

**Seeing the Real Jesus | John 7:1-24**  
**That You May Believe: The Gospel of John**  
**Southern Hills Baptist Church**  
**January 8, 2017**

**WELCOME**

Welcome! Here we are again, opening God's Word. We do it every week as a church family. It doesn't grow old with me. I love this time every week. Are you ready to hear from God? Open up to John 7 and we will consider His Word together in just a moment.

**INTRODUCTION – WHO IS JESUS?**

Let me open up tonight by asking you the most important question you will ever answer. Who is Jesus? That is a simple question, yet is there a more important question? This is a question I trust you have answered and settled in your heart.

**Fuel for Worship**

Even with that being true for most, if not all of you, it is a question that we do well to come back to and consider with regularity for a couple of reasons. One, the answer to that question is the fuel for our worship.

- We worship because Jesus is God become man.
- We worship because Jesus is our righteousness.
- We worship because Jesus is our redeemer.

We could go on and on, right?

**Redefining Jesus**

Another important reason for us to revisit this question with regularity is that the culture we live in is constantly trying to redefine Jesus for us. How is Jesus depicted in popular culture today?

- Is it a **faithful representation** of how He is **divinely revealed** in the Scriptures?
- Does the popular depiction of Jesus capture the **complexity and nuance of who He is**?
- Does the popular description of Jesus acknowledge **all that He said and did or just the convenient angles**?

I think we know the answers to these questions, right? The image, the thought, of who Jesus is according to popular culture is **nothing more than a cheap, 2-dimensional caricature, propped up to serve selfish purposes**. I am speaking generically now. Not everyone gets Jesus wrong of course, but so many do, most do for that matter. And this caricature is thrown in front of us regularly. It is so common to hear people boil Jesus down to just one of His characteristics...

- Jesus is love
- Jesus forgives
- Jesus cared for the poor

**Recreating a Safe Jesus for Your Comfort**

These statements are true, but if that is all you know of Jesus, if you have boiled Jesus down to just one of these statements, you don't really know Jesus. Generally, **when you have boiled Jesus down**

**to just one of His characteristics or attributes you are working to recreate Jesus in a safe way or possible to even recreate Him into who you want Him to be.**

Therefore, if we are going to know Jesus we have to be in God's Word, God's revelation, to come and see who Jesus really is, **not who we simply want Him to be.**

### **Passage Preview**

In our passage tonight we get a glimpse of a couple of groups who are looking at Jesus in a very surface-level way. They are looking at one aspect of who He is so they can find what they want to find, rather than finding who He truly is. Thankfully, Jesus stops these people cold in their tracks and tells us who He really is and how we can know Him for who He is more fully.

### **Opening Prayer**

Let me open up our time tonight with a word of prayer...

Dear Father, who is in Heaven,  
Hallowed be your name. Hallow your name in our hearts tonight. Give us hearts that yearn for you, for who you truly are as expressed through Jesus. May we never be satisfied with cheap, knock-off versions of Jesus that only point us back to ourselves. Draw us to greater joy and satisfaction in you.  
We pray these things in the name of our Redeemer, Jesus.  
Amen.

### **CONTEXT**

So tonight we are picking up in John 7. We have mentioned this in the past, but the Gospel of John is different from the other 3 Gospels in that John writes less like a historian and more like someone writing memoirs. John is more interested in showing you the person of Jesus through key moments in His life. Thus as we transition from John 6 to John 7 most scholars agree that at least 6 months has passed.

### **OUR TEXT**

Let's go ahead and pick up our passage with that context in mind...

#### **John 7:1-24**

[1] After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He would not go about in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him. [2] Now the Jews' Feast of Booths was at hand. [3] So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing. [4] For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world." [5] For not even his brothers believed in him. [6] Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. [7] The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil. [8] You go up to the feast. I am not going up to this feast, for my time has not yet fully come." [9] After saying this, he remained in Galilee.

