

The Undeniable Claims of Christ (Pt.2)

John 7:19-24 (Preached 3/8/09) © 2009

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INTRODUCTION

1. We are looking again this morning at John chapter 7.
2. Our last time together we were looking at verses 14-18.
3. This morning we are picking up where we left off at verse 19.
4. Jesus is still in the middle of His response to the Jewish leaders question to the crowd in verse 15.
5. If you remember, they asked, “How has this man become learned, having never been educated?”
6. Jesus responds to their question in verses 16-18 by saying the source of His teaching is from God and the purpose of His teaching is to glorify God.
7. Now in verse 19 Jesus confronts their disobedience to the Law of God.
8. Let’s begin reading at verse 19.
9. Read John 7:19-24.
10. Jesus is God.
11. That is clear from everything John has said up to this point.

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12. John begins his letter by stating that He was “in the beginning...with God, and...was God” (1:1).
13. Throughout this letter John proves the deity of Christ.
14. From addressing His preincarnate state in chapter one to His incarnate ministry throughout the remainder of this letter.
15. John records the responses of those who saw Jesus as God.
16. In chapter one, John the Baptist stated that He is “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (1:29).
17. He also states in verse 30 that “He existed before Me” and in verse 34 that He is indeed “the Son of God.”
18. Also in chapter one, we hear the response of Andrew to his brother Simon in verse 41.
19. He tells him, “We have found the Messiah (which translated means Christ).”
20. In verse 45, we hear Philip’s response to Jesus when he tells Nathanael, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph.”

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21. After Nathanel meets Jesus, he too, concludes that He is “the Son of God...the King of Israel” (v.49).
22. In chapter two, Jesus manifests His glory to His disciples and mother by turning water into wine (v.8).
23. And John notes in verse 11 that “This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.”
24. In chapter three, “a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus...came to Jesus by night” (vv.1-2) and confirmed in his own heart his first assessment of Him as being “a teacher come from God” (v.2).
25. In chapter four, after His encounter with a Samaritan women, she too concluded that there was something special about Him.
26. She ran into the city and said in verse 29, “Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?”
27. In Verse 26 Jesus responds to her statement in verse 25 regarding the coming of the Messiah. He said, “I who speak to you am He.”

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28. After His encounter with the rest of the people from Sychar, they concluded that He was “indeed the Savior of the world” (v.42).
29. When you come to chapter five, Jesus heals a man who had been “ill for thirty-eight years” (v.5).
30. Jesus tells him to “get up, pick up your pallet and walk” (v.8).
31. “Immediately the man became well, and picked up his pallet and began to walk” (v.9).
32. According to verse 13 the man “did not know who it was” that healed him because “Jesus had slipped away while there was a crowd in that place.”
33. Later Jesus “found him in the temple and said to him, ‘Behold, you have become well; do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you’” (v.14).
34. The man leaves and tells “the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well” (v.15).
35. We hear no other response from this man concerning Jesus but undoubtedly He concluded the same as the rest who encountered Him.

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36. In chapter 6 after Jesus fed the 5000, which was really 10-15 thousand, they wanted to make Him their king (v.15).
37. They didn't see through Jesus' miracle that He was God but only saw Him in a selfish manner—that is, what He could do for them.
38. But that wasn't true of His disciples.
39. When Jesus came to them walking on the water, Matthew records in **Matthew 14:33 (NASB)** ³³ And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, "You are certainly God's Son!"
40. Now as we are looking at chapter 7 of John, up to this point, His brothers do not recognize Him as the Messiah, nor do many who were at the Feast in Jerusalem.
41. But Jesus continues to give them “undeniable claims” that cannot be refuted.
42. Let's pick up at verse 19 where we hear Jesus speak of *the Jews disobedience to the Law of Moses*.

I. The Jews Disobedience (v.19a)

Jesus says that...

A. Moses Gave You the Law

“Did not Moses give you the Law?”

We already heard this morning Exodus 20 where God gives Israel His Law. Notice two other passages that speak of God giving Israel the Law through Moses.

1. **Leviticus 26:46 (NASB)** ⁴⁶ These are the statutes and ordinances and laws which the Lord established between Himself and the sons of Israel **through Moses** at Mount Sinai.
2. **Acts 7:37-38 (NASB)** ³⁷ "This is the Moses who said to the sons of Israel, 'God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren.' ³⁸ "This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness together with the angel who was speaking to him on Mount Sinai, and *who was* with our fathers; and he received living oracles to pass on to you.

Not only do we have these and many other verses that speak of God giving the Law through Moses...

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3. This Law was also referred to as “the law of Moses” (Jos.8:31-32; 23:6). Jesus uses the same designation in verse 23.

The Jews had prided themselves on Moses and the Law according to John 9:28 but Jesus said...

