

Series: John
Title: How Sinners Know
Text: John 7: 14-18
Date: June 6, 2021
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John 7: 14: Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. 15: And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

The Jews marveled because they only saw a man. Leaders among the Jews spoke this to discredit Christ before the people. There were likely those who truly marveled as our Lord preached the gospel. But the Pharisee's only saw a man who had never been taught the scriptures in their religious schools. The leaders were disparaging Christ to the others. But this one they perceived as only a "Man" is Holy God. He is infinite Wisdom and Power. They heard the doctrine of God who gave the scriptures by his Spirit. As Wisdom Christ says in,

Proverbs 8: 14: Counsel *is* mine, and sound wisdom: I *am* understanding; I have strength. 15: By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. 16: By me princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth...

This is that one in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (Col 2:3). This is he of whom James said,

James 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

Yet, in the wisdom of God, he chose to veil his Godhead by taking the likeness of sinful flesh. Therefore, they only saw a man. Why did God choose for Christ to appear before men as only an unappealing man? Why did he chose to save by preaching which men regard as foolishness? Why did he ordain he be rejected of men and nailed to a bloody cross and the message be of accomplished redemption by Christ and him crucified? Why does God put his child in perplexing providence so that we know not what to do?

1 Corinthians 1: 19: For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

In the temple that day Christ was making foolish the wisdom of the proud Pharisees. Why?

1 Corinthians 1: 27: God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28: And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29: That no flesh should glory in his presence...to make us behold all is of God in Christ...so that he that glorieth let him glory only in the Lord.

God chose foolishness things to humble his people, to bring us down from our pride. So that when God quickens and gives spiritual understanding then we know that salvation is not of him that willeth or of him that runneth but of God that sheweth mercy (Rom 9:16). He makes us know Christ is the Power and Wisdom of God who alone saves his people from our sins. It is of God that we are in Christ Jesus and, of God, that Christ is revealed to be All unto us, so that we cease glorying in ourselves and glory only in the Lord our Salvation. Paul quoted from Isaiah 29 where God said he would destroy the wisdom of men and Paul preached the essence of that passage in 1 Corinthians

Isaiah 29: 18: And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. 19: The meek also shall increase *their* joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel...23 But when [Jacob] seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel. 24: They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

Those he saves had the same heart to despise Christ. But when he makes us know *we* are deaf then makes us hear Christ. When he makes us know *we* are blind then makes us see Christ. When he makes us see *our* works are filthy rags then makes us behold we are *the work of HIS hands*. Then we cease glorying in our flesh and glory only in the Holy One, our Redeemer. Then we preach Christ and wait on Christ to work the same in his people.

So in our text, the Son of God is serving the Father for his people as the GodMan—so who did he give the glory unto? He points them to his doctrine as being the doctrine of the Father who sent him. He did not seek his own glory but the glory of the Father who sent him.

John 7: 16: Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

He saying my doctrine is not the product of human wisdom: I was not taught it by men nor do I preach it of myself. My doctrine is his that sent me. He already declared to them over 6 months before at Capernaum—that God the Father sent him with the doctrine he preached.

THE doctrine is the gospel. It is one doctrine. The teaching is Christ is All! The doctrine is not of man. Neither made effectual by men nor learned by self-teaching. But it is God who teaches the doctrine of Christ to each one he saves.

Subject: How Sinner's Know

Proposition: How shall a sinner know if the doctrine is of God or man? How shall a sinner know if the messenger is sent of God or speaks of himself? Christ declares the answer to both questions.

John 7: 17: If any man will do his will [God's will], he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory, but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

“*If any man*”—this is true of any man—“whosoever.” Therefore if any man is not willing, it the sinner's own fault.