[10] But after his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up, not publicly but in private. [11] The Jews were looking for him at the feast, and saying, "Where is he?" [12] And

there was much muttering about him among the people. While some said, "He is a good man," others said, "No, he is leading the people astray." [13] Yet for fear of the Jews no one spoke openly of him.

[14] About the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and began teaching. [15] The Jews therefore marveled, saying, "How is it that this man has learning, when he has never studied?" [16] So Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. [17] If 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. [18] The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood. [19] Has not Moses given you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why do you seek to kill me?" [20] The crowd answered, "You have a demon! Who is seeking to kill you?" [21] Jesus answered them, "I did one work, and you all marvel at it. [22] Moses gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. [23] If 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? [24] Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment."

### **That You May Believe**

I believe that there are two big truths from this passage that John intends for us to walk away with. Remember, the theme of John's Gospel, the goal He has in recording these moments in Jesus' life, is that we would believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God come to seek and save the lost. That is John's goal, his hope.

### **Road Map**

As John chases that goal he shows us a couple examples of unbelief that we need to be careful of. One is covert and subtle and the other is clear and loud. As we will see, there are many who believe they have faith in Jesus, but in reality have a false faith. John then clarifies for us what truth faith is all about and through the teaching of Jesus, shows us how we can know Jesus more fully.

## **UNBELIEF: SEEING JESUS FOR WHO YOU WANT HIM TO BE**

As we pick up in John 7, we are confronted with two examples of unbelief. The first is seen with Jesus' brothers.

### **Example 1 of Unbelief: Jesus' Brothers**

#### **Feast of Booths**

Jesus is in Galilee, avoiding Judea as the Jews there were seeking to kill Him. The Feast of Booths or the Feast of Tabernacles was upcoming. This was a fascinating time of celebration in Jewish culture. Jews from all over the world would journey back to Jerusalem and set up little booths, little tent-like constructions, colorfully decorated with fruit and produce and live in those booths for a week. This was all done in an effort to remember the deliverance they, as a nation, had experienced from their wandering in the wilderness. It was a time to remember God's faithfulness as He had come and tabernacled in their midst as they traveled. Hear God's command back in Leviticus...

#### **Leviticus 23:42-43**

[42] You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All native Israelites shall dwell in booths, [43] that your generations may know that I made the people of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God."

So all the Jews would live in these tents, even those who lived in Jerusalem would go and set up these tents on the roofs of their homes and live there for a week. It was a joyous time that came at the end of the harvest season. It was a very appropriate time, to be sure, to stop and remember God's faithfulness, deliverance, and provision.

### **Feast: Recommended Platform**

Knowing the many, many people who would be gathering in Jerusalem, Jesus' brothers suggested to Jesus that He should go to Jerusalem Himself and use this as an opportunity to go and display His miracles on one of, if not the, biggest stage in Jewish culture. Their logic and marketing advice is solid. If you want people to know you, if you want to make an impact, go to the people and where better to do this, but at Jerusalem over the feast of the booths?

### **Jesus' Agenda was Different**

While the marketing geniuses on Madison Ave. would have agreed with this advice, Jesus didn't. You see, Jesus had a different agenda for His life than anyone else. He was never going to Jerusalem to ascend to power, but to ascend on a cross. He wasn't going to achieve new heights of power, He was going to die. So Jesus' response to His brothers is that His time had not yet come.

### **They Didn't Believe in Jesus**

The second issue that we need to take note of in this interaction is what John tells us about Jesus' brothers. They were not believers in Jesus. The way John discloses this is fascinating. He records the advice of Jesus' brothers, where they tell Jesus to go to Jerusalem and perform His miraculous works that He may gain greater notoriety and a larger following. Then right after this seemingly good advice, John says, "For not even His brothers believed in Him."

### **Curious Thing – My Misconception**

**John sets up this disclosure as an explanation for their advice. Why did they give this advice? "For," because they didn't believe in Jesus.** This is a curious thing. In the past I had read this passage and believed it was communicating that Jesus' brothers were goading Him to go and fall on His face in front of the masses. Almost as if, because they didn't believe in Him they wanted to put Him in His place by seeing Him publically humiliated.

