

John 7-1-13 **Jesus verses the World**

Sermon introduction:

Mike Homer was 6 foot 4 and 205 pounds. I was 5 foot 9 and 160 pounds. We played on the same high school football team. Mike played free safety. I played wide receiver.

During a scrimmage I was supposed to sprint down the field, towards the goal post, as fast as possible. After roughly ten yards, I was supposed to turn my head and look back towards the quarterback, since he was supposed to throw me the ball.

Mike Homer was on defense. He somehow knew exactly what was happening. As soon as he saw me sprinting for the goal post, he sprinted towards me. We were on a collision course. He was sprinting towards me, and I was sprinting towards him, but I was not looking in his direction because I was looking at the quarterback. When the quarterback threw the ball, I stretched out my arms to catch it. While this was happening, Mike lowered his shoulder pads and salivated. As soon as the ball touched my hands, Mike Homer left his feet. The next thing I knew I was on my back seeing stars. A cement truck just collided with a Honda Accord.

As far as I know Jesus Christ did not play football. But he was on a collision course with the world. This brings us to the first part of John 7.

Why was Jesus on a collision course with the world? Because the world hated Jesus.

John 7:7 (ESV) — 7 The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil.

Anyone who follows Jesus Christ is also on a collision course with the world. We must understand this fact, so that we are not surprised when the collisions happen. Furthermore, if there are never any collisions, we must ask ourselves if we are really following Jesus.

To help us understand why Christ is on a collision course with the world, we must understand the world's relationship to Jesus.

This passage tells us at least three things about the world.

The world misunderstands Jesus

The world hates Jesus

The world needs Jesus

The world misunderstands Jesus

What did they misunderstand?

The world misunderstands Christ's mission!

John 7:1-4 (ESV) — 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.

The feast of booths/tabernacles was a seven-day celebration of God's provision for His people during their wilderness wandering, as well as a festival to commemorate the completion of the harvest. All Jews, from

all parts of the nation, were required to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem to celebrate. Therefore, it was Jesus' duty under the law to go to Jerusalem for the feast.

3 So his brothers said to him,

These were the biological half-brothers of Jesus (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3). Same mother, different father. This undercuts the Roman Catholic doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary.

“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.”

At this point, Jesus' brothers think just like the world.

They say to Jesus,

“Jesus, you have some serious potential. We have seen you perform some pretty amazing miracles. But right now, we are stuck in this small backwater town (think Cheney Washington). If you want to be an influencer—if you want to gain millions of followers—you need to go to Jerusalem of Judea (think New York, Boston, or L.A.).

Jesus, once you are in the big city, you can show everybody your stuff. You know, perform some miracles, cast out some demons, provide bread for the masses, and heal all the sick people. The crowds will eat it up. Plus, the really important people will be forced to take notice, and they can do things for us. They have clout. They have all the right connections. They can probably help us create just the right image for you.”

This was the advice of Madison Avenue—where the major advertising firms are headquartered—not the advice of the kingdom.

Christ's brothers don't understand Christ's mission. They want him to use worldly means to establish a political kingdom.

They are trying to get Christ to deviate from his mission.

Illustration:

“Alongside his siblings, J. Howard Pew launched the Pew Charitable Trusts with the wealth generated from their family oil business (Sun Oil, known today as Sunoco). Pew held strong Christian convictions and had a vocal wariness about the secularization of many American institutions—like Princeton and Harvard. He was a good friend of Billy Graham, and together they launched several new evangelical institutions, including Christianity Today and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

Today, more than 40 years after Pew's death, the Pew Charitable Trusts funds many organizations Pew himself disdained, including Planned Parenthood and several Ivy League schools. What happened? In short, Pew's convictions and values were hijacked by the agenda and values of the current board and staff. . . . When asked why the Pew Trusts no longer supports Gordon-Conwell Seminary, an organization Pew founded, current Pew Charitable Trusts president Rebecca Rimel simply replied: “[Howard] was a man of strong convictions, and his successors on our board are following in his tradition by having strong convictions.” (TGC article)

Application:

The current board of the Pew Charitable Trust hijacked the mission of the founder. The brothers of Jesus were trying to hijack his mission. How?

They wanted to use worldly means to establish a political kingdom, rather than kingdom means to establish a spiritual kingdom.

What are kingdom means?

In the kingdom of God,

The last are first (Matt. 20:16)

Life comes through death (Luke 9:23-25)

Strength is found in weakness (2 Cor. 12:9)

The greatest are the servants (Matt. 20:25-27)

The poor are rich (Matt. 5:3)

Gain comes through giving (Pr. 11:24)

The way up is the way down (1 Pet. 5:6)

The world wants the crown without the cross.

