

The Gospel for People Pleasers

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[0 : 01] Well, if you have your Bible with you, would you please open it up to John chapter 7. We're continuing on in the story of Jesus as told by the Apostle John.

And here in John chapter 7, Jesus is in Jerusalem. And at this moment, there's a big festival going on there, the festival of tabernacles or booths.

Thousands have gathered from all over the nation. And Jesus kind of snuck into the city halfway through the festival. And we saw a couple weeks back when we were looking at this, how he went into the temple courts and began to teach the people.

And initially, the response seemed pretty good. They were amazed. Where did he get this teaching from? He knew his stuff.

How is it that he could know all this? Without having been educated. Well, it wasn't from YouTube and it wasn't from Skillshare. It wasn't from a mentoring relationship with some unknown rabbi.

[1 : 08] Jesus essentially said, you're right. My teaching is not my own. It comes from the one who sent me. It comes from God. And if you will humble your hearts and seek to do what God wants you to do, you will know the truth about where my teaching comes from.

Let's pick up the conversation in verse 18. There we read what Jesus says next. Whoever speaks on their own does so to gain personal glory.

But he who seeks the glory of the one who sent him is a man of truth. There is nothing false about him. And again, let's have a little more word-for-word translation here.

I think that will help us. We'll go with the New American Standard. 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. What is Jesus saying here? And why is he saying this to the crowd? Well, let's remember just what the people in the crowd are thinking as Jesus speaks.

[2 : 28] We read a little bit earlier in verse 12 that there's been widespread whispering about Jesus among the crowds. Some of them are saying, he's a good man. Others are saying, no, he deceives the people.

Some are more open to Jesus, while others seem to have already made up their minds that he's a fraud. He's a con artist. He's a deceiver.

And as with other times, Jesus, again, seems to know what's going on in their minds and in their thoughts. He knows that even as he speaks to them, there are some in the crowd who are saying, yeah, right.

Your teaching comes from God? I don't believe this. And so Jesus seems to say these words in verse 18 in his own defense.

It's as though he's saying, listen, guys, in all the teaching that I've been doing here, have I been doing and saying things to get glory from you for myself?

- [3 : 32] No. Has the main tone, the main message that I've been bringing in my teaching been, everybody look at me.
- Look how awesome I am. Bow down before me. Give me glory. Give me praise. No. No. Everything I've been saying has been for the glory of the one who sent me.
- So that you might turn your hearts to him and worship him and praise him and obey him and do his will.
- You can just imagine what kinds of things Jesus has been teaching them so far by thinking back over the many things that Jesus taught all the time. Think back to the Sermon on the Mount and the kinds of things that he said there.
- Think back to the many parables. All of these things had this overall intention of turning people's hearts back to the Lord. He taught people to turn from their sins, to stop doing what is evil and instead to do what is right and what is good from the heart.
- [4 : 45] He taught people to pray to God, to ask God for things, to seek things from him, to seek his kingdom. If you look through the Gospels, it's an interesting thing to notice.
- You'll find that Jesus never once tells people to bow down in front of him and worship him or to give him glory like that. Why is that?
- The Muslims and the Jehovah's Witnesses are quick to jump on this. They're quick to say, look, Jesus always told people to worship God. Why?
- They would say because he was not God. Well, they are right about one thing and that's that Jesus did not command or tell people to worship himself.
- In fact, I would go even further than that and say that he did not speak or act at all for the purpose of gaining glory or winning praise for himself.
- [5 : 46] But it's not because he wasn't God. We've already seen countless statements in the Gospel of John that amount to Jesus saying, I am the divine Son of God.
- But as a man, he lives as a man should. And so he calls people to worship God, his Father.
- Why is that? In some mysterious way, this is how the relationship between Jesus, the Son, the God-man, and his Father, God, works.
- Let's look at a few other passages to see this. And all of these are from John's Gospel as well. One of them we've already seen. John 5, verse 41. Jesus said to the religious leaders, I do not accept glory from human beings.
- Hmm. Why is that? Again, in John 8, verse 50, we haven't got there yet, but Jesus says, I am not seeking glory for myself.
- [6 : 55] Why not? A few verses later, in John 8, verse 54, Jesus says this. He says, if I glorify myself, my glory means nothing.
- My Father, whom you claim is your God, He is the one who glorifies me. There it is.
- God the Father is the one who glorifies his Son. So Jesus is the divine Son, as we've seen all over the place in John's Gospel.
- Yet He has not been calling people to bow down and worship Him. Instead, He's been telling people to glorify and worship His Father, the one who sent Him.
- The only glory that Jesus seeks for Himself is the glory that comes from the Father. In fact, we'll get to it eventually, but in His prayer in John chapter 17, Jesus actually prays and asks God to give Him glory.
- [8 : 01] He says this in John 17, 5. And now, Father, glorify me in Your presence with the glory I had with You before the world began.

