

LIVING IN THE WORD “Discipleship: Worship, Faith, & Obedience” John 8:31

No. 6579

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Jesus’ attendance at the “Feast of Tabernacles” had proved contentious and divisive (John 7). The Pharisees challenged him at every point but others listened and believed. But exactly what and how they believed was unclear. Jesus knew this so he made a clear statement about “really (being) my disciple” to address the issue. This is obviously a subject of great importance to all generations.

I. What Do We Understand by “Many Put Their Faith in Him?” John 8:30

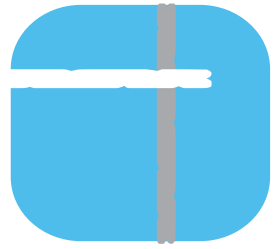
- A. The issue: How do we account for people “of faith” who wish to kill Jesus? John 8:59
- B. Possibility one: Is there a division in the story allowing for different groups?
- C. Possibility two: Was their faith inadequate and easily abandoned? cf. John 6:63-66
- D. Remember: Faith is cognitive; affective; evaluative. But it will be deficient if all three dimensions are not brought into play. (This may be the case – I see no basis for different groups.)

II. What Is the Connection Between Genuine Faith, Living in the Word, and Genuine Discipleship?

- A. Faith is as valuable as its object is worthy; strong faith in thin ice leads to a chilling experience.
- B. Living in the word (the complete message of Jesus) involves: “revering it deeply, resorting to it constantly, responding to it appropriately.”
- C. Responding to Jesus’ word: *“In the Bible God gives us revelations of himself which lead us to worship; promises of salvation which stimulate our faith; and commands expressing his will that demand our obedience. This is the meaning of Christian discipleship. Its three essential ingredients are worship, faith, and obedience.”* J.R.W. Stott
- D. The written word points to the living Word; Bible study leads to living in Christ. cf. John 5:39-40
- E. That means worshipping Him (John 6:68); trusting Him (John 4:50); obeying Him (John 14:23-24).
- F. This is how we live (meno) in the word and His word “lives” in us (Col. 3:16), as He “lives” in us (John 15:7), while He “lives” in the Father and the Father in Him. Then we will bear much fruit, our praying will be effective, God will be glorified, and we will love each other and thus “show” that we are His disciples (John 15:1-17).

III. Jesus’ Way of Teaching His disciples to Live in the Word Is Informative.

- A. They did not choose Him; He chose them and called them to Himself: we start with a sense of calling.
- B. He impressed them with the authority of His teaching: we approach the word with a submissive spirit.
- C. He challenged their pre-suppositions: we dare to re-evaluate life in the light of His teaching.
- D. He didn’t dumb things down He made the disciples think (e.g. parables): we need to approach the word seriously and earnestly, and give it our best shot.
- E. He taught by example: we must fear being satisfied with the teachings of Christ without demonstrating the life of Christ.
- F. He didn’t teach one-on-one, He taught in groups: we learn from him through each other.
- G. He did not hesitate to rebuke and correct where necessary: we need to have a desire to grow and mature, to be willing to be changed.



IV. Some Reality Checks.

- A. Jesus said that the words He spoke belonged the Father (John 14:23-24), but He modeled them in daily living. If that is so, how conversant am I with what Jesus actually said and did and does it matter? If so, how?
- B. Jesus said some things that some of His disciples did not like so they left Him (John 6:66). Are there any things that He said that you don't like? If so, how are you handling it?
- C. Jesus said, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink ... streams of living water will flow from within him." John added, "By this He meant the Spirit" (John 7:37-38). Am I drinking enough to provide overflow?
- D. Jesus said that those who hear His word and believe on the One who sent him have eternal life and will not be condemned (John 5:24). On what do I base my hope of heaven? What do I understand by "eternal life"? Do I think I am guilty of anything that would warrant condemnation? If so, what does this promise mean?