

FOLLOWING THE STEPS OF JESUS SPEAKING OUT WHEN OTHERS TRY TO SILENCE YOU

OPEN: Timing is critical, Jesus would not be intimidated by His “half-brothers” who said:

- “If you are who you claim to be then don’t hang out in the back woods of Galilee, go to the big city, Jerusalem, so everyone can see your miracles.”

❖ In our passage today, we see different opinions as to who the people thought Jesus was...

- He is a good man (7:12)

- He is a fraud (deceiver) (7:12)

- He is demon possessed (7:20)

- He is the Messiah (7:26, 41)

- He is the Prophet (7:40)

- The religious leaders (Pharisees and Sadducees) saw Him as a political threat and wanted to arrest Him, even kill Him. (7:1, 20, 44).

❖ We must decide who Jesus is...this decision is important as it has eternal consequences.

- C.S. Lewis: “*You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that option open to us. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a manman.*”

- Jesus said: "...unless you believe that I AM who I claim to be, you will die in your sins (John 8:24).

❖ Jesus goes to Jerusalem, attends the festival but keeps a low profile at first.

❖ Read John 7:10-24

1) **TEMPLE TALK.** (PRO PRESENTER SLIDE BULLETIN OUTLINE)

- Jesus would leave Galilee for the last time.
- Upon arriving He blends in with the crowd which was huge due to the festival. (Jewish men who lived within 15 miles of Jerusalem were required to attend).
- Jewish leaders were looking for Him and asking about Him...
 - ✓ People in the crowd were whispering as to what they thought about Him but "no one had the courage to speak favorably about Him in public..." (vs. 13); they feared the Jewish leaders.
 - Jesus said: "everyone who acknowledges me publicly here on earth, I will also acknowledge before my Father in Heaven. (Matthew 10:32)

? When is the last time you displayed some courage and spoke about Christ in public?

❖ Mid-week, half-way through the festival (which lasted 7 days) Jesus goes to the Temple and teaches (vs. 14).

- The Temple and courtyard was large...at different times of the day, Rabbis would stand at different pillars and teach. People would gather around and listen to their favorite instructors.
 - ✓ Imagine Chuck Swindoll, Charles Stanley, David Jeremiah, John MacArthur and Ralph Schneck speaking at the various locations (you would come listen to me, wouldn't you??) ☺
- The people were surprised...surprised He was there...surprised by His teaching...the village boy from Nazareth spoke with such skill and

clarity...why, He hasn't been to seminary nor has He credentials from some other famous Rabbi.

- ✓ You can be sure of the intellectual snobbery that existed with the Sadducees and Pharisees.
- ❖ Education is a good thing but don't let it ruin you...study, ask the Holy Spirit for help and teach God's Word from your heart, not just your head.
 - ✓ We can learn some things from a book but nothing can replace the experiences learned from walking with God daily.
 - Jesus clarifies that His message is not His own but comes from God who sent Him. (vs. 16)
 - If you want to know the Word of God, you must be willing to do the will of God. (vs. 17)
 - ✓ Biblical discernment hinges on your obedience to the author of this book.
 - ✓ Your ability to understand God's Word is directly related to your availability to do God's will.
 - ✓ When you do what you know, God will make known to you what you do not know...obedience opens new doors of learning.
 - (vs. 18) seek not your own glory but honor the One who sent you.
 - ✓ Now that He had their attention...He addresses an issue that angered the religious leaders:
 - Moses gave you the law...none of you obey it...proof = you want to kill me (violating commandment #6)
 - I heal a man on the Sabbath and you get upset, yet you circumcise a little boy on the 8th day even if it is the Sabbath.
 - The rule of circumcision took priority over the law of the Sabbath...if they could do this, could Jesus not heal a man who had been lame for 38 years on the Sabbath?

❖ Too bad they did not realize, the law cannot save them, it condemns them.

