

The Pharisees Hated Jesus: by Chuck Baldwin, Aug 10, 2014

The video viewed below follows with the transcript that's broke into 4 sections.

Section 1: Opening to John Chapter 7

Introduction

All right, open your Bibles, please, to John, chapter 7. John, chapter 7.

After these things, Jesus walked in Galilee. Chapter 6 records the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 and many other notable events that we have taught from before. I've spent several messages on John, chapter 6. If you go back, you'll remember that I have spent several messages from John, chapter 6.

Jesus Avoids Judea

After those events, Jesus walked in Galilee, for He would not walk in Jewry (King James) or Judea, the province outside of Jerusalem, because the Jews sought to kill Him. Please understand that the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem had been plotting the death of Jesus for several years.

Whenever they crucified Him, it was not an extemporaneous event. It was not an overnight event. The Jewish leaders had been plotting the death of Jesus for years, and they had attempted to seize Him and execute Him several times before His eventual crucifixion.

As a result of this animosity and the constant risk of arrest and execution, Jesus focused most of His ministry outside of Judea in the area around Galilee. This is what He was doing at this point.

The Feast of Tabernacles

Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand.

Kinfolk's Sarcasm

His brethren, therefore, said unto Him—now, “brethren” here refers to His kinfolk. This term could mean blood brothers or distant relatives like cousins. Sometimes it could even refer to father and grandson rather than just father and son. The specifics of the relationships require deeper scriptural study.

Were these the actual half-brothers of Jesus (the sons and daughters of Joseph and Mary), or were they cousins or other near relatives? Either way, they were close kinfolk of Jesus at this point. However, they were not disciples of the Lord. They had not recognized or accepted Him as the Messiah and Savior—they were outside of faith.

His brethren, therefore, said unto Him:

Depart hence and go to Judea, that Thy disciples also may see the works that Thou doest.

They were being sarcastic. This was not compassionate advice. It was dripping with sarcasm. Essentially, they mocked Him, saying, “Why are you staying in Galilee? Why don't you go to Judea and let the disciples there see your miracles?”

They knew why He stayed in Galilee. They knew the threat and the risk, including the attempts by the Sanhedrin to arrest and kill Him. Their mockery was intentional.

The Sarcasm of Unbelievers

Verse 4 says:

For there is no man that doeth anything in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, show thyself to the world.

John adds:

For neither did His brethren believe on Him.

This reminds us that they were brethren in the flesh, but not disciples. They were not followers of Christ and were extremely sarcastic toward Him.

Encouragement for Believers

So, the next time you have an unbelieving relative act sarcastically toward you, take heart—you're in good company. That's exactly what happened to the Lord Jesus.

Jesus' Response

Verse 6:

Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come, but your time is always ready.

This was a brilliant comeback. Many people who are unwilling to risk anything often have all kinds of advice for those who risk everything.

When Jesus walked into Judea, He risked everything. When they walked into Judea, they risked nothing. Jesus' words reflected this:

You can go anytime you want without risk. You are trying to piously tell Me what to do when you are unwilling to risk anything, while I am risking everything for My ministry.

Fear of Man vs. Faith

Verse 9 says:

When He had said these words, He abode still in Galilee. But when His brethren were gone up, then went He also up to the feast—not openly, but as it were in secret.

He took His disciples at a separate time, privately, without crowds or fanfare.

Division Among the People

At the feast, the Jews sought Him, asking, "Where is He?" There was much murmuring among the people concerning Him. Some said, "He is a good man." Others said, "Nay, but He deceiveth the people."

Everywhere Jesus went, He divided people. Mention His name, and people either loved Him or hated Him. The division is evident in this passage.

The Fear of Public Opinion

Verse 13:

Howbeit no man spake openly of Him favorably for fear of the Jews.

Many people were so intimidated by the powers that be, they would not even speak favorably of Jesus in public.

Relevance Today

This fear persists in many professions—doctors, attorneys, engineers, businessmen, teachers, military personnel, etc. People may believe in Jesus in their hearts but fear speaking openly about Him.

The Characteristics of Discipleship

God's people must exhibit certain characteristics:

1. Love

- Without love, we are nothing.

2. Humility

- Pride is detestable to God.

3. Courage

- Courage is not optional. Even if timid by nature, Christians must be courageous in applying God's will.

In this passage, we see men and women who believed in Jesus but refused to speak of Him publicly for fear of what the Jewish leaders might say or do.

Section 2: Taking a Stand and Judging Righteous Judgment

Christians Failing to Take a Stand

We have Christians all over America sitting in dead churches, unwilling to take a stand. They go along with anything, no matter how egregiously tyrannical it may be, saying nothing to deliver their families from the oppression of the enemy.

