

“Adamant Ignorance”

March 2, 2014

Text: John 7:25-29

**Today we will encounter the adamant ignorance/unbelief of
Jerusalem’s residents, at the time of X.**

They will deny that Jesus is the Christ based on the following
argument=>

*“We **know** where this man [Jesus] is from; but whenever
the **Christ** may come, **no one** knows where He is from.”*

1st, they incorrectly assumed that when the X came, He
would mysteriously appear out of nowhere, even
though Micah 5:2 had prophesied He would be born
in Bethlehem.

2nd, they assumed Jesus was from Nazareth, ignorant of the
fact that He was actually born in Bethlehem.

The adamant unbelief of these residents of Jerusalem was
supported by their adamant ignorance (their commitment to
ignore the truth).

They had bad information, to which they blindly clung,
because it supported their own preconceived ideas.

The truth was available to them, & they could have found
out where Jesus was actually born, if they’d tried to.

The Jews kept careful family records of such things
as that.

But instead, they just assumed they knew where He was
born.

Still today, willful spiritual ignorance is common among men.

They shut their eyes against biblical truth, refusing to believe what their souls find uncomfortable, inconvenient to believe.

And there are none so blind, as those who will not believe.

Our text today breaks down into 2 parts—The Jews’

Ignorant Analysis (of Jesus & why He couldn’t possibly be the Messiah), & **Jesus’ Insightful Answer** (to them).

At the end, we’ll also apply the truth of this text to ourselves.

* **The Ignorant Analysis**

In verses 25-27 we find the confusion, the speculation, and the conclusion about Jesus arrived at, by the residents of Jerusalem.

* **Confusion**—Jerusalem’s residents were confused about why their religious leaders were letting X teach in the Temple. They knew the leaders had a murderous hatred for Jesus, and wanted to kill Him, because He’d humiliated them, more than once.

So they expected the Temple authorities to arrest Him.

But they hadn’t—why?

* **[Jn 7:25]**=> *“So some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, ‘Is this not the man whom they are seeking to kill?’”*

Jesus had just argued that He had every right to heal people on the Sabbath, because the Jews themselves often performed good/religious deeds on that day of the week.

And no one accused them of violating it by such work.

The residents of Jerusalem expected the Temple authorities to respond to Jesus' teaching by rushing in and seizing Jesus. Or at the very least, for the scribes/Pharisees to challenge Him w/ arguments intended to embarrass Him and contradict His words.

But none of the religious leaders had done anything to stop Jesus.

* Maybe they were afraid to debate Him publicly, given the fact that every time they'd done that in the past, it had led to their own humiliation.

* Maybe they'd seen His commanding presence when He cleansed the Temple, & were afraid to confront Him directly.

* Maybe they feared they might start a riot, & didn't want to risk bringing the Romans rushing down to stop it.

Whatever the reason, the Jerusalemites were left in confusion about their leaders' inaction.

* Speculation—the residents speculated that their leaders' lack of action might indicate they had come to believe Jesus actually was the Messiah.

[Verse 26]=> *“Look, He is speaking **publicly** [openly, boldly, outspokenly], and they are saying nothing to Him. The rulers do not really know that this **is** the Christ, do they?”*

The people of Jerusalem began to speculate that their leaders might have discovered something about Jesus that had persuaded them He was actually the Messiah, after all.

Had they come to believe that of Him?

The wording of the question, “*The rulers do not really know that this is the Christ, do they?*” expects a negative answer.

And yet, there stood Jesus, holding nothing back, teaching w/ complete freedom, and no one was lifting a finger to restrict/restrain Him.

It seemed too far fetched, to think Jesus might actually be the long-awaited Messiah of Israel, so they dismissed that idea out of hand.

* Their Conclusion—the residents concluded, based on what they thought they knew, that Jesus couldn’t possibly be the X.

[Verse 27]=> “*However, we know where this man is from; but whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He is from.*”

Jerusalem’s residents were confident that Jesus was born & raised in Nazareth of Galilee.

And in their minds, that meant He could not possibly be Messiah.

There were 2 popular theories about the Messiah’s origins=>

1) That no one would know where He came from, but that He would just suddenly/unexpectedly appear on the scene.

That is the opinion being expressed here in verse 27.

