

FPFWC Christian Development



Love Completes, Law Falls Short

September 2023

Fall Quarter

September 16, 2023

Lesson #3 – Jesus Glorifies God

SCRIPTURE TEXT – John 7:14-24

ICE BREAKERS-

1. How does seeking God's glory keep your ego in check?
2. How do you guard against judging others by appearance?

Key Verse: “He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.”—John 7:18

LESSON BACKGROUND –

We have four Gospels in the New Testament that tell the story of Jesus. The first three Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) are very similar in their general structure. The fourth Gospel, John, is quite different from the other three. John wrote 30 or so years after those other three, and he was well acquainted with their material. For this reason he seems to avoid repeating most of their content. Instead, he chose to give new information from his wealth of eyewitness recollections (see John 21:24–25). About 90 percent of John's material is not found in the other three Gospels.

A significant difference among the four Gospels is the way the writers choose to begin their accounts. Mark begins with the ministry of John the Baptist, without any reference to the birth or childhood of Jesus. Luke begins with the birth of John the Baptist and includes the nativity story of Jesus. Matthew begins with Jesus' genealogy, thus pushing the story of Jesus back to the time of King David (reigned 1010–970 BC).

John the Evangelist (not John the Baptist) pushes the story back to the very beginning of creation and before. Thus John's Gospel is an inclusive account of the entire sweep of human history. Most of this is accomplished in John 1:1–18, often referred to as the prologue of John. Today's lesson explores the implications of the doctrine of the incarnation, especially concerning Jesus' knowledge and teaching of Scripture and God's will.

LESSON COMMENTARY

Jesus chose the midst of the feast to be the opportune time (cf. v. 6) to go into the temple, and to begin to teach. The Jewish leaders were astonished that Jesus had such a thorough grasp of Scripture (How has this man become learned ...?), since He had not been educated formally under a rabbi according to tradition (cf. Ac 4:13).

7:16–17. The Jews reasoned that Jesus' teaching must be His own. Jesus countered, My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me. This fact could be confirmed. If anyone is willing to do the Father's will (v. 17), i.e., believe in Christ for eternal life (6:40a), he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself. Faith authenticates and internalizes God's testimony (1Jn 5:10). The Word, when it is believed, is a life-giving seed (1Pt 1:23), bringing assurance through the Holy Spirit that God's promises are true (cf. Heb 11:1).

7:18–20. He who speaks from himself (such as a false messiah) seeks his own honor. He who is seeking the glory of the One who sent Him refers to Jesus Himself and His heaven-to-earth mission. He is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him is a claim by Jesus to sinlessness in character and motive. In contrast to Jesus' righteousness, none of the Jewish authorities kept the Law (v. 19). But neither does anyone (Rm 3:19–20). The attempt to kill (murder) Jesus (cf. v. 1) was in actuality a violation of the sixth Commandment (Ex 20:13). Instead of recognizing the Father speaking through His Son, the crowd (v. 20) absurdly accused Jesus of demon possession (cf. Jn 8:48; 10:20; Mt 12:24).

7:21–22. I did one deed (lit., "work," a synonym for "miracle," cf. 10:25, 32, 37–38) refers to the Sabbath healing of the paralytic (5:1–9). Jesus did other miracles (2:23; 3:2; 7:31). But this healing was thought to violate the law against work on the Sabbath. Yet to fulfill the law, the Jews themselves "worked" on the Sabbath whenever they circumcised (mostly male children on the eighth day, Lv 12:3). Hence if they were consistent, they would not have condemned Jesus for "working" on the Sabbath.

7:23–24. Jesus reasoned that it was contradictory to show concern on the Sabbath for one part of the body (circumcision) but show no concern for the whole body of one in need (I made an entire man well). Blinded by their traditions, Christ's opponents were judging Him (v. 24) by what "appeared" to them as right (according to appearance), but was not a righteous judgment.

LESSON NUGGET - How the world decides – This discussion reveals the confusion and unbelief of the people. Some were for Him because of His miracles, while others opposed Him because He broke the Sabbath laws. Some waited to see what their leaders would do (v.26), and their leaders wanted to kill Him. They were judging by appearances (v.24) and going astray.

Sources: Moody Bible Commentary, Standard Lesson Commentary, and The Essential Everyday Bible Commentary