

G R A C E

Reformed Baptist Church

Soli ◇ Deo ◇ Gloria

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Sermon Notes

The Feast of Tabernacles

John 7:10-18

July 3, 2005

Verse 10

- In this Verse, contrary to Verses 6 and 8, Jesus time has **now come**.
 - NOW it is the will of the Father that Jesus go up to the Feast [after His brothers do]
- Also, it was customary in the 1st Century to travel with one's extended family when going long distances [i.e. from Galilee to Judea]; however, Jesus does not travel with His brothers. This is further demonstrating His "increasing isolation even among the flesh-and-blood relations."
 - NOTE: the size of the group of extended families could be very large. Recall how, in Luke 2:44, Joseph and Mary searched for their son, Jesus, for much of the day.
- Notice **how** Jesus went up to the Feast: *not publicly, but as if, in secret*.
- "Not publicly" stands in contrast to Verse 4, when His brothers state, "For no one does anything in secret when he himself seeks to be known publicly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world."
 - Both Jesus' **timing** [i.e. after His brothers go up], as well as the **manner in which He goes** [i.e. as if, in secret] are in perfect obedience to His Father and in contrast to His brothers.

Verse 11

- The term "the Jews" in the Gospel of John often refers to the Jewish authorities in Judea, specifically in Jerusalem [i.e. the Pharisees and Sadducees; the Sanhedrin]
- Here, the term [as in John 1:19] likely refers to the enemies of Jesus in Jerusalem [that is, the authorities] [recall John 5:18, "For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more

to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.”]

- This reference, in Verse 11, is likely a **hostile search** for Jesus on the part of “the Jews.”

Verse 12

- The crowds were grumbling amongst each other (this should come as no surprise)
- As this was the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, “the crowds” were made up of Judeans, Galileans, and Diaspora Jews.
- Some were saying, “He is a good man.”
 - This statement was likely based upon knowledge that Jesus had performed miracles that had helped people physically [i.e. the Feeding of the Five Thousand]
 - However, this statement reveals that those making it **knew nothing about the claims or true identity of Jesus Christ.**
 - When someone says today, “Jesus was a good man”, they reveal that they have never seen or heard the claims of Jesus Christ. Further, they reveal they no nothing of the **character** or **nature** of who Jesus Christ is.
 - Recall, in Mark 10:17, the Rich Young Ruler addresses Jesus Christ in a similar manner, “Good Teacher...”
 - Matthew Henry stated, “This was a truth [Jesus was a good man], but it was far short of being the whole truth. He was not only a good man, but more than a man, he was the Son of God. Many who have no ill thoughts of Christ have yet low thoughts of him, and scarcely honor him, even when they speak well of him, because they do not say enough; yet indeed it was his honor, and the reproach of those who persecuted him, that even those who would not believe him to be the Messiah could not but own he was a good man.”
 - In other words, Jesus Christ cannot simply be a good man [in his totality].
 - Martin Luther stated, “If our gospel were received in peace, it wouldn’t be the true gospel.”
 - The same is true concerning the Person and claims of Jesus Christ. He is never received apathetically.

- In his classic work, *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis wrote:

I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: 'I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God.' That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic - on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg - or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. We are faced, then, with a frightening alternative. This man we are talking about either was (and is) just what He said or else a lunatic, or something worse. Now it seems to me obvious that He was neither a lunatic nor a fiend: and consequently, however strange or terrifying or unlikely it may seem, I have to accept the view that He was and is God. God has landed on this enemy-occupied world in human form.

- Remember the words of Peter in John 6:69, “we have believed and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”
- Read Matthew 16:13-16, “¹³Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ ¹⁴And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.’ ¹⁵He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’”
- Who do you say Jesus Christ is in His **character** and His **nature**?
 - Others were saying, “No, on the contrary, He leads the people astray.”
 - According to the Talmud [Jewish rabbinical tradition], “On the eve of the Passover Yeshu [Jesus] was hanged”; two reasons are given for his execution, (1) sorcery, and (2) “he enticed Israel to apostasy.” (*Sanh.* 43a.)

Verse 13

- Despite the grumbling, “no one was speaking openly of Him for fear of the Jews.”
- “Whispering” is a cognate of the word translated “grumbling” in Verse 12
- Thus, as one has stated, what was occurring was “suppressed discussion in low tones, in corners, and among friends.”
Dods
- It is as though those who spoke more “positively” of Jesus were afraid of the consequences if the Jewish authorities [who violently disagreed] heard their remarks; also, it is as though those who agreed with the Jewish authorities feared for their safety because, possibly, the authorities did not even want the person of Jesus of Nazareth being discussed.

- The authorities in Jerusalem were concerned that “those who, by their topic of conversation, make Jesus a more important figure than ‘the Jews’ wanted him to be.”