It may have been based on uninspired Apocryphal writings.

2) That He would be born in Bethlehem.

In verse 42 we’ll meet some Jews who held this opinion,

& who will say, “*Has not the Scripture said that the*

*Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from **Bethlehem**, the village where David was?"*

This 2nd group will involve people who rely on Micah's prophecy about Messiah's birth (Mic 2:5).

When Herod, prompted by the Magi, had asked the chief-priests/scribes where Messiah was to be born, their answer was "Bethlehem."

John loved to include in his Gospel, dogmatic but obviously faulty statements, such as the ones here in verse 27.

He must have done so w/ a very wry smile on his face as he wrote.

He let foolishness speak for itself, as a witness to the fact that human speculation is utterly worthless/useless for any understanding of the mysteries of God.

Jerusalem's residents said w/ confidence, "*We know* [have full & absolute knowledge of] *where this man is from.*"

They believed they knew all about Jesus' origin.

But in reality, they knew nothing about it.

They were aware that He had grown up in Nazareth.

What they didn't know was that, due to an imperial decree intended to implement a taxation census, He had been born in Bethlehem, fulfilling Mic 5:2.

Nor did they know that He had spent the 1st 2 years of His life in Egypt, which, according to Mt 2:15, fulfilled another messianic prophecy in Hos 11:1.

Most importantly, they had no idea that Jesus was born of a virgin, having been conceived in Mary's womb by a miraculous act of the H.S.—making Him fully God though He was fully man.

The residents' next dogmatic assertion was this=> *“Whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He is from.”*

This seems to have been based on the non-canonical book of 4th Esdras, which said=> “Just as no one can explore or know the depth of the sea, so no one on earth can see my Son or those who are with him, except in the time of his day.”

But again, they were wrong.

This is all part of the ignorant analysis of Jesus' Messiahship, by Jerusalem's residents.

*** The Insightful Answer**

Verses 28-29 contain Jesus' insightful answer to the Jews' conclusion that He couldn't be Messiah.

He answered w/ a confrontation, a refutation & a proclamation.

* A Confrontation—Jesus urgently confronted these unbelieving Jews with the fact that they knew intuitively, who He really was, and where He was from.

He was the Son of God, come down from God, in heaven.

[**Verse 28a**]=> *“Then Jesus cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, ‘You both know Me and know where I am from;’”*

John doesn't tell us whether Jesus had simply overheard what the people were saying, or whether His knowing about it was due to His divine omniscience.

Whichever it was, He responded forcefully, crying out w/ a loud voice to emphasize the solemn words He spoke, knowing it was critically important that these people hear them.

This was unusual for Jesus, who, as Isaiah had prophesied, did not normally raise His voice, nor make Himself heard in the street (Isa 42:2).

Because of the Jews' perverse refusal to open-mindedly consider the evidence of His words/works, X felt He had to cry out, to drive the truth home to their hearts.

What do the words mean, w/ which Jesus confronted these people, saying, “*You both know Me & know where I am from*”?

Most commentators believe they were intended to be at least ironic, if not outright sarcastic.

I.e., that Jesus didn't really mean what He said.

Personally, I can't imagine Jesus ever becoming sarcastic, especially when He was “*teaching*” (as John says).

Don Carson's commentary lands a little closer to my own view/position.

He says X acknowledged some soundness in their judgment, because some of them had known Jesus, from childhood;

I.e., they had known Him from Nazareth.

But they knew far less about Him than they thought they did.

Jesus was exposing their ignorance of Him, which they had chosen to impose on themselves w/ their sin/unbelief.

I believe Jesus prob. meant exactly what He said/taught so emphatically: “*You both **know** Me and **know** where I am from.*”

Because of Jesus’ miraculous works, they intuitively knew He must be Messiah, the Son of God, from heaven. They didn’t admit, even to themselves, that they knew it.

But they did.

Knowing that, they should have acknowledged it, placed their faith in Jesus as God’s Son, come to know Him on a personal level, & loved Him.

But they didn’t.

Because of their unrighteousness/sin, they suppressed that truth which they intuitively suspected/knew about Jesus—who He was, & where He was from.

They treated X exactly as they had always treated God.