Even within these congregations, there are believers who know in their hearts what is right and true, but they silence their voices. They won't speak up in trustee meetings, elders' meetings, deacons' meetings, or pastoral staff meetings. They remain silent, fearing the reactions of those around them.

This behavior is disgusting! Just like the senator who wrote, saying he had been trying to get pastors to speak out for years but couldn't get them to take a stand. Not only will these leaders remain silent, but they also intimidate others in the congregation who dare to speak out.

Jesus Teaches at the Feast

About the middle of the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus went up to

the temple and taught. Now it was time for Him to confront the Jewish leaders head-on.

The Jews marveled, saying:

How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

What they meant was: how does this man know so much about the Old Testament scriptures without having graduated from one of our elite schools?

These were the Jewish elite—members of the Sanhedrin—accustomed to disciples of Pharisaical leaders like Hillel and Shammai being formally trained in their schools. Yet Jesus, without their formal education, had profound knowledge.

Jesus Responds to the Critics

Jesus answered:

My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me. If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself.

He continued:

He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory. But he that seeketh the glory of Him that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

Then He confronted them directly:

Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

Jesus boldly pointed out their hypocrisy, knowing they sought to kill Him because He healed a man on the Sabbath (John 6).

They accused Him of breaking the law, yet they routinely circumcised male children on the Sabbath.

Hypocrisy of the Jewish Leaders

Jesus said:

Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

This is a verse that should be underlined, memorized, and prioritized in every Christian's life. We are often quick to judge others based solely on appearance, without knowing the heart, motives, or circumstances.

Christians across America are guilty of this—acting as judge, jury, and moral executioner based on incomplete knowledge. Such behavior mirrors that of the Pharisees.

Judging Righteously

Adam Clarke, a commentator from the 1800s, offered wisdom on this verse:

Attend to the law, not merely in the letter, but in its spirit and design.

He reminded us that:

The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

If we ignore the spirit of the law, we risk abusing it. This abuse is prevalent in churches and politics today, where the letter of the law is emphasized over its true intent.

Clarke taught:

The law commanding rest on the Sabbath is subordinate to the law of mercy and love, which requires active work to promote

God's glory and the comfort of others.

Illustration of the Greater Law

Imagine a sign by a lake reading “No Swimming,” passed as a city ordinance. If a child is drowning in the lake, do you obey the letter of the law and let the child drown, or do you break the ordinance and save the child’s life, fulfilling the natural law of Christ?

This is the kind of dilemma believers face more frequently as government laws attempt to supersede God’s natural laws. Jesus reminded the people that while they emphasized Sabbath laws, they ignored weightier matters like mercy and love.

Clarke concluded:

Judge the merit of an action not by your first impression, but by its motives and outcomes, still believing the best unless there is proof to the contrary.

These words remain relevant and powerful, far beyond what you’ll find in most modern Christian commentaries.

Closing Thoughts on Judging Righteous Judgment

Christians must strive to align their judgments with God’s will, showing mercy and love. The courage to stand for truth and judge righteously is an essential characteristic of true discipleship.

Next Verse: Moving to verse 25 for further study.

Section 3: Boldness and Division

Boldness of Jesus

Some of the people in Jerusalem said:

Is this not He whom they seek to kill?

Everyone knew the religious leaders were plotting to kill Jesus. Despite this, Jesus spoke boldly, and the people marveled:

But lo, He speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto Him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?

They were puzzled. If the leaders wanted to kill Jesus, why hadn't they arrested Him? Yet they doubted, saying:

Howbeit we know this man whence He is, but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence He is.

This reflects a contradiction in their thinking. They claimed that when the Messiah came, no one would know His origins, yet they knew all about Jesus—His birthplace in Bethlehem, His upbringing in Nazareth, and His ministry in Galilee.

Pharisaical Doctrines and Misinterpretations

The idea that the Messiah's origins would be unknown was not based on Scripture but was a Pharisaical tradition. Nowhere in the Old Testament does it say the Messiah's origins would be a mystery. Instead, Scripture clearly predicted His birthplace:

"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel" (Micah 5:2).

The Pharisees had added their own interpretations and opinions to the Bible, teaching them as doctrine. Such teachings led to confusion and misbelief among the people.

Jesus Confronts the People

Jesus, hearing their doubts, declared boldly:

Ye both know Me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of Myself, but He that sent Me is true, whom ye know not.

He emphasized their knowledge of His earthly identity while exposing their ignorance of His divine origin. This directness stirred outrage, and they sought to arrest Him, but no one laid hands on Him because His time had not yet come.

Belief and Division Among the People

Many of the people believed on Him, saying:

When Christ cometh, will He do more miracles than these which this man hath done?

Others doubted:

Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scripture said that Christ cometh from the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem where David was?

Their ignorance of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem created further division. As always, Jesus' presence and words divided the crowd.

If there's not a division, you're not saying much. If you're not creating a division, you're pretty much worthless.

