

# Do we mean what we say?

**Reference: SHM-S09-023-Mw-R00-P2**

(Originally spoken on 16 September 2012, edited on 17 September 2012)

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Let us turn to **John 7: 17-27**.

## **John 7: 17-27**

- 17 "If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or *whether* I speak from Myself.
- 18 "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.
- 19 "Did not Moses give you the Law, and *yet* none of you carries out the Law? Why do you seek to kill Me?"
- 20 The crowd answered, "You have a demon! Who seeks to kill You?"
- 21 Jesus answered them, "I did one deed, and you all marvel.
- 22 "For this reason Moses has given you circumcision (not because it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and on *the* Sabbath you circumcise a man.
- 23 "If a man receives circumcision on *the* Sabbath so that the Law of Moses will not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made an entire man well on the Sabbath?"
- 24 "Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."
- 25 So some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, "Is this not the man whom they are seeking to kill?"
- 26 "Look, He is speaking publicly, and they are saying nothing to Him. The rulers do not really know that this is the Christ, do they?"
- 27 "However, we know where this man is from; but whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He is from."

This passage gives us a helpful insight into what is within the hearts of men: The contrast between the Lord Jesus – the perfect Man – and the Jews – sinful people, self-centred and prepared to do anything for their own selfish interest.

Let us look at the way they conducted themselves, the words that they said, the meaning of their lives.

We see that the crowd responded to the Lord Jesus in **verse 20**: The crowd answered, "You have a demon! Who seeks to kill You?" Notice that these two aspects that they mentioned are totally untrue and yet they could say it so freely.

"You have a demon!" Did they mean what they said? Did they really believe that? "Who seeks to kill You?" Did they not know that many of the Jews were seeking to kill the Lord Jesus? Why did they say such things? Did they mean what they said?

This is something that all of us also must consider. When we say things, do we mean what we say or do we say things because they are convenient to say, we say things because people expect us to say, we say things because it is advantageous to us, we say things because we do not want to face difficulties, we do not want to get into trouble, we do not want to get into any difficulties that may make life difficult for us? So, we say the things that are suitable for that purpose.

Most people are motivated by self-interest, by what is advantageous to them at the temporal plane and in the self-seeking direction.

We need to consider carefully the things that we say. Why do we say them? What motivates us? What is the basis upon which we say the things that we do?

If they said that the Lord Jesus had a demon and they believed in it, then that would have been very serious.

The Lord Jesus was God Himself come in the flesh. He lived, He gave, His life for mankind. They could not recognize that love in Him? They could not appreciate what He was seeking to do on their behalf? What did He do that would render them to think of that possibility?

In the context, the Lord Jesus said, "I did one deed, and you all marvel." What was that one deed?

He healed a man on a Sabbath and for that, the Jews sought to kill Him. They said, "Who seeks to kill You?" But in the context, it is very clear many Jews were seeking to kill Him. In fact, we have seen in **John 7** itself, **verse 1**: "After these things Jesus was walking in Galilee, for He was unwilling to walk in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him". Likewise, if we look at an earlier chapter, in **chapter 5 verse 18**, we see also the Jews were seeking to kill Him because He not only healed on the Sabbath but He claimed that God was His Father.

So it is obvious that Jews seeking to kill Him was taking place at that time, but they retorted in this way: "Who seeks to kill You?" And this may then give the impression the Lord Jesus was a coward – He was afraid of difficulties and so He made that comment.

The Lord Jesus said, "Why do you seek to kill Me?" and they said, "Who seeks to kill You?"

Why did the Jews respond in that way?

They responded because the Lord Jesus pointed out their sins. The Lord Jesus showed to them what they ought not to be. They needed to change, they must repent. They were angry because the Lord Jesus showed to them what they were and what they ought not to be.

**Verse 19**, we read, the Lord Jesus said, "Did not Moses give you the Law, and yet none of you carries out the Law? Why do you seek to kill Me?"