But in the kingdom, the cross always comes before the crown.

Christ's path to greatness was through the cross, which is why Christ will refuse to go to Jerusalem with his brothers at this time.

Our path to greatness is also through the cross. As we die to our own wants, needs, and desires, we are aligning ourselves with the mission of the king.

What does this look like?

Marriage

Parenting

Roommates

The office

Giving away money...

Forgiving...

Hanging out with the lowly....

Children...

It may not be your night on dishes duty...

It may be your siblings' clothes on the floor...

The world misunderstood Christ's mission. In addition...

The world misunderstood Christ's identity

John 7:5 (ESV) — 5 For not even his brothers believed in him.

His brothers clearly know that Jesus is a miracle worker. They have seen Jesus turn water into wine, heal sick people, and provide bread for thousands with just five loaves and two fish.

But they don't understand his true identity—yet. We often forget that Jesus was fully God and fully man. He had to be both to save us (explain).

For at least 30 years, his brothers ate with him, played with him, worked with him, and laughed with him. They clearly knew he was different, but at this point in the story, they did not fully comprehend his true identity, because they were blind to his glory.

But, after the resurrection Christ's own brothers bowed down and worshipped him as God (Acts 1:14, 1 Cor. 15:7). Two of them became leaders in the early church and they wrote letters that were included in the New Testament (James and Jude).

This is an amazing fact considering their Jewish background. Explain...

His brothers, who lived with him most of their lives, could not think of anything that disqualified him from deity. They did not say, "I don't believe you are God because of that one time you sassed Mother Mary. Or that one time that you stole an extra cookie. Or that one time that you made fun of brother James."

If his own flesh and blood eventually believed that he was God, how much more should we believe that he is God.

But initially they misunderstood his identity.

Application:

People still misunderstand the identity of Jesus...

Mormons teach that Jesus was a mortal man who became one of many gods after lots of hard work. Furthermore, they teach that Lucifer is his half-brother.

Islam teaches that Jesus was a great prophet, yet not divine.

Thomas Jefferson and Gandhi taught that Jesus Christ was nothing more than a great moral teacher.

Prince Phillip said that "Jesus might be described as an underprivileged, working-class victim of political and religious persecution." (Driscoll, 15)

Fidel Castro said, "I never saw a contradiction between the ideas that sustain me and the ideas of that symbol, of that extraordinary figure [Jesus Christ]." (Driscoll, 15)

What about you?

Do you understand the true identity of Jesus??? Nothing matters more in this life than answering this question.

Here is the scary thing. In one sense, Jesus' brothers knew him very well, better than most. Yet, they still misunderstood him. They were deceived. You may think you know Jesus well. You may spend lots of time with him, but do you really know him???

If you really know him, your life will be forever altered.

Let me encourage you with this...

Jesus was misunderstood by his own family. Which means that he knows what it is like to be misunderstood by family. Maybe you too are misunderstood by your family. They think you are nuts for

following Jesus. Jesus understands. Jesus can relate. Run to him for comfort. He will never leave you or forsake you.

The world misunderstood Jesus, but it gets worse. This brings us to the second point.

First, the world misunderstands Jesus.

Second, the world hates Jesus.

Why does the world hate Jesus? He calls out their sin!

John 7:6–7 (ESV) — 6 Jesus said to them, “My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. **7** The world cannot hate you

He is talking to his brothers. Why can't the world hate his brothers? Because at this point, his brothers are acting just like the world.

but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil.

The world hated Jesus because Jesus told the world that they were sinners (i.e., their works were evil). Maybe it sounds rude or judgmental for someone to tell someone else that they are sinners. I get it. No one likes to be told that they are wrong.

But Jesus has the right to tell us that we are wrong because he is God. Furthermore, he tells us that we are wrong because he loves us.

Illustration:

Several years ago, one of my sons went to the hospital for a brain scan. The MRI revealed a pilocytic astrocytoma brain tumor. In other words, my son had brain cancer.

We had no clue...

I will never forget where I was or what I felt when the doctor (a friend of the family) told me the devastating news. Three days later my son spent eight hours in brain surgery, followed by two years of chemotherapy.

Now...

Imagine the doctor thinking to herself... “You know, this is really bad news. I don't want to upset the Farley family. They may be offended when they hear the word brain cancer. I just will not tell them.”

Would this be loving???

Of course not. The loving thing to do is tell someone that they are in grave danger. Why? If they know they are in danger, they can seek rescue.

It is a kindness of Christ to expose sin...