The will of the Father is that that those he gave to Christ come to Christ as a lowly, needy sinner, as a little child, willing to be taught of God, willing to receive Christ's word and willing to believe on Christ and follow him. Christ preached at Capernaum, declaring,

John 6: 37: All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 38: For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39: And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. 40: And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

If any will do the Father's will—if any man is willing to come to Christ—not proud but as a sinner in need of Christ to do the teaching and the saving—God shall make him know the doctrine by God's grace. Christ said to his true apostles,

Matthew 18: 2: And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, 3: And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4: Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Our Savior is not saying that sinner's naturally have a will to do the will of the Father. He told Nicodemus we must be born again of God the Holy Spirit. Christ preached at Capernaum, saying,

John 6: 44: No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 45: It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

God shall accomplish his will. He said to Christ, "thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power!" (Ps 110: 3) He makes his child willing to confess that even our willingness is of God and not of us.

Christ is simply declaring the truth. He is declaring that the Father's will is that we come a humble, empty-handed sinner, bringing nothing to God, but willing to be taught and saved by the doing and dying of Christ his Son alone. He declares that the sinner who is willing to do this shall be made to know the doctrine is of God. That sinner will know he is hearing the truth of God through a true messenger. Christ and his messenger preach God's doctrine according to God's word. He gives all the glory to God in Christ and leaves the sinner no room to boast. He is a true messenger of God and no imposter. He declares God's word and does not take the offense out of the gospel.

He declares God's word that Christ is All! He must increase, I must decrease. Christ's messenger declares Christ is the only Righteousness of his people. The true messenger is not without sin. Paul said he was the chief of sinners. He declared that his righteousness is Christ alone. There is no sufficiency in us to even preach his gospel. Our sufficiency is of God (2 Cor 2: 16-17; 3: 1-5). Paul said,

Ephesians 3:8: Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

Christ is declaring the problem is that the Pharisee's were proud, self-made, self-taught men. They were not willing to come to Christ and cast all care on him, confessing themselves destitute, helpless sinners in need of God's salvation.

John 5: 37: And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me....8: And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. 39: Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. 40: And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. 41: I receive not honour from men. 42: But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. 43: I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. 44: How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour [power, privilege] that *cometh* from God only?

Remember John 1. He spoke of the honor that comes from God only. The word is power, privilege.

John 1: 12: As many as received him, to them gave he power, [honor, privilege] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God

Christ said the proud Pharisees received honor one of another, not the honor that comes from God only. Men will bow to a man teaching his own precepts, saying that the new birth is by man's will. Men will receive the honor coming from man that the sinner must work his way to God. Men will receive the honor of another man telling them they are now a child of God because of something they did.

But Christ declares they will not give the glory to God, confessing they are helpless, unworthy, hell-deserving sinners. They will not receive the honor that comes only from God, confessing that it is God alone that elected his people unto salvation in Christ by grace, not by anything in us. They will not receive that the power to become the children of God is by Christ alone who satisfied justice for his particular people and made us righteous by suffering the cross in place of his people. Sinners will not be made children of God by the Spirit alone giving his children life and faith in Christ and preserving us in grace, apart from our will and our works. Sinners will receive honor from men making them children but not that honor of God alone who gives his child the privilege to be called true sons of God through faith in the blood and righteousness of his Son by his free and sovereign grace alone.

Now, hear what Christ declares. It is not God keeping sinners from Christ. "If any man will do the will of the Father." Is any willing? If not the fault is all the sinner's fault. If any is willing to come to Christ confessing his sin and need of Christ to save him Christ says he shall now of the doctrine that it is of God. He shall know he is hearing the truth through God's vessel.

No flesh shall glory in his presence. Come to Christ. Christ is the Light. Christ is Wisdom from whom all doctrine is known. "Of God is Christ made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and

Redemption.” (1 Cor 1: 30-31). If any man is willing to come to Christ, casting all care on Christ, giving the triune God in Christ the glory as all his Salvation, he shall know the doctrine because it is in Christ’s Light that we know the doctrine and are given assurance.

Psalms 36:9 For with thee *is* the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

John 7: 37: In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. 38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. [he shall now the doctrine whether I speak of God, because I give all glory to God]

Hosea 6: 3: Then shall we know, *if* we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter *and* former rain unto the earth.

Amen!