Rom 1 says men “*suppress the truth* [they know about God] *in unrighteousness, / because that which is **known about God** is evident within them; for God made it evident to them*” (Rom 1:18-19).

Because of Jesus’ works/words, His divine nature could be known by men, so even if they didn’t admit it to themselves, they knew it.

Jesus' perfectly sinless & godly life told them that He could only have come from heaven.

But in other verses Jesus says that these people didn't know Him.

E.g. Jn 8:18-19 (Jesus)=> "*I am He who testifies about Myself, & the Father who sent Me testifies about Me.*" / So they were saying to Him, 'Where is Your Father?' Jesus answered, '**You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also.**'"

So did these people know God, & know Jesus was God, or not?

My answer would be that they did, on an intuitive level.

But in both the case of the Father and that of the Son, they suppressed that knowledge, hiding it from themselves, w/i themselves.

On a volitional level, they chose not to know either God the Father, or God the Son.

They remained adamantly ignorant, wanting to ignore God.

When man has seen Jesus' miraculous works and heard His wonderful words, failure to acknowledge Him as God's Son, believe in Him & love Him, is nothing short of sin.

In Jn 15:24, Jesus said=> "*If I had not done among them the **works** which **no one else** did, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen & hated Me and My Father as well.*"

They became adamantly ignorant, refusing to learn of X.

When Jesus was insisting in our own text that the local Jews in the Temple knew Him, & knew where He was from, He was warning them to act on that intuitive knowledge, not to allow their willful ignorance to harden into volitional unbelief.

He was confronting them, out of concern for their souls.

* A Refutation—Jesus now refuted their belief that He was nothing more than a self-appointed prophet, saying=>

[Verse 28b]=> *“and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know.”*

Jesus was sent by God the Father, whom X says is “true” in the sense that He is absolutely real.

Remember that Jesus was alluding to the Trinity here, a concept w/ which these monotheistic Jews weren't directly familiar.

OT Scriptures such as Psa 2 hinted at it;

But the OT didn't teach it directly/specifically or unambiguously.

So Jesus was saying there really is a 1st Person of the Trinity (or Godhead), (God the Father), & that it was He who had sent X, who was Himself, the 2nd Person of the Trinity.

That is the true explanation of Jesus' own origins.

This was a total/radical refutation of the Jews' own theory of who Jesus was, and where He had come from.

Why couldn't these Jewish people believe that?

Jesus said the reason was, that they didn't actually know God,
the One who had sent Him to earth.

The Jews prided themselves in being the only people who did
know God.

In Rom 9, Paul lists the great privileges God had given the

Jews=> *“the adoption as sons, and the glory and the
covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple
service and the promises”* (9:4).

They thought they'd come to know God thru the OT, the
Law, & all these other God-given privileges (and
they should have).

But Jesus had told them (Jn 5)=> *“If you believed Moses
[Moses' writings in the OT], you would believe Me,
for he wrote about Me”* (5:46).

The reason these Jewish people didn't recognize who Jesus is,
was that they'd never dealt w/ the Law as God intended.

Therefore they'd never really come to know God.

So Paul said they had *“a zeal for God, but not in
accordance with **knowledge**”* (Rom 10:2).

They had never allowed the Law to humble their hearts
before God, so they'd never come to truly know
Him/His-grace, by faith.

Because they neither knew/loved God, they had neither
known/loved His Son, Jesus, who shared His essence, &
whom God had sent to earth.

In Jn 8, Jesus will tell them=> *“If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me”* (Jn 8:42).

They had not accepted, nor were willing to accept, Jesus’ divine nature, and His unity w/ God the Father.

Jesus, having come from heaven, sent by God the Father, is the test of whether anyone truly knows God.

If a person recognizes who Jesus is, he knows God.

But if he cannot discern that Jesus is the Son from heaven, he doesn’t know God.

In the case of Jerusalem’s Jews, Jesus declared the results of this, test, speaking of the Father as the One *“you do **not** know.”*

They viewed Jesus as a self-appointed prophet, which was proof positive that they did not know God.

* A Proclamation—Jesus’ proclamation is both simple/direct=>

[Verse 29]=> *“I [this word is emphasized] **know** Him, because I am from Him, and He sent Me.”*

You know where I am from—I’m from God.