Officers Sent to Arrest Jesus

The Pharisees and chief priests, hearing the murmurs, sent officers to arrest Jesus. However, when they arrived, they were captivated by His words.

Never man spake like this man.

Even the officers could not bring themselves to arrest Jesus because of the power, purity, and spirit in His words.

Moral Decline and Responsibility of the Pulpit

Reflecting on the moral decline in society, the message shifted to the responsibility of pastors. The speaker referenced a survey conducted among Marines at 29 Palms, California, regarding whether they would fire on American citizens if ordered to do so:

- In the mid-1990s, 25% of Marines said they would follow such an order.
- By 2013, this number had risen to 66%.

The speaker emphasized that the root of this moral decline lies not with politicians, the media, or educators, but with the failure of pastors to teach biblical truth and the natural laws of God. Without a moral compass, young people are left vulnerable to political and ideological manipulation.

Call to Action for the Church

The pulpit must return to teaching truth—God's natural laws, the principles of Scripture, and the moral foundations that guide conscience and actions. Without this, society will continue to drift into moral and spiritual chaos.

Next Verse: Moving to further study of Jesus' words and their impact.

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Section 4: Responsibility of the Church and the Stand for Justice

The Failure of the Pulpit

The pastors of America are sacrificing the lives and liberties of the people by remaining silent. Christian, get out of those churches! Pastors must teach their congregations about natural laws and moral obligations. They should remind their young men and women:

Obedience is to the highest power—God Almighty.

Historical lessons, such as the Nuremberg Trials, emphasize that one must not violate God's laws to comply with unjust human laws. Yet, many young Marines, likely raised in evangelical churches, have lost their moral compass.

- They grew up attending Sunday school and youth groups, but their churches failed to equip them with the truth.
- They now face moral dilemmas, with some even admitting they would turn weapons against their own people if ordered.

This tragic reality highlights the negligence of the American pulpit. Pastors who refuse to declare the full counsel of God's Word will one day face the consequences of their silence.

A Call for Courageous Law Enforcement and Military Personnel

We need law enforcement and military personnel who, when confronted with orders to violate the natural rights of their fellow citizens, will say:

Sorry, I won't do it.

This includes border patrol agents, sheriffs, deputies, and soldiers. Many good men and women in these roles face extreme circumstances, such as violence along the U.S.-Mexico border, often without adequate support or even the right to defend themselves.

The Crisis of Tyranny

The good men and women in government positions are increasingly challenged to uphold honor, truth, and constitutional principles amidst corruption. The public must pray for these individuals as they confront an ever-growing tide of tyranny.

Pharisaical Elitism and the Contempt for Common People

The Pharisees of Jesus' time scorned the common people, referring to them as "the rabble" or "the unwashed." They believed only those educated in their schools were capable of understanding the law or judging matters of faith.

When officers returned without arresting Jesus, they were questioned:

Are you also deceived? Have any of the rulers or Pharisees believed on Him?

This elitism mirrors the contempt still held by some in positions of power today—whether in higher education, government, or other influential spheres. They dismiss the intelligence and moral judgment of ordinary people, believing only their own class is fit to lead.

Nicodemus' Bold Defense of Justice

Nicodemus, once timid and cautious, defended Jesus before the Sanhedrin:

Doth our law judge any man before it hear him and know what

he doeth?

Albert Barnes comments that Nicodemus' actions highlight an essential principle: every man is presumed innocent until proven guilty. Nicodemus demanded justice, refusing to allow Jesus to be condemned without a fair trial.

Barnes further observed that Christianity uniquely respects and elevates the poor and common people, unlike the philosophies and religious systems of elitists throughout history.

The Danger of Presumed Guilt

The presumption of guilt is a growing problem in modern society. People are often judged based on appearances or accusations rather than evidence. This mindset has eroded the principle of "innocent until proven guilty," leading to wrongful convictions and a culture of suspicion.

Tyranny in Everyday Life

The trend toward a surveillance state, where neighbors are encouraged to report one another for trivial infractions, echoes the tactics of tyrannical regimes like those of Hitler, Stalin, and Mao. This erosion of liberty and justice starts small but grows into a system where freedom is replaced by fear.

Nicodemus' Courage and Our Responsibility

Nicodemus, by speaking up, temporarily delayed the plans of the Sanhedrin, giving Jesus six more months of ministry before His crucifixion. His courage reminds us that standing for truth and justice can make a tangible difference.

How much more time can we give our communities and our nation when we, too, take a stand?

Conclusion: A Call to Action

Christians are called to stand against tyranny, defend justice, and uphold truth in every sphere of influence. By doing so, we provide more time for others to live in liberty and hear the message of salvation.

Let us pray for courage and take a firm stand for what is right, knowing the stakes are high and the responsibility is ours.