

# *Unbelief Is a Chain*

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Mike Miller

Straight Paths Bible Church

John 7:2-5 Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him.

John 7:6-9 Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come. When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee.

- I. The line between unbelief and saving faith is marked by how much we value the world's opinion of us.
  - A. Acceptance, respect, and honor from the world are the matters that influence the final decision about what we are going to do about God more than anything else.
  - B. This is that "spirit of the world" that has so much influence on all men, and which did it's best to try to overthrow the Lord.

1 Corinthians 2:12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

- 1. These are the two spirits at work in these verses: the Spirit of God in Jesus, and the spirit of the world in his brethren.
- C. Jesus did not come to be an earthly king, but it would have been easy for Him to have been one.
  - 1. The opportunity was always before Him and all He had to do was take it.
  - 2. If He had yielded to this temptation of the devil in the wilderness.
  - 3. The multitude was intending to make him a king by force.
  - 4. And even his brethren, and other people urged the devil's same suggestion on Him.
  - 5. Just let us see! Show us and we will believe! Give us the chance to approve you and give you the honor you deserve!

Matthew 16:1 The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven.

Matthew 27:41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said,

Matthew 27:29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

- 6. Here's your chance! Take it!
- 7. It's obvious that you want to be somebody, and you desire for people to know who you are, so here is an open door for you.
- D. Show thyself to the world!
  - 1. That is the temptation that gets most people.
  - 2. Make an impression on the world and the people around you.
  - 3. Make yourself acceptable to them and sure they see you and hear you.

4. Then you will feel accepted, admired, honored, and comfortable in their presence.
- E. It is the same temptation that we all face when it comes right down to the moment of decision.
- F. Do we esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the riches of the world?
  1. Most people would pretty easily say yes to that one, because they know they are never going to be rich.
- G. But do we esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the world's smile, approval, and acceptance?
  1. This is the issue at hand here; it is a matter of the heart here, and pride, or self-love, and self-preservation, and seeking honor for self.
- H. Are you willing to be nothing, to be unsuccessful, to have nothing to show? To be unnoticed, unheard, and dishonored, on top of all the rest?
  1. Can you continue as a Christian like that?
  2. Can you live and die like that, or can you only make it so far before you put your hand to things and make something of yourself?
  3. Is the shame you feel too much for you?
  4. Are their smirks and insults and haughtiness toward you too much to bear?
  5. Is it too hard for you to be excluded and ostracized?

II. The world cannot hate you...Jesus said to his brethren who did not believe in Him.

A. The world cannot hate you if you are one of their own.

John 15:18-19 *If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*

- B. If you have the same baseline desires, and use the same means to obtain them.
- C. If you will play their game with them, according to their rules.
- D. There will be no conflict for you and you will feel at home among them.

James 4:4 *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*

- E. But, if your life is a testimony to the fact that their works are evil, they will hate you, like they hated Jesus then and still hate Him today.
- F. The old saying about "birds of a feather flock together" is very true when it comes to the righteous and the wicked; the world and those who belong to God.
- G. Unbelief is the chain the world has on you and until you break it you are doomed to perish for eternity.
  1. Any course of action that has as its simple end your own honor is a solicitation of the spirit of the world.
- H. Who will help you?
  1. No one helped Jesus; His life was one continuous sacrifice and He overcame the world absolutely alone, without the aid of anyone.
  2. If He had gone with the principles of his brethren who were possessed by the spirit of the world, He would have been alienated from the Father and there would be no Savior.
- I. But we have help in this matter, because Jesus set up the church, and sent the Comforter, and said He would never leave us or forsake us.
  1. Besides that, we have 2000 years of history to look at the examples of others.
  2. And most Christians, if they would look for them, have people among their own acquaintances that have won this battle against self and overcome the world.