The Jews took pride in the Law of Moses. It seemed as if they valued the Law of Moses – they were basing their lives on the Law of Moses. But the Lord Jesus said: “In reality, none of you carries out the Law.” In terms of the intention of the Law, in terms of what God wanted the people to do through giving the Law to Moses, the Jews were rebelling against God; they were making use of the Law for their own ends. So the Lord Jesus told them the truth: “...none of you carries out the Law. Why do you seek to kill Me?”

In reality, they were seeking to kill Him because they were opposed to each other in terms of the moral meaning and direction of life. They were self-centred; they wanted their own way; they were rebelling against God. The Lord Jesus was self-giving; He was concentrating on what was truly good in the eyes of God; He was seeking to help them to become what they ought to be.

There was a conflict in the moral realm, and so they sought to kill Him.

So we see the contrast: The Lord Jesus, the perfect Man – He spoke what was true, what was accurate, what was good, what would be helpful for all those who truly want to follow God, who want to find true meaning in life; what He did, what He said would be of true value to them; all He said and all He did were in this direction. In contrast, the Jews were not prepared for this path: They only wanted what was more enjoyable to them, what they would get out of the situation for themselves, and they were prepared to be dishonest, they were prepared to deceive, they were prepared to distort in order to win an argument, in order to stand their ground, in order to accuse the Lord Jesus.

So, as we come before the Lord, as we seek to appreciate what He has done for us, it is also very important for us to consider: Do we truly appreciate Him? Does our appreciation of Him bear fruit in terms of the way we live our lives? Or do we just say, "Yes, the Lord has done so much for me. He is my Saviour, He is my Lord. I am very grateful to Him" and carry on living the life that we wish and we desire, without very much consciousness of Him in our daily lives? Is this the way we respond to Him? Or will we in our daily lives be motivated by what we recognize of who the Lord Jesus is, and we want to follow Him, we are prepared to focus our attention on Him, fix our eyes on Him, learn from Him, appreciate how He lived His life and be like Him?

This will cost us our lives. The Lord Jesus said, "If you want to cling on to your life in this world, you will lose your life. But if you give it up for Me, you will find it."

The Lord Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit and John the Baptist saw the Holy Spirit descend upon Him when He was being baptized, and the Holy Spirit led Him into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. His life manifests that kind of life that we should live: A life filled with the Holy Spirit, empowered by the Holy Spirit to do the will of God, conscious of God's guidance, enabling, in the things that we do.

But the Jews said, "You have a demon!" (A demon is a spirit that has rebelled against God, a spirit that has followed the most evil being in the world; a demon is one who seeks to have power over men, to afflict men with suffering for their own gain.) They could accuse the Lord Jesus of having a demon when in reality, they were the ones who were evil; they were the ones who were self-centred.

So if we want to follow the Lord Jesus, we must also be prepared for times when we will be maligned, where there are those who do not appreciate what the Lord wants to do who may be against us. And we must be prepared for that. Of course, there are times when people are against us because we have done something bad or wrong. In the case of the Lord Jesus, that was not so.

If we ensure that we walk with Him, our lives are meaningful before God then we must also prepare our hearts for the difficulties that may come because it is a spiritual battle. As we live in this world, as we seek to develop the quality of our lives, it will be a spiritual battle that we will have to fight and the evil one will seek to destroy us. And the evil one does work through the people in this world who have a similar desire.

So then, let us, as we seek to express our love for the Lord, ask Him to help us to think through our lives: What is it that we want to base our lives upon? Are we truly appreciative of Him, that the Lord is good and we want to follow Him? Are we truly grateful to Him for what He has done for us and we want to express our love for Him by the way we live? Are we prepared to endure to the end because it is a meaningful and worthwhile race? It will lead to an eternal goal of meaning and richness. Will we persevere?

So let us ask the Lord to help us, so that we will not just say things that we do not mean. We will not just call Him, "Lord, Lord" and not do the things He tells us, but that when we express our love for Him, it will be backed up with a life in which we live by what we have said, that it is true and we mean it.

Let us come before the Lord and ask Him to help us to draw near to Him and to express our commitment to Him.