

I. Jesus affirms His deity

A. Before reading the final seven verses of John 5:19-47, I want to present a quick review of vs 19-40, and then give you a short, introductory explanation of an evil that remains a destructive force in the church today.

1. A quick review of vs 19-40

- a. We read in John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God." In other words, Jesus is the earthly voice of God which is able to be heard and understood by everyone in this world.
- b. To reject the message spoken by the earthly voice of God is to reject the speaker (*who is Jesus Christ*), God (*the One whose words the speaker is speaking*), and the words themselves.
- c. Jesus' oneness with God is verified by the three-fold testimony given by Jesus, God, and the miraculous works Jesus did.
- d. The scriptures neither saves us nor gives us life. Salvation and the life God created us to live, and which we enter into upon being born again, are in Jesus. Therefore, the scriptures point to Jesus, they show us in what manner we are to come to Jesus to receive His life, and they teach us how to live the life He gives.

2. An introductory explanation of a destructive evil in the church

- a. There is an evil that has and continues to spread its destructive tentacles throughout the universal church.
- b. This evil is so subtle that most church attenders accept it as good, which means most of those who practice it see themselves as good and are seen as good Christians. A few who practice it see it for what it is and admit it is their weakness, while fewer still have done what it takes to die to this evil and make God their source of security, and pleasing God their source of well-being.
- c. The evil I am speaking of is the practice of seeking a sense of security, well-being, and importance in the praises, approval, and acceptance of people rather than from God.

B. John 5:41-47 . . . I (*Jesus*) do not receive glory from men; [42] but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. [43] I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his

own name, you will receive him. [44] How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God? [45] Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. [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?

C. Pray

II. Jesus confirms He is one with God

A. John 5:41-42 . . .

1. Jesus begins this section with “I do not receive glory from men.” The point Jesus is making is that He is neither looking for nor does He have a desire for glory or praise from mankind. And should people praise Him so as to give Him glory, He will not accept it as meaningful or worthy of His consideration. Jesus says something similar in two other portions of John –

- a. John 7:16-18 . . . “My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me. [17] If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself. [18] He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who is seeking the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.”
- b. There are two principles and one truth in these verses directly related to receiving glory.
 - (1) First principle: An outcome of doing the will of God in everyday life is knowing that Jesus’ teaching is from God.
 - (2) Second principle: The outcome of making God’s glory the focus of our words and deeds is a godly life.
 - (3) Truth: He whose words and deeds are not focused on glorifying God is focused on seeking glory for himself.
- c. John 8:54 . . . “If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, ‘He is our God.’”
 - (1) In this statement, Jesus follows the advice of Proverbs 27:2, “Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; [let] a stranger [praise you], and not your own lips.”
 - (2) There are two evils in glorifying or praising yourself
 - (a) Pride – that is, feeling superior to God and man.
 - (b) Self-centeredness – which results in overlooking or even resenting the accomplishments of others.

- d. According to Webster's 1913 Dictionary, to receive glory is to receive praise, honor, admiration, and prestige from others. In itself, receiving glory is neither good nor bad.
 - e. However, there is a negative side to receiving glory. For example, it becomes negative
 - (1) when it becomes your source of well-being and security;
 - (2) when you depend on it for the assurance of belonging;
 - (3) when you depend on it for acceptance and approval;
 - (4) when you use it to reinforce self-importance;
 - (5) and when it becomes a source for boasting or the justification for behaving as if you are superior.
2. [42] but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves.
- a. This statement is the second half of "I (*that is Jesus*) do not receive glory from men." And as I just said, Jesus is saying He neither seeks nor desires the praises of men.
 - b. Therefore, in this context, to receive glory implies wanting and seeking glory from those around you.
 - (1) And those who want and seek glory do so because they believe they deserve to be praised, honored, and exalted,
 - (2) And they believe they deserve glory because they are proud.
 - (3) And they are proud because they love themselves, first and foremost.
 - c. Therefore, seeking praise, honor, approval, and acceptance from others is a selfish act.
 - (1) No one seeks glory for the good of the community or the good of their family or the good of the church or the good of God. They do it for their own sake – to satisfy their own desires and felt-needs, and in order to feel better about themselves.
 - (2) In other words, those who want praise, honor, approval, and acceptance from others are selfish and self-centered.
3. Therefore, the first lesson Jesus teaches about seeking glory, that is, seeking praise, honor, approval, and acceptance from others, is that we are not doing this out of love for God, but rather out of love for self. And Jesus makes it clear that we do not love God when we love ourselves in this way.

B. John 5:43 . . .

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

2. In essence, Jesus is saying that those who are not receiving Him are fickle, shallow, and misguided.
 - a. They are fickle because they will embrace, endorse, and follow almost anyone who becomes popular with those from whom they want glory. Yet once the teacher, preacher, conference speaker, or author loses popularity, they move on to the next one who is growing in popularity so as to keep receiving the glory they seek.
 - b. And why do they do this? Because they value praise, honor, approval, and acceptance more than truth and allegiance.
3. They are shallow because they are focused on seeking glory rather than on growing in godliness and spiritual maturity. Therefore, they lack the spiritual depth to discern the difference between those speaking the words of God and those speaking their own ideas, beliefs, values, and understanding of scripture.
 - a. In other words, they cannot tell the difference between speakers who point them to God, and speakers who want a following for themselves.
 - b. But here again, they are more concerned with receiving glory than growing in spiritual maturity and Christ-likeness.
4. They are misguided because in spite of knowing truth, they either twist the truth or overlook certain parts of the truth in order to justify using God and the scriptures to support their self-centeredness and seeking glory from others. However, no one can justify self-centeredness and seeking glory from others without rejecting God and the teachings of Jesus Christ.
5. Therefore, the second lesson Jesus teaches about seeking praise, honor, approval, and acceptance from others is that it produces fickleness, promotes spiritual shallowness, and requires twisting or overlooking certain parts of the truth found in God's word.