This is a difficult relationship to understand. I find it difficult. Even though Jesus is God, living among us in human flesh, He does not have the mindset that we would expect Him to have.

Paul describes it for us in his letter to the Philippians, a passage that many of you are familiar with. His mindset was not to cling to what was rightfully His, glory, the worship, the praise of all people.

No, His mindset is to humble Himself, to get down to our level, to become a man, one of us.

And Paul tells us it's even more than that, to go even further down than that, to become a servant. Jesus is on a rescue mission that requires Him to lay aside, to give up, to veil, to cover up and conceal some of His glory.

[9 : 30] And to live for a time in a humbled and lowly state. And for a time to endure humiliating and even shameful treatment.

And it's not until after this rescue mission is complete that Jesus will begin to receive the glory that He is due. Paul goes on in Philippians 2.

He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Therefore, because He did that, God, the Father, exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name.

That at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord.

So it's God, the Father, who exalts His Son. It's God, the Father, who glorifies His Son, who lifts Him up to that place where all will bow down and worship Him.

[10 : 45] So yes, we are to worship Jesus. Even though Jesus does not seek glory for Himself from us, as He walks the earth, He is still glorious.

He is still worthy of worship. And God, the Father, wants us to worship His Son. That's the trajectory of this whole story. And we've seen this already, too, in what Jesus said the last time He met with the religious leaders in Jerusalem.

John chapter 5, verse 22. Jesus said there, The Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son. Why?

Why has He given it to the Son to do all judgment? So that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. The Father wants us to worship His Son.

And that's why He's given it to Him to do all of the judgment at the last day. Back to John chapter 7, verse 18.

[11 : 53] 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. Jesus is saying here, One of the evidences that I speak from God, and that I speak the truth, is that I'm doing and saying nothing for personal benefit here.

All the things that I've been doing, all the things that I've been teaching, have not been to get glory for myself. In everything I've been doing and saying, I am seeking for you to glorify Him who sent me, the Father.

And that's how you can know that I am no deceiver. Now I had planned to go on another few verses here. And the conversation is about to heat up.

Jesus is about to publicly declare that the leaders are trying to kill Him. And some in the crowd are about to yell back that Jesus is demon-possession. But we'll save that for next week, because there's a lot, even in this one verse, that can apply to our lives today.

[13 : 10] And we want to take time to think about that. So what do we take from Jesus' comments about not seeking glory for Himself? What can we take from this for our own daily lives?

I think the important thing at the start here is just to acknowledge that this is the story of Jesus. It's not mainly about us. This is the good news of Jesus, the way that it unfolded in real time in history, generations ago.

But there is still something here that relates to us, if we're looking and listening closely. Let's think again about that mindset that Jesus had. That mindset not to seek glory or praise or honor from other people, and instead to humble Himself, and to obey God as every man should, and seek for His Father, God, to be glorified as every man should.

Paul tells us back in Philippians 2, verse 5. He says, Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

Or as some translations say, Have the same mindset as Christ Jesus, who humbled Himself. In other words, we should have the same attitude about getting glory for ourselves from other people as Jesus did.

[14 : 46] This is one of those things that we do that isn't good. In fact, it's ugly. It's evil. It's twisted. We do or say things in order to get glory for ourselves, to get the praise of other people, to get their applause, their approval, their attention.

We do or say things to get them to like us, to think of us highly. Sometimes we might call this people-pleasing. An example of people-pleasing, you know, you're over-committed in your life, you have lots of responsibilities, and then someone comes along and says, Hey, I really need you to do this for me.

Please, can you help me out with this? And because you don't want them to think any less of you, you want them to be happy with you, even though you shouldn't say yes, you say yes anyway.

