

Lighthouse Bible Church

May 26th, 2013

John 7: 14 – 24 *Scripture Reading Luke 4: 16 - 22*

‘He taught as One having Authority’

Stand – Read – Pray

Remember last week we saw that 6 months had passed between chapter 6 and chapter 7 and now the Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. Jesus is in Galilee and according to the law of God He has to go to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles according to **Deuteronomy 16: 13 – 17.**

His brothers go ahead of Him to Jerusalem and when they get there they are asked by the religious leaders, the Jews, where Jesus is, **where is He?** Well, we saw that He also went up to Jerusalem but He went up **secretly** because He knew the Jews were trying to kill Him for violating their Sabbath traditions.

So in this passage of scripture we see Jesus come out and begin teaching in the temple and doing what He always does; bringing people to the place where they have to make a decision about who He is and whether they believe what He is teaching or not.

Very few believed and many did not and their unbelief eventually lead to His crucifixion and death. But isn't that what **Matthew 7: 13 – 14** says **enter in by the narrow gate for wide is the gate and broad is the path that leads to destruction and there are MANY who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life and there are FEW who find it.**

It is the same today with the claims of Christ, all hear but only few, relatively speaking, will believe and receive Jesus as their Lord, Savior and Master. You either believe who He is or you don't.

As we come to our passage in John 7 Jesus is, once again, teaching the people openly and publicly in the temple about who He is and about the kingdom of heaven and once again there is a diversity of opinion about who He is. We pick it up in Verse 14.

Verse 14 Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught.

Keep in mind that Jerusalem is filled with people coming to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. You have booths set up everywhere you have worshippers coming and going from the temple and just an incredible amount of things happening during this feast.

Up to this point Jesus had arrived in Jerusalem in relative secrecy and now, because the time is now right, He goes into the temple openly before the people, including those who want Him dead, and He begins to teach.

We don't know what He taught but typically when a Rabbi came into the temple to teach He would take an Old Testament passage and then expound on it. Jesus did that in the synagogue in Nazareth back in **Luke 4: 16 – 22** *expound on this*

In Capernaum He did the same thing. **Mark 1: 21 – 22** says He **went into the synagogue and taught and they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.**

Whatever Jesus taught here, in John 7, He taught with authority and it was probably what He had been teaching all along; that He is from heaven and that God is His Father and that He is equal with God and that He is the redeemer of the world and that you can't get to heaven apart from Him;

He would have used many Old Testament passages to communicate these just like He did with the 2 disciples on the Road to Emmaus in **Luke 24: 25 – 27** .

Then look at the reaction of the Jews to what He has said in Verse 15

Verse 15: and the Jews marveled, saying, ‘how does this Man know letters, having never studied?’

As a result of His teaching, His doctrine, the Jews, the religious leaders who were schooled in the Old Testament and rabbinical teaching, were amazed, they **marveled** at His ability to teach the Old Testament.

It says ‘how does this Man know **letters**. That word letters is *gramma* in the Greek and it is used of letters in a written letter as in **Galatians 6:11**. It is used in **Acts 28: 21** of an actual written letter, maybe pages long. It is also used of the entire Old Testament scriptures as it is in **2nd Timothy 3: 15** where it says **and from childhood you have known the Holy *gramma* the Holy Scriptures..**

What John is saying is that the Jews **marveled** at how Jesus knew and understood and applied the Scriptures as He taught the people in the temple. As a matter of fact look at **John 7: 45 – 46** where it says...*read*. Listen, Jesus is the living Word of God, He knows every jot and tittle of every single verse, because He is the Word of God and no mere man; **and the Word was God.**

As a matter of fact, at the end of the Sermon on the Mount the people said about Jesus’ teaching in **Matthew 7: 28 – 29** ...when Jesus ended these sayings the people were astonished at His teaching for He taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes.

The Jews in John 7 were, in essence, saying about Jesus' teaching; He's coming up with this stuff on His own, because it doesn't agree with our great Rabbis who have been educated in the greatest school, what does this guy know. He's coming up with this stuff on His own, from His own interpretation, His own opinion. They are trying to discredit His educational background.

They did the same thing in **Matthew 14: 54 – 57** where it says when Jesus came to Nazareth **He taught in their synagogue so that they were astonished and said 'where did this Man get this wisdom..' ... is this not the carpenter's son.** So Jesus answers that claim in Verse 16.

Verse 16 Jesus answered them and said 'My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me.

By the way, who sent Jesus? God did! **John 6: 37 – 38** and many other places. What Jesus is saying is; My doctrine, My teaching doesn't come from Me it comes from God. I am not teaching you what I think, I am teaching you what God says, I am teaching you the truth of God.

And the implication from that statement is; that you and the Rabbis are not; and of course we know from their teaching that they were not teaching the truth of the Word of God, they were teaching **as doctrine the commandments of men** not God as **Matthew 15: 9**

Jesus will say later in **John 12: 49 – 50** **for I have not spoken on My own authority, although He could have, but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.**

Then Jesus says in Verse 17; there is a way to know who's doctrine this is ..

