



Metro Calvary – Roseville CA
Richard Cimino
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The Gospel of John

Confrontation at the Convocation PART 2

JOHN 7:14-36

Related Topics: Holy Convocations; Feast of Tabernacles/Booths; Contempt for Jesus; Confusion Concerning Jesus; Unbelief Concerning Jesus; Polarization because of Jesus; Open Opposition to Jesus; The Authority of Jesus; The Origin of Jesus; Jesus: A rabbi without a rabbi; Not Judging By Appearances; Ignorance; Willful Ignorance

CHAPTER 7

¹⁴About the middle of the feast

About the fourth day; it's an eight-day festival

Jesus went up into the temple and began teaching. ¹⁵The Jews therefore marveled, saying, "How is it that this man has learning, when he has never studied?"

INTERESTING — They would think essentially the same thing about the followers of Jesus.

Acts 4:13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

It wasn't just the highly educated religious leaders that marveled at the teaching of Jesus. The people marveled as well.

Matthew 7:28-29 And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, ²⁹for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

Jesus taught with authority, while the scribes and Pharisees taught from rabbinical authorities — quoting all the famous rabbis. None of them ever really talked about the scripture. They were 2 or 3 rabbis removed from the text. EXAMPLE: We have the writings of the apostle Paul. Then there are the remarks of Augustine about the writings of Paul. Then there are Luther's remarks concerning Augustine. It would be like me talking about Luther, and what Luther says about Augustine — but I never really get down to Paul — which is where everything is supposed to START — with the inspired Word of God.

HERE was their problem — These were highly educated —academically disciplined men. They looked at Jesus and said — *Well where did he go to school? Where did he get his Masters Degree? Where did he go to seminary?* The Jewish leaders knew that Jesus had not studied or been a disciple under a prominent rabbi (as Paul studied under Gamaliel, Acts 22:3). Here's how it worked for them — You would select a Rabbi to be your teacher, and then you would sit under that Rabbi and then once that Rabbi approved of you then you could become a Rabbi and get your own students. You would then quote your rabbi to your students, and so on and so on and so on. And the question is well who was Jesus' Rabbi? Who was Jesus' teacher? Where did Jesus go to school?

PLEASE DON'T MISUNDERSTAND ME — I am not knocking books. I'm quoting dead authors to you guys every week. I'm encouraging you to read the writings of these guys almost every week. But if at any point we are only reading the commentators about God's Word **instead of** God's Word — we will end up just like these guys in or text. We will end up arguing about **people's perspective** on what God has said instead of actually getting down and digging in to **what God has said**.

And that was the problem with the religious leaders in our text. Their teachers loved to speculate and teach their opinions, and **they did not want to submit to the full authority of the scriptures**. You see — it's a lot more fun to live in a world of theory and opinion than it is to live in a world that says — *God speaks, and when God speaks He speaks with authority, and when God speaks with authority He demands obedience from his people*. We don't

like that. Left to ourselves we would much rather have **conversations** around issues than deal with **proclamations** that **demand obedience**.

Have you ever met someone who had a good handle on the scriptures and when they spoke, you knew that the wisdom of God was coming out of their mouth — but then you discovered that they had never formally studied? I am in no way opposing or knocking education at all. But education does not qualify someone to speak for God. Knowledge of the Scriptures — love of God — demonstration of the power of the Holy Spirit in their life — those are the things that qualify someone to speak for God. It's issues of **character** and **submission** to God — **love** for his Word and **devotion** to studying.

¹⁶So Jesus answered them, “My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me.

Jesus doesn't point to His credentials, but to His doctrine. It is as if He says, "I don't have a seminary degree, but judge Me by My doctrine." If the Jewish leaders listened carefully to the doctrine of Jesus, they would know that it was all rooted in the Old Testament Scriptures, and that it was from God.

¹⁷If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority.

Back in **John 6:29** we learned that the *work of God* — the will of God for man — is to believe in Jesus.