C. John 5:44 . . .

1. How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?
2. In vs 42, Jesus made it clear that those who seek praise, honor, approval, and acceptance from others love themselves rather than God.
3. Here in vs 44, Jesus is stating that we cannot believe in God, that is, we cannot live according to God's will and word when we are seeking or hoping to receive glory from others.

4. In other words, wanting to receive glory from others and living your life accordingly prevents you from believing in God in the Biblical way – which results in living according to God’s will and word.
5. Therefore, the third lesson Jesus teaches about seeking praise, honor, approval, and acceptance from others, is that this lifestyle prevents you from believing in God in the Biblical way.

D. John 5:45 . . .

1. Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father;
 - a. To accuse someone is to charge them with a punishable offense that they knew was wrong.
 - b. In this context, if someone had the right to accuse anyone, Jesus did, because He was talking to those who were rejecting Him, dishonoring God, and turning a deaf ear to God’s message of life.
 - c. However, He states that He is not going to be the one to accuse them. Imagine the selflessness and humility required to be this gracious and patient with those rejecting and dishonoring you.
 - d. Yet Jesus was even more selfless and humble with those who falsely condemned Him to death, tortured Him, and nailed Him to a cross (1 Peter 2:20-23).
 - e. The point here is that it requires this kind of selflessness and humility to live a life that is pleasing to God and receives glory only from God.
 - f. And why does it take this kind of selflessness and humility? Because living to please God sometimes results in displeasing people, which often results in receiving disapproval and rejection.
2. the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope.
 - a. Those Jesus was talking with only had the OT. And we could conclude that it was in ignorance that they were exalting Moses above God, as if Moses spoke apart from God.
 - b. However, their ignorance was not the result of not knowing better. Their ignorance was the result of rejecting or twisting or overlooking what they could know if they wanted to know it. Why? Because the truth they could have known was in the very same scriptures they were using to support their rejection of Jesus and the words God gave Him to speak.
3. Therefore, the fourth lesson Jesus teaches about seeking praise, honor, approval, and acceptance from others, is that the scriptures you are ignoring or distorting to support this evil practice will be the

very same scriptures that will accuse you of doing what you could have known if you wanted to know, is wrong.

E. John 5:46-47 . . .

1. For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me.
 - a. To believe Moses, they would have had to read Moses with the desire to learn what Moses has to say about living a life that is pleasing to God in all areas and in all ways, not just some areas and in some ways.
 - b. This points to an important truth. The more we read to learn how to live a godly life in all areas and in all ways, and the more we apply to our living what we read, the more we see and understand the truths contained in the scriptures about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and living the Christ-like life.
 - c. And of course, the opposite is true. The less we read to learn how to live a godly life in all areas and in all ways, the less we will apply, and the less we will see and understand the truths contained in the scriptures about God and Christ-like living.
2. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"
 - a. This is a profound statement. To put it into words that apply to us today, we could say, "If you regularly read your Bible, yet have areas of spiritual weakness or sinfulness that have been with you for some time, then even if Jesus, himself, were standing here teaching you, you would not listen or change."
 - b. In other words, an eye that is blind to any part of the scriptures which address godly living is equal to an ear that is deaf to God, himself.
 - c. Therefore, if you will not learn from and live according to what God's writers of scripture wrote, you will not learn from or live according to what God, himself, says to you directly.
 - d. In the conclusion of the story of the Rich man and Lazarus, Jesus said something very similar, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead" (Luke 16:3).
3. And this brings us to the fifth lesson Jesus teaches about seeking praise, honor, approval, and acceptance from others. If you read the Bible yet still pursue the approval and acceptance of others as if you have to have it to be secure and have a settled sense of well-being,

then the reality is, you would ignore or reject what Jesus has to say about this if He were standing right in front of you.

III. Conclusion

- A. Regardless of what you tell yourself or what someone else may tell you, the reality is, you EITHER live for God, and the glory of God, and the praise, honor, approval, and acceptance of God, OR you live for yourself.
- B. There is nothing wrong with wanting praise, honor, approval, and acceptance, but there is something spiritually destructive with wanting it from those around you instead of from God. And there is something evil in wanting it for yourself in place of God. The reality is, you cannot seek glory in the wrong places and for the wrong reasons and live for God at the same time.
- C. Almost everyone who lives to receive praise, honor, approval, and acceptance from others believes they are basically good, and that their intentions are good – which makes it very difficult to show them the truth about the evil they have embraced.
- D. May we be among those who seek glory for God and only from God, so that whether others praise us or curse us, it will make no difference to our sense of well-being, security, or the godliness of our daily lives.