Sin ruins lives
Sin robs us of joy
Sin brings death

Sin dishonor's God

If sin is not exposed, people will not flee to Christ for refuge.

This implies that we should not expose sin for the sake of exposing sin, we must expose sin for the sake of exposing the gospel.

Application:

Even though it was loving of Christ to expose sin, the world did not appreciate it. The world hated Christ for exposing sin and the world hates us for exposing sin.

Therefore, we must expect persecution.

2 Timothy 3:12 (ESV) — 12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,

This verse does not imply that we will be persecuted every day. Some people will be attracted to Christ through our lifestyles, while others will be repelled from Christ. If you are always being persecuted, you are probably being overly obnoxious, if you are never being persecuted you are probably being a coward.

Illustration:

I recently hear a story about a New York City cop. When he became a Christian, he started living differently. Before he was a Christian, he had no problem taking bribe money, because all the cops did. They saw it as tip money.

He and his fellow cops would leave their cop cars parked on the street. When they came back, they would find envelopes of cash on their windows. The envelopes contained notes from pimps and drug dealers saying, "Please ignore what happens on the corner of 44th and whatever Avenue." Most cops kept the cash.

When this cop became a Christian, he felt obligated to turn the cash in to his supervisor. As you can imagine, his fellow cops were not happy with him because his actions exposed their sinful practice. The persecution was intense.

Maybe you have experienced similar persecution. When you are persecuted, you must remember the words of Christ.

Matthew 5:10–12 (ESV) — 10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. **11** "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. **12** Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Any persecution suffered for Jesus' name leads to tremendous rewards (which includes unmixed joy, wonder, and unspeakable glory).

Why does the world hate Jesus? He calls out their sin!

What does the world's hatred do? It silences the feeble!

John 7:8–13 (ESV) — 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.

Some people see a problem in verses 8-10. Jesus says to his brothers, that he is not going up to the feast, then he goes up to the feast later. So, did he change his mind, lie, or mislead? No, he was not saying, “I will never go to the feast.” He was simply saying, “I’m not going up to the feast with you now.” Why? They want him to go to the feast for the wrong reasons.

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.

What is the point? The Jewish leaders want to kill Jesus. As a result, the people were afraid to say anything about Jesus.

According to one scholar,

“They (Jewish leaders) are now forcing the public to agree with them, using the threat of religious and social ostracism as a weapon to get their way.” (Osborne)

Application:

This tactic is becoming increasingly popular in our culture.

We are often called the haters... but I often wonder, who really hates who?

The world wants to silence us from exposing sinful lifestyles. Will you be silenced???

Even though the world hates Jesus, the world desperately needs Jesus. This brings us to the final point.

The world misunderstands Jesus.

The world hates Jesus.

Third, the world needs Jesus

What does the world need from Jesus? His crucifixion!

John 7:6–8 (ESV) — 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.”

Twice in this passage Jesus says, “my time has not yet come...” (v. 6a, 8b). The word “time” is the Greek word “Kairos.” This word means a key moment or an important occasion.

BTW... Jesus says the same thing to his mother in John 2, when she asks him to turn the water into wine.

Jesus’s brothers think that it is time for Jesus to go to Jerusalem to perform miracles and wow the crowds to establish a political kingdom. They want him to be famous!!!

There will be a time for Jesus to go to Jerusalem and display his glory, but it is not this time. Later, when it is the father's time, he will go to Jerusalem, and he will display his glory, but it was in a totally unexpected way. He displayed his glory in the cross.

The cross displays the glory of God's mercy, grace, and love.
The cross displays the glory of God's righteousness, justice, and wrath.
The cross is the greatest display of God's glory in human history.

What does the world need from Jesus? His crucifixion. The world desperately needs to see the true glory of God displayed in the cross.

Application:

Here is the irony of the cross.

There very ones that hated Jesus, were the very ones that needed his love.

Here is another irony...

How in the world can the world say that Christians are haters when Christians overcome hatred with sacrificial love?

Jesus went to the cross for his enemies.
Jesus went to the cross for sinners.
In other words, he went to the cross for you...

Have you received his love?

Conclusion:

Back to the fall of 1994. I was on a collision course with Mike Homer at Heart Field. I was sprinting towards him, and he was sprinting towards me. I did not see him coming. He clearly saw me coming. When we collided, I lost.

Jesus was on a collision course with the world. He saw the world coming. He could have avoided the collision by destroying the world. Instead, he allowed the world to nail him to the cross. Why? So that the world could be forgiven and reconciled to God.

Christ overcame the world with sacrificial love.

We overcome the world with sacrificial love. Let's pray...