

Arresting Jesus at the Festival

(A Study of the Gospel of John; Message #25)

John 7:25-36

A. John 7 finds Jesus attending the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles

1. John is underscoring the growing hostility against Jesus
 - a. John 7:1-13 finds Jesus' brothers questioning his motives and methods
 - b. John 7:14-24 finds temple goers challenging Jesus words and works
2. Now some Jerusalemites confront Jesus about his whence and his whither

B. What is impressive about this passage is the boldness of Jesus

WHENCE: THE HIDDEN MESSIAH (7:25-30)

A. People are so amazed with Jesus' courage they wonder if the authorities believe Jesus really is the Messiah?

B. Others point to a commonly accepted teaching that Messiah would "suddenly appear" in the temple (cf. Malachi 3:1)

1. Everyone knows where Jesus came from: He is Jesus from Nazareth

"Three things come wholly unexpected: a godsend, a scorpion, and Messiah"
(Rabbinic Saying)
2. Jesus doesn't meet that requirement; he is "obviously" disqualified
3. The irony is they didn't know where Jesus actually comes from
4. The mind that relegates God to the mysterious, extraordinary, and miraculous seems an innocent misunderstanding; it's not; it's significant
 - a. If God is only present in the extraordinary, then he is seldom present
 - b. If God is present in the ordinary, commonplace then he is always present

C. Jesus: "You think you know me. You think you know where I came from"

1. One thing you don't say to a Jew is "you don't know God." Jesus did.
2. Jesus' Jewish listeners are insulted. Notice their response

D. 7:30 - "At this they tried to seize (arrest) him..."

1. When it comes to Jesus, people are left with only two options:
 - a. One: Jesus is a liar: he's guilty of blasphemy and worthy of death (or)
 - b. Jesus is telling the truth; he is the Son of God; he must be worshipped
2. So when the Gospel is preached; one of two things happens:

a. One: People will get upset, angry and violent and/or walk away

b. Two: People will believe, embrace the aroma of life, and follow Jesus

"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword." (Matthew 10:34)

WHITHER: THE ASCENDED MESSIAH (7:31-36)

A. Jesus teaches and many believe; adding insult to injury for the leaders

"Go back and tell John the things you have seen me do. That will convince him."
(Matthew 11:1-6)

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of deep lasting life." (John 6:68)

B. Jesus' knows his time had not yet come

1. They try to arrest Jesus, but they can't because his hour has not yet come
2. One of the best phrases in the English language is "When it is time..."
3. Scripture is clear: God is in charge. His timing is perfect. His plan is amazing
4. If we are walking in the will of God, we can be assured nothing will happen to us except what God allows
 - a. This is not an invitation to be presumptuous
 - b. But if we are following his will, we'll be kept safe until our moment comes

C. In John 7:25-30, Jesus talked about where he came from; in 31-36, he talks about where he's going: origin, then destination; whence and whither

1. Both are full of mystery; who can understand; incarnation and ascension
2. Clearly this passage underscores the imperative of believing in Jesus now:

"Seek and you will find" (Matthew 7:7)

"You will search for me and you will not find me. You can not come where I am"
(John 7:34)

"Seek the Lord while he may be found." (Isaiah 55:6)

3. The time is limited; the opportunity will not last forever; choose now
4. The Gospel has a now-or-never urgency
5. Jesus came claiming ultimacy - to bring those far from God to be his fully devoted disciples