

**Series Title: “John’s Gospel of Jesus: God in Flesh”**

**Today’s Title:**

**“Jesus Makes Fence-Sitting Impossible”**

Scripture Reading and Text: John 7:25-31

**Introduction:** (Illustration from *Perfect Illustrations*, p.128)

Back when the telegraph was the fastest means of long-dis-tance communication, there was a story about a young man who applied for a job as a Morse code operator. Answering an ad in the newspaper, he went to the address that was listed. When he arrived, he entered a large, noisy office. In the back-ground, a telegraph clacked away. A sign on the receptionist’s counter instructed job applicants to fill out a form and wait until they were summoned to enter the inner office.

The young man completed his form and sat down with 7 other waiting applicants. After a few minutes, the young man stood up, crossed the room to the door of the inner office, and walked right in. Naturally the other applicants perked up, wondering what was going on. Why had this man been so bold? They muttered among themselves that they hadn’t heard any summons yet. They took more that a little satisfaction in assuming the young man who went into the office would be reprimanded for his presumption and summarily disqualified for the job.

Within a few minutes the young man emerged from the inner office escorted by the interviewer, who announced to the other applicants, “Gentlemen, thank you very much for coming, but the job has been filled by this young man.”

The other applicants began grumbling to each other, and then one spoke up saying, “Wait a minute – I don’t understand something. He was the last one to come in, and we never even got a chance to be interviewed. Yet he got the job. That’s not fair.”

The employer responded, “I’m sorry, but all the time you’ve been sitting here, the telegraph has been ticking out the follow-

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ing message in Morse code: “*If you understand this message, then come right in. The job is yours.*” None of you heard it or understood it. This young man did. So the job is his.”

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God’s message to mankind delivered by Jesus Christ was not complicated. God is to be worshipped as the all-holy God: man rebelled against God and inherited a sinful heart. God sent Jesus Christ, the God-Man to redeem man from his sin. Only the shed blood of Christ on the cross could restore the fallen image of God in mankind.

Because of man’s sinful condition, he did not have ears to hear God’s message, nor did he have eyes to behold Jesus’ as God’s only Messiah.

When Jesus says the work of God is that mankind is to believe in Him for eternal salvation, sitting on the fence of belief or rejection is not an option. To do nothing is to reject God’s only way of deliverance from the wrath of God

**Premise:**

## Outline:

### I. Willful Ignorance

### II. Weighty Independence

### III. Wholesome Insight

#### I. WILLFUL IGNORANCE

##### A. Denying Jesus breeds factions, confusion, and distrust

- from *Perfect Illustrations*, p.287

Rock and roll musician Paula Cole laments her loss of faith:

*“As a child, I felt what we call God, that spirit, that energy. Then you get schooled by society, and I rationalized that it didn’t exist. It made me profoundly unhappy that there was no meaning, no logic, no unity of all life.”*

- from Henry David Thoreau’s Journal (Nelson, p.213)

*“This is man, and one wonders why he wants to live at all. A third of his life is lost and deadened under sleep; another third is given to sterile labor; a sixth is spent in all his goings and*

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*comings, in the [toil] and shuffle of the streets, in thrusting, shoving, pawing. How much of him is left, then, for a vision of the tragic stars? How much of him is left to look upon the everlasting earth? A few snatched moments only from the barren glut and suck of living?”*

- from Robert J. Morgan in (Nelson, p.214)

*“You stand here and watch the world go by, don’t you?”*

*I had ducked into a newsstand at Chicago’s O’Hare airport for a paper, and the small, gray-haired lady who took my money had perceptive eyes and oversized glasses. She only glanced at me, her attention barely leaving the mass of humanity that was coming and going in a blur of motion. I was intrigued by her absorption in the flowing crowd, so I asked her, “You just stand here and watch the world go by, don’t you?”*

*“Yes...” she said, her eyes still on the humanity. “Yes, and much of it is sad.”*

*She turned briefly to me, gave me my change and my paper, and nodded toward the men’s bathroom across the concourse. “You wouldn’t believe the suicides they take out of that wash-room. Many men go in there and kill themselves, and the para-medics take them out one after another, all the time.”*

*With that observation, she dismissed me from her attention, her eyes transfixed again by humanity.\_*

##### B. Egotistical arrogance rejects clear teaching of Scripture

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- Matthew Henry

*“One would think that those who lived at the fountain head of knowledge and religion should have been most ready to receive the Messiah: but it proved quite contrary. Those that have plenty of the means of knowledge and grace, if they are not made better by them, are commonly made worse; and our Lord Jesus has often met with the least welcome from those that one would expect the best from. But it was not without some just cause that it came into a proverb, “The nearer the church the further from God.” These people of Jerusalem showed their ill-*

will to Christ.”