### **Brothers – Seen Miracles, Cared for Jesus**

As I have had time to think about this further I don't think that is the case. Jesus' brothers had been around Him in the midst of His ministry. **They had seen miracles worked by Him. Both Mary and Joseph believed in Jesus.** They knew Him to be the Son of God. God had told them miraculously. So as these miracles are being performed Mary and Joseph were certainly affirming, which had to be influential to these brothers. Also, people were out to kill Jesus. **Surely, they wouldn't have wanted to see their eldest brother die.** Sure, maybe they were annoyed with how perfect He always was, but they knew He was innocent, that He loved them purely. I have a hard time imagining they would have desired to see Him walk towards a very real danger. We see in other passages where Jesus' brothers and family shown concern for His wellbeing (Mark 3:21).

### **How Do We Reconcile?**

So how do we reconcile the fact that Jesus' brothers are giving Him this advice to go and perform these miracles to gain a following and a name with the fact that they don't believe in Him?

### **Judge Rightly**

I believe the answer is that Jesus brothers and saw Him for who they wanted Him to be. I think verse 24 serves as a summation of the problem here.

### **John 7:24**

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

Jesus' call to the Jewish crowds was to **stop judging by the surface alone and to go deeper**. Jesus' brothers had seen the miracles. They knew there was something special about Jesus. I believe they wanted Jesus to go to Jerusalem and make a statement, to make a name for Himself.

### **Liberate? Ride Coattails?**

Maybe they wanted to see Jesus come and liberate Israel from Roman oppression, as many Jews expected of the Messiah. Maybe they wanted someone's coattails they could ride to power, wealth, fame, and an easy life. Had Jesus gone into Jerusalem performing miracle after miracle He could have easily wowed and won over the crowds, right? **I don't know what Jesus' brothers wanted. What I do know is that they didn't see Jesus for who He was, they saw Him for who they wanted Him to be.**

### **Shallow Understanding**

They had seen His miracles. They had seen His power. Thus they wanted Him to go and perform miracles in Jerusalem for the crowds. **This is a shallow understanding of Jesus though. Jesus had come for matters far deeper, far more significant. He had come for a greater miracle.** All of His other miracles He had performed, in comparison, were nothing to that which He had come to accomplish through His death.

### **Believed in What They Wanted Him to Be**

Again, the problem is that Jesus' brothers believed in Jesus for who they wanted Him to be, not for who He really was. **They wanted a miracle-worker, they wanted a celebrity, they wanted a brother with power and cachet. But, what is this? It is a false faith. John calls it unbelief.** To believe in a shallow, 2-dimensional, boiled-down, caricature of Jesus is to not believe in Jesus at all according to John.

### **Common in Cultural Christianity**

Can I tell you... this is what exists within so many who call themselves Christians here in America. **There are so many people who believe in a safe, edited, curated Jesus who has been stripped down to non-offensive teachings. The hard things that Jesus said about the cost of discipleship and holiness are ignored or explained away so that Jesus can be there to affirm you.**

### **Backwards and Ugly**

What a backwards, ugly thing! **People strip Jesus of His identity to find affirmation, when it is we who should be affirming Him** for every aspect of who He is, the King of kings, Lord of lords, Creator, Redeemer.

### **Seeing Idolatry**

Do you see the idolatry in this? **When we reshape Jesus to fit our mold, when we reimagine Jesus to suit us or affirm us, Jesus is here for us, we are worshipping ourselves. Jesus becomes a tool for own self-exultation.** What a sick, twisted thought.

### **Camouflaged**

The dangerous thing with this is that **it camouflages itself really well as Christianity**. People who worship this curated caricature of Jesus will often sound like true Christ followers. They will tell you that they love Jesus, that they live for Jesus, that they want others to know of Jesus. **The problem is that they are not talking about the same Jesus the Bible is talking about.** They are talking about a Jesus they have recreated in their own image.

