

John 5:41–47

41 “I do not receive honor from men.

42 But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you.

43 I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.

44 How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God?

45 Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you— Moses, in whom you trust.

46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.

47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”

“Whose Glory Do You Seek?” **John 5:41-44**

INTRO:

Why are we here? We noted before the framers of the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* helped us greatly by providing the Biblical answer to the question, “*What is the chief end of man?*” In short, why did God create us? The answer follows. “*The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.*” While the language they used is quaint, the truth is clear. The answer to the question of why we are here is all about glory. Whose glory are you seeking?

Too much of the time, we are overly concerned about the glory we receive from others and not concerned enough about the glory we need to give to God. We worry about what the neighbors think. The writers of the Shorter Catechism told us that what the neighbors think isn’t the important thing. The only thing that really matters is what God thinks. This issue entered into our Lord’s discussion with the religious leaders in **John 5**. Here in the end of the discussion, the Lord turned the conversation to the subject of glory. There are two things He said about glory.

I. The Glory He Sought (v. 41-43)

II. The Glory the Jewish Leaders Sought (v. 42-44)

I. The Glory He Sought (v. 41-43)

“I do not receive [glory] from men. But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.” (John 5:41-43)

A. The religious leaders who were interacting with the Lord Jesus might misunderstand His assertions as an attempt at self-aggrandizement. Therefore, He immediately addressed the issue of whose glory He was not seeking. ***“I do not receive [glory] from men.”***

B. Our Lord’s goal in this discourse was never to impress or even to convince these religious “somebodies.” Instead, His interest was solely in pleasing His Father and giving glory to Him. In other words, the reason the Lord Jesus did these things and taught what He taught was so God the Father would be pleased with Him.

1. In this statement of the negative, there is an inference of the positive. If Jesus did not act for the applause of men, what was His motivation in all that He did? Clearly, His motivation was the glory of God.

2. Remember in **John 4** how the disciples could not get the Lord to eat when they came back from Sychar with food? Jesus explained why in **verse 34**.

“Jesus said to them, ‘My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.’”

His satisfaction came from doing the will of the Father.

II. The Glory the Jewish Leaders Sought (v. 42-44)

“But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God?”

A. The glory that the Lord Jesus sought was not the applause of men. Rather, He set His sights on the approval of God the Father. In contrast, the Jewish leaders had a different motivation. The root of that motivation was the love in their hearts.

“But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God?”

B. This is a shocking statement. The first word in the Greek sentence is the word ***“but,”*** which means this is a strong contrast with the sentence before it. Jesus asserted, ***“I seek not man’s glory,” “[in stark contrast] the love of God is NOT***

in you.” The love of God is the reason our Lord Jesus sought to please the Father. The reason these Jewish authorities desired glory from someone other than God is because they did not have love for God.

1. I am sure this was news to these leaders. They could protest. What do you mean we do not love God? Do we not tithe even to the mint in our houses? Do we not carefully follow the Sabbath Laws? Do we not wear our phylacteries? To this Jesus responded in another place,

“But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and every herb, and neglect justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.” (Luke 11:42)

2. How can you say this, Jesus? Who are you to tell us we do not love God? Jesus replied ***“I can say it, first, because I know you!”*** When our Lord said this, He was not speaking as a man knowing another man. He knew their hearts.

3. The second reason He could say this was because of how they responded to Him whom God sent.

“I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.”

He was not saying that they should embrace everyone who comes and claims to be sent by God. He said if they loved God and His Word, they would have recognized the testimony God gave and would have embraced the Lord Jesus.

4. How about you and me? Do we have the love of God in us? John the Apostle told us there are ways in which our love for God manifests itself. In **1 John 2:3-5** we read that one way in which we can know if we love God is through our obedience to His Word.

“Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.”

Then in **1 John 4:19-21**, John wrote that our love for God is made visible in our love for our brothers and sisters in the Lord.

“We love Him because He first loved us. If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.”

How are we doing in this test?

C. Because they had no love for God, they lacked a burning desire to please Him.

“How can you believe, who receive [glory] from one another, and do not seek the [glory] that comes from the only God?”

1. These religious leaders made a pretense of trying to glorify God. Yet, in reality what they wanted was the praise of men. **Matthew 6** reads, ***“Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Verily, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you.”*** (vs. 2-4)

Seeking the glory of God often involves doing things that only God sees.

2. I also think about a tragic statement we will come to later in our study of the Gospel of John. In **John 12:43**, we read, ***“Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise [glory] of men more than the praise [glory] of God.”***

How about us? Do we value the praise of men more than the praise of God? Are we willing to do some things that the neighbors around us see as crazy because we want to please God?

D. How do we love God and seek to please Him?

1. If we are to love God, we must first know Him. We do that by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.

2. Second, we need to decide to love Him. The statement in **Deuteronomy 6:5** is a command. We decide to love God and then the love grows as we walk in fellowship with Him.

3. When this is our heart, our lives are aimed not at our own glory or the glory that others can give us. Rather, our hearts are committed to bringing glory to God as the only one deserving of that glory!

Hymn #394 *In My Life, Lord, Be Glorified*