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“How they despised him, because they knew [from where] he was. Familiarity breeds contempt, and we are apt to disdain the use of those whom we know the rise of. Christ’s own re-ceived him not, because he was their own, for which very reason they should the rather have loved him, and been thank-ful that their nation and their age were honored with his appearance. How they endeavored unjustly to fasten the ground of their prejudice upon the scriptures, as if they countenanced them, when there was no such thing. Therefore people err concerning Christ, because they know not the scripture.”

**C. Since they didn’t know Jesus, they couldn’t know God**

“...and him you do not know.”

- Spurgeon on the Deity of Christ

“It is not possible that the man who denies the deity of Christ can be a Christian. He deliberately refuses the only way of es-cape from the wrath to come. I can understand a man getting to heaven as a Roman Catholic, notwithstanding all his errors, because he believes in the divinity of Christ and relies on the expiatory sacrifice of his death. But I cannot understand, nor do I believe, that any man will ever enter those pearly gates who, in doubting or discrediting the deity of our blessed Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, renounces the sheet anchor of our most holy faith and dares to face his maker without a counselor, without an advocate, without a plea for mercy! It is time we said so, and spoke out plainly. This is no theme for trif-ling.:

- Spurgeon’s first message in the Metropolitan Taberna-  
cle in London, England, 1861

“I would propose that the subject of the ministry of this house, as long as this platform shall stand, shall be the person of Jesus Christ. I am never ashamed to avow myself a Calvinist, but if I am asked to say what is my creed, I think I must reply, “It is Jesus Christ.” The body of divinity to which I would pin

and bind myself forever, God helping me, is Christ Jesus, who is the sum and substance of the gospel, who is himself all theology, the incarnation of every precious truth, the all-glorious personal embodiment of the way, the truth, and the life.”

- Spurgeon’s last message in the Tabernacle in 1891

“He is the most magnanimous of captains. It there is anything gracious, generous, kind and tender, lavish, and superabun-dant in love, you always find it in him. These forty years and more have I served him, and I have nothing but love for him. His service is life, peace, joy. Oh, that you would enter it at once! God help you to enlist under the banner of Jesus even this day.!”

**II. WEIGHTY INDEPENDENCE**

**A. Jesus spoke with the authority of God**

1. God the Father verified Jesus’ Person and work

c/w Matthew 3:13-17

c/w Matthew 17:1-8

c/w Matthew 28:16-20

2. Jesus Himself claimed authority as God in flesh  
c/w Mark 2:1-12

**B. Jesus knew God**

- Bishop J. C. Ryle

*“The knowledge of which our Lord here speaks, is that peculiar and intimate knowledge which is necessarily implied in the unity of the three Persons of the Trinity, in the Godhead. There is a high and deep sense in which the Son knows the Father, and the Father knows the Son, which we cannot pretend to explain, because it is far above our capacities. The Jews knew nothing rightly of God the Father. Jesus, on the contrary, could say, “I know Him,” as no one else could. “Neither knows any man the Father except the Son, and He to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.”*

**C. Jesus was sent by God**

- Hymn by Isaac Watts #268

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*Come, happy souls, approach your God  
With new, melodious songs;  
Come, render to almighty grace  
The tribute of your tongues.*

*So strange, so boundless was the love  
That pitied dying men,  
The Father sent his equal Son  
To give them life again.*

*Thy hands, dear Jesus, were not armed  
With a revenging rod;  
No hard commission to perform  
The vengeance of a God.*

*But all was mercy, all was mild,  
And wrath forsook the throne,  
When Christ on mercy’s errand came,  
And brought salvation down.*

*Here, sinners, you may heal your wounds,  
And wipe your sorrows dry:  
Trust in the mighty Savior’s name,  
And you shall never die.*

*See, dearest Lord, our willing souls  
Accept thine offered grace;  
We bless the great Redeemer’s love,  
And give the Father praise.*

**III. WHOLESOME INSIGHT**

**A. Jesus disallowed anyone to kill him prematurely**

c/w John 18:1-11

**B. Jesus caused many to believe in him**

c/w Acts 13:48

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- from John Bunyan in *Voices from the Past*, p.363

*“The words of John 6:37 reveal the purpose of the Father in giving his elect to Jesus Christ. The Father’s purpose was that they might come to him and be saved. This, says the Son, shall indeed be done. Sin, Satan, the flesh, or the world shall never hinder their coming to Christ. The Lord Jesus positively determined to put forth such a sufficiency of grace, that it will effectually perform this promise, and use all the means necessary to accomplish this purpose. The Father’s end will not be frustrated. By coming, we understand it to be the coming of the mind to him, and the moving of the heart towards him. It is a coming with the absolute desire to be justified and saved. There needs to be the sense of a lost condition to move him to come. This made the three thousand come; it made the jailor come; and indeed makes all the others come effectually.”*

**Conclusion:**

**Premise:**