### **Don't Really Believe**

John tells us that those who have this reductionist view of Jesus don't truly believe in Jesus.

### **Example 2 of Unbelief: The Jewish Crowds**

There is yet another example of unbelief that John wants to show us in this passage and we see it in the Jewish crowds Jesus talks to in Jerusalem. Their unbelief was more direct and obvious, but it stemmed from the same root as the unbelief of the Jewish brothers.

### **Addresses Contention**

Jesus is now in Jerusalem. He went up privately and not as the brothers suggested, but He has begun teaching. As Jesus talks to this crowd He addresses a source of great contention that the crowd had against Jesus that goes back to John 5. As you will recall Jesus healed a disabled man, a man who was unable to walk. Normally, this wouldn't have been an issue of controversy, but Jesus performed this miracle on the Sabbath when no work was to be done.

### **Befuddling: Missing the Miraculous for the Mundane**

It is befuddling, but the Jewish leaders catch wind of what Jesus did and they completely overlook the fact that a man who hadn't been able to walk in 38 years is now walking and carrying the mat he used to sit on, they overlook this and are outraged over the fact that Jesus would have done this work on the Sabbath. They find Jesus and confront Him. Jesus replies that His Father is at work and He is as well. The Jews are even more outraged as Jesus has just made a claim to deity. It was this interaction that led to people actively looking for opportunities to kill Jesus.

### **Argument: Greater to Lesser**

So as Jesus stands before this crowd, which undoubtedly had some of the very leaders who were aware of the plot to kill Jesus or who were apart of the plot to kill Him, Jesus addresses the situation. He opens by asking why these leaders want to kill Him. He acknowledges their concern about the Sabbath, but points out that exceptions are made for work on the Sabbath. Male babies were circumcised on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of their life and if that fell on the Sabbath the circumcision was not delayed, it still took place. An exception was made. Jesus is asking, if an exception can be made for circumcision of course it could be made for the miraculous healing of a disabled man.

### **Perfecting Rite**

Circumcision in Jewish culture was viewed as a perfecting rite. One member of the body was perfected. This perfecting act was so important exceptions were made for its work on the Sabbath. Jesus argues, if that is the case when one member is perfected or righted, why would we exclude a single act that would perfect or right the full body of a man? Jesus is showing Himself to not have broken the law.

### **Hardnosed and Stuck**

Here is the deal, the Jews had come up with this exception clause for circumcision on the Sabbath as it was a common situation that had to be addressed. There were not too many policies in place for the healing of a disabled man on the Sabbath, that wasn't a regular event, it was a miracle. So when

the unexpected came, the Jews became hardnosed with the law. They didn't take time to understand the situation and think through it, they clung to their basic understanding.

### **Don't Judge at the Surface**

This is why Jesus' criticism of the Jews who were outraged over His healing work was to stop judging Him and the situation at the surface level and to judge rightly, to see the situation for what it was and to see Jesus for who He is.

### **Missing Greatness over the Granular**

The Jews were too caught up in the law to see the greater miracle that was being worked in front of them. **Jesus healed a disabled man, rolling back the curse of sin upon creation in one small area to preview the greater work He had come to do, and these Jews could only think about the law.** How sad. **You see, the law had become their identity. They found meaning and pride in the law. It gave them control over their sense of self-worth. The law was a means to their self-exaltation.**

Jesus threatened that, thus they sought to kill Him.

### **Parallel: Pursuing Self**

Do you see the parallel between the brothers and the Jewish crowd? **They were both pursuing self, the brothers though the miracles of Jesus, and the Jews through the law of Moses,** but it was never about the glory of God, it was never about His Son, Jesus.

### **Application**

So the question I will come back to is this, Who is Jesus?

- To Jesus' brothers Jesus was a miracle worker, a power to be harnessed, a ride to be taken, a meal ticket to be cashed.
- To the Jewish leaders Jesus was a threat to the power, pride, and meaning they have found in the law.