✓ Illustration: The end of the 12th century, Scotland's king was being chased by English soldiers. They were almost upon him and he realized he was not making the speed he should, he left the path and darted through the thick forest, hoping to escape. King Robert ran mile after mile. But then, just as he was telling himself that perhaps he had escaped the vengeance of King Edward, he heard the sound of his own blood hounds. They were tracking him through the woods and though they were supposed to protect him they were about to betray him. Desperate and exhausted, he stumbled upon a clear mountain stream several feet deep. At once, he plunged in allowing it to sweep him several miles downstream. He came out on the other side of the forest, where he hid and listened as the blood hounds came barking at the water's edge. They were not able to go any further. The scent was gone. Robert had escaped.

- The law is supposed to do us good but in the end, it betrays us. People think their church will save them, their work, morality, ethics... One day, the "blood hounds will hunt you down. You need to plunge into the stream of grace where sins scent is washed away forever."

Read John 7:25-36

2) **MESSIAH** WHISPERINGS. *(PRO PRESENTER SLIDE BULLETIN OUTLINE)*

- The people are a bit confused...have the leaders changed their mind...Jesus is speaking in public...does this suggest they believe He is Messiah?
 - ✓ That doesn't make sense...the Messiah is going to suddenly appear.

? We have lots of misconceptions, don't we? The songs we will sing in Heaven, the things we will do, how the end times will play out.

- Jesus helps them out...you know where I am from...but you don't know the One who sent me...I know Him.
 - ✓ The leaders wanted to arrest Him but they could not.
 - ✓ He was "untouchable." **His time had not come (vs. 30)**

- ✓ Many in the crowd believed in Him...believed He was Messiah...just check out all the miracles.
- ✓ The Pharisees heard the whispers and send Temple guards to arrest Him.
- Jesus tells them...I will not be here much longer (only 6 months remain).
- ✓ I'm returning to the One who sent me...you'll not be able to find me and you cannot go where I am going.
- ✓ The Jewish leaders are puzzled, baffled, don't understand.

Read John 7:37-50

3) **JESUS SHOUTS.** *(PRO PRESENTER SLIDE BULLETIN OUTLINE)*

- Notice the time...it's the last day of the festival...the climax.
 - ✓ Water was a significant part of the Festival.
 - ✓ Each day the Priest would take a golden pitcher and parade through the streets of Jerusalem until he reached the pool of Siloam.
 - ✓ He would fill the pitcher with water, walk back through the "water gate" with the people following and chanting **Isaiah 12:3 (NLT) – With joy you will drink deeply from the fountain of Salvation!**
 - ✓ The water would then be carried to the Temple and poured on the altar.
 - ✓ This was a symbol of water gushing from the rock in the wilderness that gave life to the Israelites.
 - ✓ On the last day of the feast (**vs. 37**) the people would gather their palm branches, from which they had constructed their shelters.
 - ✓ They would parade through the street as the priest went to get water.
 - ✓ When they reached the Temple, they would march around the altar seven times and then pour the water out.
 - ✓ They would then chant... **"O bring now then salvation."**

- At that very moment, Jesus shouts to the crowd: “Anyone who is thirsty may come to me! Anyone who believes in me may come and drink! Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.”

- ✓ Jesus was saying, God is answering your prayer. He is bringing your salvation.

- ✓ He is offering the refreshing water of the Holy Spirit...the water of eternal life.

- ✓ When you accept Christ as your Savior, you are indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

❖ Three responses:

a) Those who agreed.

- ✓ This is the Prophet we’ve been expecting, He is Messiah (vs. 40 & 41).

b) Some argued.

- ✓ Can’t be! Will Messiah come from Galilee? (vs. 41)

c) The leaders wanted to arrest Him.

- ✓ They question the Temple guards...why didn’t you bring Him in? (vs. 45)

- ✓ They are ticked and call the people foolish and ignorant.

- ✓ And then one of your own spoke up...Nicodemus, he cautions them and they blast him!

CLOSE: What about you, what do you believe? What is your response?

- ✓ No middle of the road...play it safe choice.

- ✓ He is either liar, lunatic or Lord!

- ✓ Your decision has eternal consequences, choose wisely.

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Message Notes
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