You don't want them to be offended. Other times we could call this the fear of man. Those moments or those situations where the right thing to do is to step up, to take responsibility, to speak up for what's right, for what's true.

And instead, in that moment, we're looking around the room and we're more worried about what other people think, and so we don't say anything. Or we don't do what we know we should do.

[16 : 22] The fear of man. What are some other ways that we do this? Perhaps it's with social media accounts. Online, we're all too aware that maybe hundreds of people see everything that we post or see every like that we do on someone else's post.

What can I post on my social media that can get me some likes or some good comments? We could put this into the sports realm.

There we might call it showboating or showing off. Leaving the team behind and going for it all by yourself with all your best moves to get the goal.

Because we know that the one who gets the goal gets most of the glory, right? And all too often, the players that worked hard to set that person up get overlooked. Sometimes it's with our words in conversation.

Jokes. This is so common in our world today. I hear about this in the school all the time. People throwing other people under the bus, making jokes about them, saying hurtful things towards them or about them to make them look bad just to get the laughter and attention of some of their other friends.

[17 : 47] We may even do this ourselves a little bit. Where we talk about our, the way we talk about ourselves, we maybe put ourselves down when we talk to other people and secretly we're fishing for some compliment, for some affirmation, for some praise.

Hey honey, guess what? While you were out, I did the dishes. Ain't I great? Whatever you call it, however it comes out, it all stems back to pride, to this desire to be exalted or loved or thought highly of in the eyes of others.

And so we say or do or we don't say or we don't do whatever will put us in that place in people's thoughts that we want to be. but Jesus shows us a completely different way, a completely different mindset.

He shows us how a real righteous man should live and think. We are not to seek our own glory from others.

So how do we do this? How do we stop ourselves from being people pleasers? from seeking glory and praise from others?

[19 : 16] What's the solution here? Inevitably, whenever this whole discussion of people pleasing comes up, there's often one person who is almost ready to just stick up their hand and say, I'm not a people pleaser.

I don't care what anybody thinks about what I say or do and I'm not afraid to let you know it. Is that the solution? Instead of seeking glory and praise from others to just have a mindset, well, who cares what everyone else thinks?

I don't think that's the right attitude either. A lot of times people with this attitude can be rude or obnoxious. They can be insensitive, needlessly offending people with their words and their actions.

it's almost like a pride in the opposite direction. Almost like you're setting yourself up on a pedestal above others. I don't care what you guys think about me. What you think isn't important.

Looking down on them, that's not right either. And I don't think it's, the way to do this is to analyze every one of our thoughts, every one of our behaviors and check before we do it or say it, am I doing this for me?

[20 : 28] Am I doing this for God? I think instead, we need to follow the example of Christ and we need to focus not on ourselves but on the one that we want to see praised and glorified.

How does Jesus do it? Let's see two ways that Jesus shows us that we should not seek our own glory, but instead seek the glory of God.

The first, he tells us that we should seek glory from God. And the second, that we should seek glory for God.

Two different ways. We're going to look at both of them. We'll start with the first one. What does it mean for us to seek glory from God? That's the mindset Jesus had. He's not looking for glory for himself.

Instead, he is looking for the glory that comes from God, for God to glorify him. What does that mean? What does that look like?

[21 : 41] John chapter 5, verse 44. This was last time with the Pharisees. Do you remember what Jesus said to them? He said, 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?

One of the problems with the religious leaders is that they are living for the praise and honor and glory of one another. And you probably know those passages where Jesus calls them out on that in some very specific ways.

The way that you pray, the way that you fast, the way that you give of your money, your offerings, all of that you do in public to get the attention of other people, to win praise, to win glory for yourself.

And it's wrong. Jesus says that instead they should be seeking the glory that comes from God. I don't think Jesus is talking about seeking glory from God in some kind of twisted way, as in looking for God to worship.

us. No. I think Jesus means that we are to humble ourselves before God, to serve him, to obey him, and to seek the reward and blessing that he has promised for doing so.

[23 : 10] To seek his approval, his affirmation, his commendation. You probably all know the parable of the talents, where the servants were each entrusted with a sum of money.

What do those faithful servants hear from their master when the master returns? Well done, good and faithful servant. He commends them.