### **Seeing What They Wanted to See**

The unbelief of Jesus' brothers was less obvious, it wasn't as easy to see, but the basic problem they had was that they saw Jesus for who they wanted Him to be. The problem was the same for the Jewish leaders. Jesus threatened the way of life they sinfully loved, so it was easier to make Him a threat.

### **Drifting Away From Jesus**

I think for most of us here tonight, we need to be careful that we don't fall into the trap that Jesus' brothers fell into. **We need to be careful that we don't reduce Jesus down to one or two characteristics that we prefer or enjoy the most so that we can be affirmed.** This sounds like an awful thing, and that is because it is, but it can happen slowly and without malicious intent. We can slowly drift there and this happens **when we find ourselves untethered from the Word of God.** If you have a steady and regular diet of the Word of God you protect yourself from this.

### **Expository Preaching**

This is yet another reason why we walk through the books of the Bible verse by verse. We are not interested in just studying and considering the passage we prefer the most. We want the whole counsel of God, we want to understand all of the nuance and complexity of Jesus. So what do we do?

We walk through the entire book of John and one day, by the mercy of God, we will walk through Matthew, Mark, and Luke as well.

Christian, be in God's Word so that you can see Jesus for who He has revealed Himself to be and not just who we want Him to be.

### **BELIEF: SEEING JESUS FOR WHO HE HAS REVEALED HIMSELF TO BE**

This takes us to the last portion of our passage tonight, where Jesus teaches us what we should believe about Him. We find a summary of this in verse 24, where Jesus said,

#### **John 7:24**

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

### **What is the Right Judgment of Jesus?**

So we are to judge Jesus rightly and not by a few externals. **What is the right judgment we need to have of Jesus?** That is a big question. We can't have a simplistic view of Jesus. We need to do our best to understand all that the Scripture has revealed about Him, but Jesus gives us one thing for us to walk away with from this passage. Let me reread the last paragraph of our passage once more so it is fresh on our minds...

#### **John 7:14-24**

[14] About the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and began teaching. [15] The Jews therefore marveled, saying, "How is it that this man has learning, when he has never studied?" [16] So Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. [17] If 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. [18] The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood. [19] Has not Moses given you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why do you seek to kill me?" [20] The crowd answered, "You have a demon! Who is seeking to kill you?" [21] Jesus answered them, "I did one work, and you all marvel at it. [22] Moses gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. [23] If 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? [24] Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment."

### **Went Privately**

So Jesus had told His brothers that He wasn't going to Jerusalem, but instead went up privately. Did He change His mind? Was He being deceptive? I don't think so. **I believe He was telling His brothers that He was not going to go to Jerusalem as they had suggested.** He wasn't going to go to drum up a lot of attention through miracles. That is exactly what we see. He goes not with the marvel-drawing miracles He could have performed, but instead He went and taught.

### **Marveling at Jesus Teachings**

As Jesus taught the crowd marveled. They knew Jesus had no formal education, but He taught with the insight, clarity, and authority of someone who had sat under the best teachers. John records that the crowds marveled over Jesus' teaching.

### **Deflecting Glory**



Apparently they marveled so much that Jesus had to address their comments. Jesus took this opportunity to deflect glory from Himself to the Father. That is something of interest as a side note. **Sometimes we see Jesus accept praise and glory that comes His way, other times we see Him deflect it to the Father.** Why is that? Because Jesus is God incarnate. He is the God-Man. He is worthy of all the glory because He is God, fully God, so He receives the praise. Yet, He has come as man and is showing us how to live for God, thus at times He deflects glory to the Father.