The Jews of Jerusalem had wanted to know who Jesus was, and where He had come from.

The answer was that He was the Son of God, sent by God to earth from heaven, as the only One fully qualified to proclaim God’s name.

**Jesus knows God as no other man ever has, or ever could,
because He shares God's own essence, & has a special,
intimate knowledge of God, as a Member of the Trinity
Himself.**

Therefore, He is from God.

There is a truth in Jesus' words here in verse 27, a/w/a Jn 10:15,
the depths of which we will prob. never fully understand.

In Jn 10, Jesus said=> *"The Father knows Me and I know
the Father"* (10:15).

There is mystery in that sentence, the depth of which would
baffle human understanding.

Jesus knows the Father as no one else ever has/will/could,
because X Himself is God of very God.

E.g. He fully understands/appreciates what seems like
tension from our human p.o.v., between God's
unrelenting, uncompromising righteousness/justice
on one hand;

And God's absolute/pervasive love on the other.

He is both the unrelenting/unwavering Executioner of
divine justice; and the merciful Father of love.

X perceives and revels in the union of these 2 seemingly
opposite/contradictory attributes of God, w/ a clarity
of vision which no other man/woman possesses.

He has had, from eternity past, incomparable experience of the full range of all God's attributes, which altogether constitute the marvelous glory of God.

When Jesus came to earth, He came to reveal to mankind the radiance of that divine glory.

He came to declare, by His words and by His deeds, God's own righteousness, by living an immaculately sinless life.

The sons of Korah were describing the pre-incarnate X

when they wrote in Psa 45=> *"You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness"* (45:7).

Jesus took our weakness upon Himself, & was tempted in every way we are—but yet He never sinned.

He ate/drank w/ sinners, w/o becoming a sinner Himself.

He was so righteous, that every eye could have intuitively seen, that His origins were in heaven, not this earth.

People knew intuitively that He was God's Son from

heaven, whether/not they admitted it to themselves.

But X also came to reveal to man, God's own love for mankind.

In His life, & in His words, we see/hear God's own

love/pity for the wandering sheep He has given to His only begotten Son.

The ultimate expression of God's love for people, is X's taking our sin upon Himself, & going to the cross w/ it, atoning for our sin, as 1 perfect Man dying for a multitude of sinful people.

1 Jn 3:16=> “*We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us.*”

Someone might say, “I see God’s love in the blooming flowers of spring, & in all His provision of food/clothing for us.”

So do I, but not like I see it in the death of His Son for us.

That’ the ultimate proof of God’s love for man.

He sheds His common grace/love on other creatures such as wild animals by providing them food too;

And He clothes the lilies of the field w/ color/beauty.

But in the blood of His innocent Son on Calvary shed for man alone, we see the Father’s love, giving its greatest gift, to guilty men.

And we say, “*Herein is love!*” (I Jn 4:10).

* **Application of This Text to Our Own Lives**

Jesus told the people of Jerusalem, “*He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know.*”

The starting place for any understanding of divine truth is an awareness of the fact that, although unregenerate man may know about God, & about Jesus, he doesn’t actually know either One.

Fallen man doesn’t know God, because he doesn’t want to know God.

In fact, he urgently desires not to know Him—but rather to remain an agnostic, forever trying to persuade himself that God is ultimately unknowable (if He even exists);

Forever suppressing the truth of God w/i himself, to dull the pain of the intuitive knowledge that he is in rebellion against almighty God, & there will be a heavy price to pay for that someday.

Job got it right when he said of sinful men=>

“They say to God, ‘Depart from us! We do not even desire the knowledge of Your ways. / Who is the Almighty, that we should serve Him, And what would we gain if we entreat Him?’” (Job 21:14-15).

It is essential that you act on whatever knowledge of Jesus you have, by seeking to know Him in your heart by faith.

If you don’t do so, your willful ignorance can become fatal spiritual hardness.

But there is a 2nd truth that goes beyond our text, which is precious to our souls=> Knowing Jesus—& thus knowing God—is a love-relationship that is unrivalled in its joy/glory.

Listen to what Jesus prayed while w/ to His disciples in the

Upper Room=> *“O righteous Father, although the world has **not known** You, yet **I have known** You; and **these** [His disciples] **have known** that You sent Me; / and I have made Your **name known** to them, and will make it known, so that the **love** with which You **loved** Me may be in them, and I in them”* (Jn 17:25-26).