Verse 17: if anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority.

Jesus is saying ‘this teaching, this doctrine is from God and **if anyone wills to do His will**, to do what I am telling you that God have given Me to tell you, then you will know **whether it is from God or of My own authority**.

If you are willing to do what God wants, you will know the truth about where this teaching is coming from; by not being merely a hearer of the Word but a doer of it, as James says.

It is no different today and the challenge is the same. People will say, ‘yes I want Jesus’ but then they don’t want to know Him, come to Him and to do what He, through His Word, says, because they are coming to Him in unbelief, for personal gain and not willing to do His will because it interferes with their wills.

We have seen that over and over again in John and James and 1st John Jude and Peter that obedience is always one of the strong evidences of belief and disobedience is always one of the strongest evidences of unbelief.

One writer said “if you want to know if Jesus Christ is who He claimed to be, here's the test. You come to Him and you say, "God, I genuinely, honestly want to know and I'm willing to do Your will." I promise you by the very Word of God you will know, God will reveal it. Wherever and whenever a person is honest and really wants to do God's will, God will give to that person the capacity to understand His truth. But God does not grant His truth to unbelief or to an unwillingness to obey it. He has no time for hypocrites.” *MacArthur John 7GTY*

That is the way it has always been. Back in **Deuteronomy 4: 29** it says **...you will seek the Lord your God and you will find Him (how) when you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul.**

Jesus is saying that it is a willingness to abandon all that you believe the truth to be and follow the truth of God, no matter where it takes you or what it costs.

When people hear the truth and hate the knowledge of the truth revealed to them and disdain God and Christ, they are turned over to their unbelief and God's righteous judgment because they choose not to believe.

When people hear the truth and are genuinely open in their heart to pursue the light given to them and seek God and His will with their whole heart, God will reveal it.

People heard Jesus teach about the kingdom of heaven and the resurrection of the just and unjust and Him being the only way to heaven and many hated His words and would eventually have Him killed because of them.

Jesus words are still being taught today, in this very place and other places where the Word of God is preached, and if you treat Him and His Word with indifference, with unbelief, with willful ignorance, if you have no desire to do God's will, then you never will know Him and you'll never know the truth. But if you come with all your heart seeking to know the truth, seeking to do His will, you'll know the truth. And Jesus said, 'when you know the truth, the truth will what make you free' as we'll see later in John 8.

Jesus is in essence saying 'do you want to know if My teaching is for real and from God' test it out, do what it says and then you will know'. What have you got to loose. If you are here this morning as a skeptic or an unbeliever, my challenge to you would be to try it out, what do you have to lose? **Lee Strobel** did. You will either loose everything or your will gain everything.

Then Jesus says in Verse 18.

Verse 18: He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true and no unrighteousness is in Him.

Jesus says ‘when it comes to public teachers you can tell the true from the false by who they represent’. He says there are the kind that **speak from himself** or from his own authority or opinion. That is a true mark of a false teacher, they speak from their own resources and usually that which is politically correct or will not offend or tickle the ears of the hearers.

They are subtle, deceptive, often charismatic and believable. They struggled with them in Jeremiah’s time. In **Jeremiah 14: 14** it says **the prophets prophesy lies in My name. I have not sent them; they prophesy to you a false vision, divination, a worthless thing and the deceit of their heart.**

Jesus told the people that the religious leaders, in **Matthew 23: 15** were **traveling land and sea to win one proselyte and when he is won, they make him twice as much a son of hell as themselves.**

Paul told Timothy in **2nd Timothy 4: 3** that the **time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine and want teachers who will turn their ears away from the truth.**

Jude 4 says **they will creep into churches unnoticed and turn the grace of God into lewdness and deny Jesus Christ.**

The result of that kind of teaching is that the person is ultimately **seeking his own glory** and not the glory of God. They are like what **Jude 16** says **they mouth great swelling words, flattering people TO GAIN ADVANTAGE** of them and for themselves. Then Jesus finishes verse 18 by saying

But He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true and no unrighteousness is in Him. That is the difference between a true and false teacher and a true and false savior. One is in it for themselves and one is in it to glorify God, and there are a lot of would be Savior's and prophets of God who are in it for themselves.

The true Savior is the One who came, humbled Himself and washed the disciples feet, He came to minister and not be ministered to. He came to give His life a ransom for many, He had no place to lay His head, He constantly gave and asked nothing in return but to follow Him.

Paul said in **Philippians 2: 8** that **Christ humbled Himself** and put Himself through the mocking and spitting and beating and crown of thorns and crucifixion and death for the glory of the Father. No would be Savior or false teacher dare go that far.

But they are the ones that demanded to be called Rabbi and Father in public and would make **long pretentious prayers** and **sound a trumpet** when they gave and **dressed like a homeless person** when they wanted people to know they were fasting. It was all a sham to draw attention to themselves, to bring glory to themselves and not to God.