### **Perfect Message**

And that is what He does here. He tells the crowd that His teaching isn't His, it is God the Father's. **Jesus is revealing Himself to be God's perfect messenger.** If we think back to John 1, John introduces Jesus to us as **The Word**. The very title that John uses of Jesus as he opens the Gospel testifies to this reality. **Jesus is the perfect communication of God**, as He is God become man, **that we may see Him, hear Him, and experience Him in native ways that we can process and wrap our minds around.**

### **Teaching is God's, He is God**

In making this statement Jesus is **putting Himself in a class all to His own.** He isn't merely saying that this one message is a message from God, he is saying that all His teaching is God's. Prophets from the Old Testament were given a word from God that they were to go and share with the people. Prophets however waited for God to come to them with this message each time. Jesus on the other hand, every word He utters is a word from God because He and the Father are one.

#### **John 10:30**

[30] I and the Father are one.

They are one in essence, one in nature, one in mission. Who else can claim that all of their teaching is not theirs, but God's? No one. Only Jesus can make this claim as only Jesus is God.

### **Absolute Authority**

Thus, as we look to understand Jesus for who He is and not for who we want Him to be, we need to see Him as the perfect Word, the perfect message of God. All of His words carry absolute authority in our lives. He is to be our guide, our shepherd, our Lord. We are to follow His move. We are to march to the beat of His drum.

### **God's Work | Our Work**

Jesus then tells us 2 important things. First, He tells us **how we can identify the perfect message of God. Then He tells us how we should evaluate Him as the message of God.**

So how can we know if Jesus is indeed the true message of God? Let me read verse 17 once more...

#### **John 7:17**

[17] If 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.

### **What We Would Expect**

This is fascinating and it is so in sync with what we just learned from John 6. How can we know whether Jesus' teaching is from God or whether He speaks of His own authority? I think the answer most of us would give to that question is that we would go and study it out. **We would go and review all of the facts that we could find and assess them to make the best judgment we could.**

**That answer is not totally wrong. It is right in a sense, however, there is something more elementary that must take place** for that work of study and thought to pan out.

### **Wiling God's Will**

Jesus says, if anyone's will is to do God's will they will see rightly. That is the pre-qualifier. To see Jesus for who He really is, our will has to be synched, it has to be in line, with God's will. **Our wills must be changed before we will be able to see Jesus for who He really is.** Now that is counter to all of our experience. We use thought, reason, logic to assess the value of something. **How can we change our heart, our will, apart from assessing what is in front of us?**

Let me unpack this with a couple of other verses. First John 6...

#### **John 6:44**

[44] No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

You can't come to Jesus unless God draws. God must do that initial work. You can study all you want, you can assess all you want, but apart from God drawing you will never move from where you are. Here is a wonderful description of God's drawing work...

#### **Ezekiel 36:26-27**

[26] And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. [27] And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

### **God's Work, New Affections**

This is the work God does to change our will. He take away our dead heart of stone that fails to will for the things that God wills and gives us a living, beating heart of flesh, that has new affections and desires for the will of God.

### **Our Work, Sharing and Considering the Gospel**

Now all of this takes place in conjunction with the Gospel of God being considered, which is why I said that your study of the Gospel and consideration is essential. We know that this work of God doesn't ever happens apart from the Gospel, yet it has to happen before we can accurately see Jesus for who He really is.

### **The Essential Nature of Prayer**

So the ability to see Jesus for who He is and who He reveals Himself to be is dependent upon a miracle, it is dependent upon our wills being changed to line up with God's will. This is why prayer is essential in evangelism. The most compelling presentation of the Gospel will never be enough to change someone's heart, only God can do that, thus we pray, we pray for God to work on hearts and change them from the inside out so that when we share the Gospel with others we can see a harvest of faith.

### **Seeking Truth? Pray for Eyes and Ears to Hear**

If you are here tonight and are looking to know and understand Jesus, we welcome you, we delight in the fact that you are on this journey. Read the Bible to see Jesus. Study it. Consider it. But as you do all of that pray that God would reveal Himself to you. Pray that God would give you the kind of heart you need to find truth. Because apart from a miracle of God you won't find what you are looking for. The good news is that God loves to save lost sinners, it the express purpose of Jesus' mission.