He praises them. He honors them. He lifts them up in the sight of others to new heights of responsibility. humility. I think that's a picture of what Jesus is talking about here.

What it means to seek the glory that is from God. Are you living for the well done of other people? Or are you living for the well done of God?

One of the things that we hear time and time again throughout the scriptures is that God is a God who humbles the proud and exalts the humble. He's a God who turns the spotlight off of the proud and takes the ground out from under them, the thing that they're standing on and boasting in, and instead turns the spotlight onto the humble and highlights them for others to see.

[24 : 34] The apostle Peter picks up on this in his letter. He says, all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another because God opposes the proud but gives favor or grace to the humble.

Humble yourselves, says Peter. Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand that he may lift you up in due time.

This is what it means to seek glory from God and not from other people. It means to humble yourself before God, to bow the knee to him, to submit to him, to obey him, to consider yourself as you should before him and allow God at the appropriate time to lift you up and honor you and give you the reward that you are due.

This was Jesus' mindset. He didn't seek glory for himself from people. He sought his glory from God. God. And this should be our mindset as well.

The second way that Jesus teaches us to seek the glory of God is a little different. He teaches us not to seek glory or praise for ourselves but instead to seek glory or praise for God.

[26 : 00] And if we look back to all that Jesus taught, we can see how he did this for his disciples as well. We'll just give one example. In the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples to pray, he taught them to seek the glory of the Father.

He said, this then is how you should pray. Pray like this. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Not hallowed and respected and revered and honored be my name.

No. Pray, hallowed be your name, God. May you be glorified. That's the heart that he taught his disciples to have.

What we do and say should be to make much of God and not much of ourselves. God.

I encourage you to think of this past week. Have you been living to make much of God? Or have you been living to make much of yourself?

[27 : 15] In your conversations with other people, were you speaking to make much of God? Or were you speaking to make much of yourself? Maybe even in a false humility kind of way.

How can we live to make much of God if we are too busy living to make much of ourselves? They're at odds with each other. So Jesus gives us this example of how we should live.

We should not seek glory or praise or honor from other people. instead, we should do as Jesus did and seek glory and praise for God.

And any glory or praise that we do seek for ourselves should be the glory that comes from God, that well done, good and faithful servant. Finally, I want to come back to what I said earlier about this story not mainly being about us.

I hope that we can take a lesson here from Jesus about how we should live, what our mindset should be. I hope that all of us will go into this week and take some time to pray and ask the Lord, what kind of habits or things am I doing or saying to get glory from other people?

[28 : 46] The truth is we all do this in many ways, whether we realize it or not. It's just part of the subtle and pervasive taint of sin that is in all of us.

But this is the gospel. This is the good news of Jesus. And the good news for people pleasers like you and me is that there is one who did not live to please himself.

the good news for self-centered glory seekers like you and me is that there is one who did not live to seek his own glory but in every way humbled himself and sought the glory of God and God alone.

And because he did, he was able to make atonement for our sins. He was able to secure forgiveness for us, for all of our proud and self-centered glory seeking, all of our people pleasing.

He was able to bear the punishment we deserve for all of it and wipe the slate clean. Not only that, but he was able to transfer the reward and the blessing that only comes to those who live righteously and humbly.

[30 : 13] He was able to transfer that reward to us who believe. And he did this. He accomplished this by taking upon himself the humiliation and shame that is really ours.

For all of the proud and self-centered glory seeking that we have done at the cross. grace. Isn't that amazing? Isn't that gracious?

So seek the glory for God. Seek the glory that comes from God. But rest and rejoice in the wonderful news that for all of our times that we've failed to do those two things.

Jesus has done what was needed to turn the punishment that we deserve away from us and to secure the blessing and the reward that we did not deserve for us.

Praise be to God. Let's pray. Lord Jesus we are not worthy to stand in your presence.

[31 : 40] Thank you that you have loved us with such an amazing love that you humbled yourself as you did. You are worthy of all the glory all the praise and we choose not to wait until the end to bow before you but we bow before you now and we worship you.

We pray and ask that you would cleanse our hearts of all sin, all pride, all arrogance, all self-righteousness and that you would teach us to walk humbly with you day after day.

We ask this in your name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

compensated by the name. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.