HUGE — Jesus is saying that you cannot understand His teaching from the outside. His teaching is not like some philosophy that you analyze before you buy into it. We are prone to say — *"I want to discuss and investigate some more — And when I know understand everything — then I will act — then I'll commit — then I'll submit.*

Jesus says — *NO* — *you have it backwards. You begin in faith — You love me — you follow me — you do what I say — And then you will realize that everything I have spoken is true.*

THE SAME IS TRUE for those who have come to faith in Jesus. **Truth be told** — Most of us know more than we obey. Our knowledge usually outweighs our obedience.

It is not a matter of — *“Some of this stuff is HARD — Let me unravel these mysteries and then I’ll TRUST God — then I’ll OBEY God.* Instead — The hard things of Scripture will become plain when we honestly live up to the light we presently possess. If we humbly use what little knowledge we have, God will give more.

“If your eye be single, your whole body shall be full of light.” (Matt. 6:22.)

¹⁸The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory,

Some people love to speculate. *Well here’s my opinion — Here’s all the books I’ve read — Here’s dozens of authors I can quote — Here’s how smart I am — Here’s my spin on the whole deal.*

JESUS said — *That person is in it for their own glory.*

EXAMPLE: One of the leading figures in the Emergent Church movement once said this about preaching about the sin of homosexuality — *Perhaps we need a five-year moratorium on making pronouncements. In the meantime, we’ll practice prayerful Christian dialogue, listening respectfully, disagreeing agreeably. When decisions need to be made, they’ll be admittedly provisional. We’ll keep our ears attuned to scholars in biblical studies, theology, ethics, psychology, genetics, sociology, and related fields. Then in five years, if we have clarity, we’ll speak; if not, we’ll set another five years for ongoing reflection. After all, many important issues in church history took centuries to figure out. Maybe this moratorium would help us resist the “winds of doctrine” blowing furiously from the left and right, so we can patiently wait for the wind of the Spirit to set our course.*

The problem is, that God has already spoken authoritatively on the subject. This guy **disregards** the authority of God. Maybe he wants to be the man who gets the credit for helping gays feel better about Christianity and preachers. I don’t know — what we do know is that because he has taught something different from the plain teaching of Scripture — he is doing it for his own glory.

But Jesus said — the person who works for the honor of the One who sent Jesus is a man of truth.

Here's what God says

Here's what God wants.

It's about God.

You're doing it for God's honor.

but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood. ¹⁹Has not Moses given you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why do you seek to kill me?"

The Jewish leaders were attempting to *kill Jesus*. This goes all the way back to **John 5** — There Jesus healed a man at the Pool of Bethesda, who had been an invalid for 38 years.

***John 5:16-18** And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. ¹⁷But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working." ¹⁸This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.*

Jesus says — *You know, you guys really pride yourself on being good theologians and scholars. You sit around and argue about the definition of what it means to WORK on the Sabbath. BUT HEY — Didn't Moses say something real simple like **do not murder?** Let's not argue about all of the opinions of all of your commentators — and My lack of education. Let's just take something very simple. The Bible says not to murder anybody and you're trying to kill me.*

They want to argue about their commentators and yet they don't understand that they're not allowed to murder people.

²⁰The crowd answered, "You have a demon! Who is seeking to kill you?" ²¹Jesus answered them, "I did one deed, and you

all marvel at it. ²²Moses gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers),

Circumcision predates the Law. It was originally prescribed by God as the outward sign of God's covenant with Abraham and his descendants.

and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. ²³If on the Sabbath a man receives circumcision, so that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because on the Sabbath I made a man's whole body well?

Here's His argument — It was the law that a baby boy should be circumcised on the eighth day after his birth.

Leviticus 12:3 "And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised."

Obviously that day would often fall on a Sabbath. So Jesus says — *You circumcise a boy if the eighth day falls on a Sabbath the eighth day. I heal a man who has been a cripple for 38 years on the Sabbath. We are BOTH doing work on the Sabbath. How is it that you're not in sin, but I am?*

²⁴Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment."