B. None of You Carries Out the Law (v.19b)

“And yet none of you carries out the Law? Why do you seek to kill Me?”

In other words, “none of you” obeys the Law because you’re seeking to kill Me.

A.T. Robertson said, “They marvelled at Christ’s “ignorance” and boasted of their own knowledge of the law of Moses. And yet they violated that law by not practising it.”¹

1. Jesus knew their hearts and of their desire to kill Him. He knew their hearts were full of evil and their hatred of Him would eventually lead to His death

The Law said, “You shall not murder” (**Ex.20:13**).

¹A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, 1997). Jn 7:19.

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William Hendriksen said, “The offended One is now taking the offensive. The double denunciation, aimed at the leaders, comes like a thunderbolt and a lightning flash. It shows that Jesus was at this very moment reading the hearts of these men. He knew that while they tried to pose as the guardians of the law of Moses, a law which is summarized in the one word *love*, they had hatred and murder in their hearts (cf. 5:18). But the terrible charge, the devastating accusation, is aimed not only (though especially) at the leaders. Jesus knows that the citizens of Jerusalem are going to join with them by and by, and so will others (7:30, 44), until finally, a half year from now, the entire mob, gathered in Jerusalem from everywhere, will shout, “Let him be crucified.” To be neutral with respect to Christ is not even possible. Hence, the question “Why are you seeking to kill me?” is, in a sense, meant for the entire audience.”²

2. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus addressed the Law of Moses and said chapter 5, verses 21-22 that if you *hate* you were murdering that person in your heart.

Matthew 5:21-22 (NASB) says, “You have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not commit

²William Hendriksen and Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary : Exposition of the Gospel According to John*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1953-2001). 2:12.

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murder ' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' ²² "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty *enough to go* into the fiery hell."

John MacArthur makes this observation in reference to their desire to kill Him. He says, "If Jesus were another religious fake, the world never would have reacted in such hatred. Since the evil world system loves its own, its hatred toward Him demonstrates that He came from God (15:18, 19)."³

The crowd responds in verse 20 to Jesus' accusation with *denial*.

II. The Crowds Denial (v.20)

They answered, "You have a demon! Who seeks to kill you?"

The citizens of Jerusalem, at least those in touch with the rulers, know of the plot against Jesus, v. 25. But the pilgrims that came from all parts of the country are entirely

³John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997, c1997). Jn 7:19.

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innocent. When Jesus suddenly and publicly casts into the face of the rulers their scheme to kill him, these pilgrims are astounded and horrified.⁴

So they began to abuse Him. They said that He had a **demon**. They challenged His statement that any of them was **seeking to kill Him**.⁵

Their statement...

A. You Have a Demon (v.20a)

The adjective “demon” (daimonion), which is used here as a noun, means “some kind of evil spirit.”

They resented His allegation, and accused Him of being possessed by an evil spirit and thus irrationally paranoid.

1. Though verse 20 says this came from the crowd, other passages reveal that it came from the Jewish leaders.
2. **John 8:48 (NASB)**⁴⁸ The Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?"

⁴R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961). 548.

⁵William MacDonald and Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible Commentary : Old and New Testaments* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1995). Jn 7:20.

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3. In **John 8:52 (NASB)** ⁵² The Jews said to Him, "Now we know that **You have a demon**. Abraham died, and the prophets *also*; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word, he will never taste of death.'

4. **John 10:19-20 (NASB)** ¹⁹ A division occurred again among the Jews because of these words. ²⁰ Many of them were saying, "**He has a demon** and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?"

Their question...

B. Who Seeks to Kill You? (v.20b)

This reveals the ignorance of many. Though many in the crowd were ignorant of the rulers plot to kill Jesus, they affirmed the accuracy of the indictment by showing their graceless hearts.⁶

They would ultimately reject Jesus with equal enthusiasm...screaming out for His crucifixion.

The sentence of guilt for violating the Law is confirmed by their hatred of the Son of God, who fulfilled the Law blamelessly (Matt. 3:17; Heb. 7:26).

A.W. Pink said, "Here Christ completely turns the tables upon them. They were saying that He was

⁶John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 295.

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unlettered, and now He charges them with having the letter of the Law, but failing to render obedience to it. They professed to be the disciples of Moses, and yet there they were with murder in their hearts, because He had healed a man on the Sabbath. He had just declared there was no unrighteousness in Himself; now He uncovered the unrighteousness which was in them, for they stood ready to break the sixth commandment in the Decalogue.”⁷

Jesus responds to the crowd by referring back to His...

III. Jesus' Miracle on the Sabbath (vv.21-24)

He says, “I did one deed, and you all marvel.”