Verse 14

- It was “now the midst of the feast [of Tabernacles]”
 - The phrase, here, for “the *midst* of the feast” is indefinite
 - It could mean in the exact middle of the feast [i.e. the fourth day]; or simply sometime after the first day and before the last.
- “Jesus went up into the temple, and began to teach.”
- Some have seen this Verse as a fulfillment of Malachi 3:1: “Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple;”

It is very significant that, in the midst of all the pomp and ceremonies, all the festivities, Jesus, the fulfillment of the very feast they were celebrating, goes to the Temple, the center of activity, and teaches.

- Read John 6:45. In the Messianic Age, God promised that the Father will draw men to the Son, “AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD.”
- Read also Matthew 28:19-20 [the Great Commission].
 - **How**, then, are we to fulfill the Great Commission [i.e. “making disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit”]?
 - By TEACHING.
 - The Church exists for _____ through the _____.
 - Thus, if we are to be like Christ, then we are to know the Scriptures, that we might teach them.
 - In his book, *The Spirit of the Disciples: Understanding How God Changes Lives*, Dallas Willard, Professor at the University of Southern California writes:

...in place of Christ's plan [i.e. the Great Commission], historical drift has substituted: ‘Make converts (to a particular faith and practice) and baptize them into church membership.’ This causes two great omissions from the Great Commission to stand

out. Most important, we start by omitting the making of disciples or enrolling people as Christ's students...We also omit the step of taking converts through training that will bring them every increasing to do what Jesus directed. These two great omissions are connected. Not having make our converts disciples, it is impossible for us to teach them how to live as Christ lived and taught.

- NOTE: It is also significant to note that the Shema [Deuteronomy 6:4-9] stresses the importance of teaching in the home.

Verse 15

- Notice that Jesus was not simply teaching basic, elementary principles, for “The Jews then were astonished, saying, ‘How has this man become learned, having never been educated?’”
- The question that the Jews asked literally means, “How does this man know letters [grammata, *grammata*]?”
- The same word is used in 2 Timothy 3:15, translated “the sacred writings [which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus].”
- “The Jews then were astonished” because Jesus was so “learned,” that is He had such a command of the Scriptures, when He had “never been educated.”
 - The same type of statement is made of Peter and John in Acts 4:13
- To be a “learned” Jew in the 1st Century would have meant to have studied in a rabbinical school as a disciple of a rabbi.
- “The surprise would be at the fact that Jesus could carry on a sustained discourse apparently in the manner of the rabbis, and perhaps also with the amount of Scripture he could quote.”
Leon Morris
- This should be of no surprise to modern-day Believers, as Jesus is the Living Word, the Incarnate Eternal *Logos*, and, therefore, He possesses a mastery of the Written Word, that which He fulfills.

Verse 16

- This Verse supports Jesus’ claim in John 5:19, “Therefore Jesus answered saying to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.”
- Thus, Jesus is in perfect obedience to the Father.
- One of the consequences of studying for years in the rabbinical centers was the tendency to substantiate every pronouncement by appealing to precedent, to earlier rabbinic judgments. Not to do so might indicate a certain arrogance, an independence of spirit in danger of drifting from the weight of tradition.”
D.A. Carson

- “The age did not prize originality. The rabbinic method was to cite authorities for all important statements. So Jesus did not claim to be the originator of his message.”
Leon Morris
- “In Judaism of his day, there was only one way to teach and learn the word and will of God: through Scripture (Torah) and its interpretation. In appealing to someone other than himself as the authority for his teaching, Jesus is not unlike other rabbis of his day. The rabbis referred back to the earlier rabbis; Jesus appeals to the Father, claiming direct knowledge from God (8:28).”
Andreas Kostenberger

Verse 17

- Jesus begins this work by stating, “If anyone is willing to do His will...”
 - This is a conditional statement.
 - It pertains to those who are willing **to do** His will. [Jesus is speaking of those individuals who do not merely accept certain doctrines, but act on them.]
 - Biblically, those who are willing to do the will of God are those who have been born-again, of the Spirit, that is, regenerated.
- Jesus affirms that those “willing to do His will” will hear His teaching and discern that it is truly from God.
 - Read John 10:25-26.

Verse 18

- Notice the humility of our Lord Jesus Christ: although He is equal to the Father [in his essence; ontologically], He seeks the glory of the Father, not Himself.
- Jesus also states that He **is true**. Notice, He is not stating that He speaks the truth, but rather, He **is** true. See also John 14:6, “Jesus answered, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life.’”
- Read John 5:41-47. Like John 5:44, Jesus’ opponents cannot believe Him, partly because they, unlike Him, accept praise from one another. Jesus is so radically different from them, that they cannot believe Him.
- This Verse stands in contrast to the very people Jesus is speaking with, “the Jews.” Unlike Jesus, “the Jews” sought their own glory for other men, were not true, and were unrighteous despite their efforts to appear otherwise.