

THE WILL OF GOD
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John 7:1-18

1. At this point Jesus was entering into the final phase of His earthly ministry.
2. His teaching was becoming increasingly pointed, and, "As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore." John 6:66
3. The hostility of the Jewish leaders was also growing, and Jesus was now a marked man.
NOTE: See John 7:1, 13, and 25.
4. Jesus had previously left Judea to avoid conflict, but now He was about to leave Galilee and return to Judea and Jerusalem.
5. He chose to coincide His return with the Feast of Booths, which meant that many other Jews would be traveling to Jerusalem as well.
6. The Feast of Booths commemorated the Exodus from Egypt and the journey to the Promised Land. Leviticus 23:39-44
"On exactly the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the crops of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the Lord for seven days, with a rest on the first day and a rest on the eighth day. 40 'Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days. 41 'You shall thus celebrate it as a feast to the Lord for seven days in the year. It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations; you shall celebrate it in the seventh month. 42 'You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths, 43 so that your generations may know that I had the sons of Israel live in booths when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.'" 44 So Moses declared to the sons of Israel the appointed times of the Lord.
7. Over the next several weeks we will be looking at the events recorded in John 7:1-10:21.
8. In the passage we are looking at today we see people struggling to understand and comprehend Jesus and what He was all about.

I. Human wisdom.

- A. The first thing we see is a confrontation between Jesus and his brothers.
- B. After Jesus' miraculous birth Mary and Joseph had quite a few children. Matt 13:53-58
When Jesus had finished these parables, He departed from there. 54 He came to His hometown and began teaching them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers? 55 "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 "And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" 57 And they took offense at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household." 58 And He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.
- C. Among those children were four brothers.
 1. They told Jesus to go to Jerusalem so that His followers there might see His works as well as those in Galilee.
 2. From their perspective Jesus' methodology did not make sense.
 - a. No one who wants to impact people does things in secret.

- b. Those who want to impact others go where the people are, and the people were currently going to Jerusalem.
- 3. At this point Jesus' siblings did not take Him seriously.
- D. Jesus pointed out:
 - 1. That His time had not yet come, but they could come and go as they pleased.
 - 2. That the world could not hate them as it did Him because they were not a threat to the culture.
 - 3. That it was not the time for Him to go up openly to the feast.

II. Human perplexity.

- A. Jesus' intent becomes clear in verse 10.
- NOTE: Timing matters, and Jesus knew exactly how and when to do and say the things that He did and said.
- B. He came to a city that was in turmoil.
- C. Everyone was wondering where He was.
- D. The people had conflicting ideas about Him.
- E. No one was openly identifying with Him because they feared the Jewish leadership

III. Human perspective.

- A. When the time was right Jesus went up into the Temple and began to teach.
- B. Those who heard Him marveled because, even though Jesus had not been formally educated, He spoke as one who had been.
 - 1. He had the accent and the speech patterns of an educated man.
 - 2. His grasp of idea, and His ability to communicate spoke of formal training.
- C. Human beings have a tendency to focus on a person's education and credentials.
- D. People had the same problem related to the Apostles. Acts 4:13-15
Now as they (the Jewish leaders) observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus. 14 And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply.
- E. Those who truly know and follow Jesus will be a mystery to those who do not.

IV. Divine reality.

- A. Jesus identified the problems that His brothers, the Jewish leaders, and the people had.
- B. They could not understand Him or comprehend His teaching because:
 - 1. He and His teaching were from God, and they neither knew nor understood God.
 - 2. He came to do God's will, and they had their own agenda.
 - 3. He came to glorify God, and they were interested in their own glory.
- C. There are several important truths here.
 - 1. We need to embrace God and His teaching.
 - 2. Those who are willing, and who actually do the will of God, are the ones to whom God will grant understanding.
 - 3. Those who are concerned about their own glory and well-being cannot be trusted.

APPLICATION

- 1. We often struggle and agonize over knowing the will of God, when many things would become plain if we would just do what we already know we ought to be doing.
- 2. Those who are of God, who are actively seeking to live out the will of God, and who seek God's glory will find themselves to be out of step with the world and most of the church.
- 3. The more like Jesus we become, the more we will be misunderstood by many others.