *God validates the man of God with the power of God* (Matt. 7:28, 29; Mark 6:2)! The fact Jesus was proficient in the Torah while teaching with authority in an application-oriented way amazed and perplexed the crowd and ignited the jealousy of the Jewish leaders. Along with studying, Jesus learned from the Author of God's word and supernaturally confronted teachers of his day. *The purpose of God's word is to change people into people of God* (2 Tim. 3:16, 17)!

Jesus challenges their HYPOCRISY and hard hearts

In the Torah, God required work to stop and a day of rest to worship on the Sabbath (Ex. 20:8-10; our 'Saturday'). But the oral law developed traditions prohibiting nearly all physical exertion, like plucking hairs. *Legalism subtracts, not adds, to God's righteousness!* In the Law, a newborn male was to be circumcised on the 8th day, but if that day fell on a Sabbath, when no one was supposed to do any kind of work, the Jewish leaders 'broke' the oral law to keep the child ceremonially clean (Lev. 12:1-3). Jesus argued they were hypocritical, as they wouldn't persecute a rabbi for a circumcision on the Sabbath, but would persecute Jesus for healing a paralytic, when technically neither was against the Law (John 5:1-16). *Sometimes the least self-aware are the most arrogant about their awareness!*

Jesus is qualified to CHANGE people's lives

Amid the hatred, hostility, gossip, and slander, everyone with an ear to hear the truth and a heart to obey God listen and believe in Jesus (Luke 8:8). Their willingness to choose Christ among the lies, distortions and threats of violence against him shows the character of a true Christian. The truth should never be smothered just because there is opposition, as that's when it's most potent and appropriate. *The light often shines brightest in the darkest times* (Matt. 5:14-16)!