Knowing God is the joyous essence of eternal life.

Jesus had prayed just before this=> *“This is **eternal life**,*

*that they may **know** You, the only true God, and
Jesus Christ whom You have sent ” (Jn 17:3).*

But even the high/blessed privilege of truly knowing God, is not
an end in itself, but a means to the end of a love-relation w/
Him;

The objective of such knowledge is the infusion into us
of an eternal love, of incomparable value.

Or as Jesus said it=> “...*that the **love** with which You loved
Me may be **in them** .”*

What does that mean to individual men/women?

That those who have come to know/love Jesus thru faith
may come to experience God’s love, know it, become
persuaded of it, believe it, and enjoy it to the hilt.
Jesus came to earth to give us a knowledge of God, so that
we might perceive God’s love, feel its power,
recognize its glory, wonder at its greatness, and
delight in its beauty.

Believer, God loves you as He loves His own Son.

If He didn’t, He wouldn’t have sent His Son to the cross for
you.

This truth is very surprising to us, but it’s real, nonetheless.

There can be no limit to such love, which we claimed and
received as a gift from God, when we believed in His
Son, Jesus X, and placed our trust in His death for us.

“Adamant Ignorance”

March 2, 2014

Text: John 7:25-29

1. Willful spiritual ignorance is common among men; they shut their eyes against biblical truth [18 refusing] to believe what their souls find inconvenient to believe.

Mic 5:2

Our text today breaks down into two parts—The Jews’ Ignorant Analysis, and Jesus’ Insightful Answer...

*** The Ignorant Analysis**

In verses 25-27 we find the confusion, the speculation, and the conclusion arrived at by the residents of Jerusalem...

- *2. Confusion—Jerusalem’s residents were confused about why their religious leaders were letting [14 Christ] teach in the Temple.

[Jn 7:25]

- *3. Speculation—The residents speculated that their leaders’ lack of action might indicate they had come to believe [12 Jesus] actually was the Messiah.

[Verse 26]

- *4. Conclusion—The residents concluded, based on what they thought they knew, that Jesus couldn’t possibly be the [14 Christ].

[Verse 27]

Jn 7:42; Mic 5:2

5. Jerusalem’s residents believed they knew all about Jesus’ origin; but in reality they knew [16 nothing] about it.

Mic 5:2; Hos 11:1

*** The Insightful Answer**

Jesus answered the Jews’ conclusion with a confrontation, a refutation and a proclamation...

- *6. A Confrontation—Jesus urgently confronted these unbelieving Jews with the fact that they [10 knew] intuitively who He was.

[Verse 28a]

Isa 42:2

7. Because of their unrighteousness and sin, they suppressed the truth which they intuitively knew about Jesus—who He was and [12 where] He was from.

- *8. A Refutation—Jesus now refuted their belief that He was nothing more than a [10 self] appointed prophet.

[Verse 28b]

9. Why couldn't these Jewish people believe? They didn't actually know God, the One who had [10 sent] Jesus to earth.

Rom 9:4; Jn 5:46; Rom 10:2; Jn 8:42

10. If a person recognizes who Jesus is, he knows God; but if he cannot discern that Jesus is the Son of God from heaven, he [16 doesn't] know God.

* A Proclamation

[Verse 29]

11. Jesus knows God as no other man ever has or ever could because He shares God's own essence and has a special, intimate knowledge of God as a [14 Member] of the Trinity.

Jn 10:15

12. When Jesus came to earth, He came to declare by His words and by His deeds God's own righteousness by living an immaculately [16 sinless] life.

Psa 45:7

13. But Christ also came to reveal to man God's own [10 love] for mankind.

I Jn 3:16; 4:10

* Application

14. Although unregenerate man may know about God and about Jesus, he doesn't actually [10 know] either One.

Job 21:14-15

15. Knowing Jesus—and thus knowing God—is a [10 love] relationship that is unrivalled in its joy and glory.

Jn 17:25-26; 17:3

16. Believer, God loves you as He loves His own Son; there can be no limit to such love which we claimed as a gift from God when we [20 believed] in His Son, Jesus Christ.