We are called to seek and bring glory to God as well today, right? **1st Corinthians 10: 31** says **whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to (what) the glory of God.** **1st Peter 4: 11** says that when you use your speaking gift or your ministering gift **do it all for the glory of God.** We are called to constantly seek the glory of God and not our own. Then Jesus says in Verse 19

Verse 19: did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keep the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?

He asks these Jewish religious leaders **did not Moses give you the law** and of course they would answer yes He did. **John 1: 17 for the law was given through Moses but grace and truth through Jesus.** It is a rhetorical question that sets up His next statement that Jesus says; **yet none of you keep the law.** You who revere Moses and recognize that God used Him to present the law to the Jews, yet you want to **kill Me.**

The law included the 10 commandments and commandment number 6 says ‘you shall not kill or murder’. You are wanting to violate the very law you say you believe and uphold and obey. He is in essence saying ‘you hypocrites’. Look at their reaction in Verse 20.

Verse 20: the people answered and said ‘You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?’

By the way, look who responds to Jesus in this statement; it says **the people** answered and said You have a demon. The people are the followers of the Jewish leaders known as the Jews. The Jews, as we have already seen want to kill Jesus, but the people here don’t know that just yet, so they are surmising that Jesus is crazy, irrational. The Jews don’t answer because they know its true. Then Jesus responds in Verses 21 – 24

Verses 21 – 24: *Read*

Jesus says in **Verse 21 I did one work and you all marveled.** In **Verse 23** at the end He says **are you angry with Me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath.** That **one work** He is talking about is the healing of the man with the 38 year infirmity at the pool of Bethesda, remember that. It was on the Sabbath day and the people marveled but the Jews decided then to kill Him.

So Jesus makes a comparison between what He did on the Sabbath day and what they do on the Sabbath day and He uses the law of circumcision.

In **Leviticus 12: 3** it says that **on the 8th day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised**. It was the same in the N.T. **Luke 1: 59** John the Baptist, when he was 8 days old, was circumcised. **Luke 2: 21** Jesus was as well.

This was a law that didn't come from Moses but it was prescribed at the time of Abraham and put into law at the time of Moses. The problem is, what if the 8th day, when someone was to be circumcised, fell on the Sabbath day. They circumcised Him according to the law of Moses. The circumcision took precedence over the law of Moses not to work on the Sabbath day and the law of Moses was not broken.

So Jesus' point is; if they would circumcise a baby 8 days old on the Sabbath day and not break the law of Moses, then don't you think it would be ok if I made a man completely well on the Sabbath day'. Jesus is once again exposing the hypocrisy of their keeping of the law and so He says in Verse 24.

Verse 24: do not judge according to appearances, but judge with righteous judgment.

In one sense it is an indictment against them for not believing who Jesus is based on what He has said and done and on the other hand it is a plea for them to **judge** or determine or decide, not on what they see from their own biased unbelieving view, but from the standard of righteousness found in the word of God that He speaks.

Don't judge according to the letter of the law but judge by the spirit of the law. In other words, don't just look at the legalistic letter of the law that says you can't work or heal an infirm man, yet you can circumcise an 8 day old child on the Sabbath.

Judge by the righteous spirit of the law that looks beyond the appearance of what is right to the spirit of what is right. One writer said "Lay aside your prejudices against My person, and consider these cases attentively and impartially: and then judge whether you can justly condemn me as a Sabbath-breaker, and acquit yourselves. *Dr. Clagett esword*

You can judge by the outward letter of the law and both the circumcision and healing on the Sabbath would be wrong, or you can look at the righteous spirit of the law, the heart of the law, and judge accordingly and see that neither one would be wrong.

Their hatred and prejudice of Jesus allows them to see His healing as a supposed violation of the Sabbath and yet they don't see that they should be condemned as well for their circumcision on the Sabbath.

Closing prayer

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‘He Taught as One having Authority’

Introduction and Review:

Deuteronomy 16: 13 – 17, Matthew 7: 13 – 14

Verse 14:

Luke 4: 16 – 22, 24: 25 – 27, Mark 1: 21 – 22

Verse 15:

Galatians 6: 11, Acts 28: 21, 2nd Timothy 3: 15
John 7: 45 – 46, Matthew 7: 28 – 29, 14: 54 – 57

Verse 16:

John 6: 37 – 38, Matthew 15: 9, John 12: 49 – 50

Verses 17 – 18:

Deuteronomy 4: 29, Jeremiah 14: 14
Matthew 23: 15, Jude 4, 16
2nd Timothy 4: 3, Philippians 2: 8, 1st Peter 4: 11
1st Corinthians 10: 31

Verse 19:

John 1: 17

Verses 20 – 24:

Leviticus 12: 3, Luke 1: 59, Luke 2: 21

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John 1: 17

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