You can't determine the motive, the intent and the affections of someone's soul by looking at outward appearances.

A good portion of modern Christianity has created it's own sub-culture. To be a Christian means you also take on certain cultural forms. Every youth group has a standard issue haircut. If you're a Christian you're supposed to listen to certain music and you're supposed to have a fish on your car — you're supposed to wear certain t-shirts. A sub-culture! If someone comes along and looks completely differently there is in some people and some churches an immediate response to judge and to say — you can't love God and look like that!

One of the servers at Dos Coyotes was worried that if she brought her boyfriend (a tattoo artist) that he might not be welcomed. God forbid that

anyone pierced or tatted up would come into Metro and they get the cold shoulder because of how they look!

Over the years people have asked me why I didn't have a fish on my car. They said well it doesn't look like you're a pastor if you don't have a fish on your car. LISTEN — if I had a fish on my car — and you saw the way I drove — it still wouldn't look like I was a pastor. That's why I don't have a fish on my car. The last thing you want is your pastor going by giving someone the stink eye for cutting him off — with a fish on the back of his car. And so I'm fish-less!

Stop judging by outward appearances.

The same thing happened to Jesus — They looked at Jesus and said, *Hmm, He doesn't **look** like he's a real good Rabbi. Someone should educate him.* Well, He was a good Rabbi. In fact He was God. God just didn't have the right cultural trappings to be accepted by them.

²⁵Some of the people of Jerusalem therefore said, “Is not this the man whom they seek to kill? ²⁶And here he is, speaking openly, and they say nothing to him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Christ? ²⁷But we know where this man comes from, and when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from.”

There were two things at play here: Ignorance and Willful Ignorance.

IGNORANCE — Does the Bible say that *no one will know where the Messiah comes from?* No. In fact — the prophet Micah made this declaration about the coming of the Messiah —

***Micah 5:2** But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.*

***Matthew 2:3-6** When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: ⁶ “ ‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of*

Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.’ ”

John 7:40-42 *When they heard these words, some of the people said, “This really is the Prophet.” ⁴¹Others said, “This is the Christ.” But some said, “Is the Christ to come from Galilee? ⁴²Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the offspring of David, and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David was?”*

Many of these people were Biblically illiterate and they leaned on what the rabbis and commentators had to say — rather than searching the Scriptures.

Acts 17:10-11 *The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.*

WILLFUL IGNORANCE — It is absurd to suppose that everyone was ignorant — or that everyone had forgotten this prophecy. But apparently they found it *inconvenient* to remember it on this occasion.

QUOTE: William Barclay — *Men's memories are often sadly dependent on their wills.*

²⁸So Jesus proclaimed, as he taught in the temple, “You know me, and you know where I come from?”

This first sentence of Jesus' reply may well have been sarcastic. They *thought* they knew where He was from, but they were unaware of His heavenly origin.

It might also mean that it was a known fact that He was born in Bethlehem! A fact of which some were ignorant and others willingly ignorant.

But I have not come of my own accord. He who sent me is true, and him you do not know. ²⁹I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me.”

Here's the bottom line. Jesus says — *You don't understand what I'm talking about because I am sent by God the Father and you don't know him. At this they tried to seize him, they want to arrest him.*

³⁰So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come. ³¹Yet many of the people believed in him. They said, “When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done?” ³²The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest him. ³³Jesus then said, “I will be with you a little longer, and then I am going to him who sent me. ³⁴You will seek me and you will not find me. Where I am you cannot come.” ³⁵The Jews said to one another, “Where does this man intend to go that we will not find him? Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? ³⁶What does he mean by saying, ‘You will seek me and you will not find me,’ and, ‘Where I am you cannot come?’”

Jesus is talking about his death, burial, resurrection and ascension back into Heaven.

NEXT WEEK —

³⁷On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. ³⁸Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” ³⁹Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.