## Assessing Jesus

Jesus gives us a tool to assess whether He is the True Message of God. Assuming God has changed your heart, how should you assess Jesus? We get this answer in verse 18...

### John 7:18

[18] The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood.

## Watch Jesus' Motives

Jesus said, watch my motivation, watch who I live for. Do I live for my own glory or do you see me living for the glory of God? John MacArthur answer that question this way...

"Jesus, however, never sought His own glory, since he "did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matt 20:28), for He is "gentle and humble in heart" (Matt 11:29 cf. 2 Cor 10:1). "Although He existed in the form of God, "Paul wrote, Jesus "did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:6-8; cf. 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pet 2:24). False teachers are materialistic, but "the Son of Man had nowhere to lay His head" (Luke 9:58); false teachers are self-seeking and demanding, but Jesus "got up from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself. Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with a towel with which He was girded" (John 13:4-5) – thus performing a menial task normally reserved for the lowliest slaves. That Jesus came seeking the glory of the One who sent Him, instead of glorying Himself, verified His claim to be the true Messiah, and showed that there was no unrighteousness in Him."

*-John MacArthur (John commentary)*

## Put Jesus to the Test

So those who have had their heart changed to desire the will of God can take this challenge from Jesus and assess His life. Who's glory does Jesus live for? Clearly, the glory of the Father, the One who sent Him.

Jesus is indeed the message of God. He is God's revelation in human form. **So let us hear Him speak that we may know God. Let us watch Him interact with others and see where He invests His time that we may know God. Let us go to Him looking for the answers that only our Creator and Designer can offer.**

## CONCLUSION

Who is Jesus?

- He is God.
- He is God's self-disclosure.
- He is God's perfect revelation.
- He is the image of the invisible God.
- He is the Word of God.

- He is the radiance of the glory of God.
- He is the exact imprint of the nature of God.
- He is the fullness of God.

### **Praying for you to Believe**

Who Jesus is, is no small matter. If you are here tonight and you have not believed in this Jesus, the Jesus of the Bible, because maybe the Jesus you follow is a Jesus remade in your image or perhaps Jesus isn't even on your radar, maybe you are like the Jewish leaders who found their purpose and satisfaction somewhere else, like in living a "good life", I want to pray for you. I want to pray that God would do a work on your heart. That He would give you eyes to see and ears to hear the beauty and truth of Jesus. I want to pray that you would begin to see Jesus as the all-satisfying bread of life, the reason for living, the hope for eternity that John 6 taught us He was. I would love to talk through this more with you if you are looking.

### **More than a Message, a Savior**

Jesus was more than a message, He was a Savior. He didn't just come to teach us about God, He came to rescue us. He lived the life that you couldn't, it was perfect. He died the death that was your, taking the punishment for sin you deserved. He rose again, victorious over sin and death. He now stands ready to save you for all eternity if you would believe in Him, not a made up version, not an edited or curated version, but Jesus as He has revealed Himself in the Bible. I will pray in just a second that God would turn the hearts of any and all who have not yet believed.

### **The Danger of Wandering Hearts**

Who Jesus is, is no small matter and we are in **danger of forgetting all that He is if we are not regularly in the Word**, hearing from Him and seeing Him. Our hearts are prone to wander. Oh how easy it is for those wandering hearts to latch on to just a couple of Jesus' attributes and forget the rest as we go about life. In the process we recreate Jesus in our image, we see Him for who we want Him to be, rather than who He has revealed Himself to be. This is something we simply cannot allow for. This is unbelief, it is belief in a non-existent Jesus, it is idolatry, and even more than that we are missing out on the greater good.

### **Don't Settle for a Small Jesus**

Any version of Jesus that you have recreated in your own mind, after your own image, is too small. He is weak and incomplete. **The only Savior that will truly satisfy your heart and save your soul is Jesus as He has been revealed in the Scriptures. Brothers and Sisters, let us run to Him and rejoice in all that He is for us. Let us taste and see that He is good.**

### **Let's Pray**