A. I Did One Deed (v.21a)

1. The “one deed” refers back to the man who was at the pool of Bethesda
2. This had taken place eighteen months before, on the occasion of his last visit to Jerusalem.⁸

⁷ Arthur W. Pink, *Exposition of the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1945, 1975). 387.

⁸B.W. Johnson, *John : The New Testament Commentary, Vol. III* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1999). 123.

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The man had been sick for “thirty-eight years” (v.5) and Jesus asked him, “Do you wish to get well?” The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I am coming, another steps down before me.”⁸ Jesus said to him, “Get up, pick up your pallet and walk.” (vv.6-8).

This occurred on the Sabbath.

B. You All Marveled (v.21b)

Jesus says He did this “one deed, and you all [marveled].”

Their marveling or astonishment was not the astonishment that leads to praise, but the astonishment that someone would actually tell another to carry his mat on the Sabbath day, openly flouting the accepted norms for Sabbath conduct.⁹

That miracle alone offered sufficient proof that He was who He claimed to be (cf. 3:2; 5:36; 7:31; 9:16, 30–33). But instead of responding to it with belief, the

⁹D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991). 314.

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Jewish authorities reacted by plotting to kill Jesus (5:16, 18).¹⁰

This is where the persecution began.

John 5:16 (NASB) ¹⁶ For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath.

Jesus says that He healed a man on the Sabbath but...

C. You Circumcise on the Sabbath (vv.22-23)

“For this reason Moses has given you circumcision (not because it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and on the Sabbath you circumcise a man. If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath so that the Law of Moses will not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made an entire man well on the Sabbath?”

1. Circumcision came “from the fathers”
2. Acts 7:8 says God gave Abraham “the covenant of circumcision.”

¹⁰John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* : *John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 296.

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3. He was circumcised when he was 99 years old (Gen.17:24).
4. He circumcised Ismael (Gen.17:23) and Isaac (Gen.21:4).
5. Circumcision was done on the eighth day according to Genesis 17:12

Genesis 17:12 (NASB) ¹² "And every male among you who is ***eight days old*** shall be circumcised throughout your generations, a *servant* who is born in the house or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants.

So, every male Jewish child was circumcised when he was eight days old (Gen. 17:12; Lev. 12:3; Luke 1:59; 2:21). If the eighth day happened to fall **on the Sabbath** the Jews would **circumcise** the baby anyway—despite the injunction in the Law against working on the Sabbath (Ex. 20:10). Thus, circumcision took precedence over the Law of Moses¹¹ and revealed their misinterpretation of the Sabbath.

¹¹John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 296.

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Jesus says, “If they themselves broke the Sabbath law to circumcise children, how could they object to Him making **an entire man well on the Sabbath?**”

If they did not object to the ceremonial cleansing of one part of the body on the Sabbath, how could they object to His healing the entire body on the Sabbath?

Jesus not only exposed their rank hypocrisy (cf. Matt. 12:11–12; Luke 13:10–16) by His response, but He also demonstrated that it was permissible to do good on the Sabbath.

Jesus gives a final exhortation in verse 24. He exhorts them to...

D. Judge with Righteous Judgment (v.24)

He says, “Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.”

This is not a general injunction against forming superficial judgments but a demand to render the right judgment in the present case.

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Hence the article τὴν κρίσιν. We may also translate the present imperative, “Stop judging superficially!” for it forbids what these people were already doing.

The preposition κατά indicates the norm, namely the mere appearance of the act Jesus had performed.

Looked at only from the outside, this act might seem to be in contravention of the law. But mere appearance is never to be the norm for directing our verdicts. The very law itself, which these people cited against Jesus, should teach them to follow a different course.¹²

So, this was both an indictment of their utter lack of moral and theological discernment and a plea for it.

The harsh, censorious judgment of self-righteous legalism is always unacceptable to God (Matt. 7:1), but so is superficial judgment **according to appearance** (cf. 1 Sam. 16:7).

In the context, Jesus was urging His hearers to abandon their misconceptions regarding Him and **judge His claims with righteous judgment.**

¹²R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961). 555.

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Those who do so will find Him to be exactly who He claimed to be, just as He promised they would (John 7:17).¹³

CONCLUSION

1. How do you judge Jesus this morning?
2. You say, "I would never do that?"
3. You do it every time you refuse to believe and obey His Word.
4. Jesus came to fulfill the Law not abolish it (cf. Mat.5:17).
5. He said in **Matthew 5:17-20 (NASB)** ¹⁷ "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. ¹⁸ "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹ "Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others *to do* the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ "For I say to you that unless your righteousness

¹³John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* : *John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 296.

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surpasses *that* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

6. Does your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees?
7. Do you have the righteousness of Christ?
8. Surrender to Jesus today and God will give you His righteousness.
9. Let's pray.