

The Character of Jesus 40
Doing the (Unexpected) Right Thing
John 7:2 – 10, Luke 9:51 - 62
Focus

- Characteristic: Focus
 - Taken sequentially, first John, then Luke.
 - (2) Tabernacles began in late-September through mid-October, depending on the lunar calendar versus the solar calendar.
 - (3) The speakers are Jesus' brothers (Joseph, Simon, Judas, and James), since they reference Jesus' disciples as a group other than themselves.
 - (5) Certainly, Jesus' family supported His religious work. Their "unbelief" was with reference to His being the Messiah ("believe into Him"). They had a normal publicity mindset.
 - (6 – 8) Jesus did not allow custom or family pressure or expectations of others divert Him from His task. He did not always act unexpectedly, but His focus on His task kept Him from making culturally-induced choices.
 - (8) "I am not going." Jesus was not going in the sense His brothers expected, but rather quietly. His reasoning was that if He made a grand entrance as He would at the next Passover, His execution would not be far in the future.
 - (10) Jesus did not make a public appearance until half way through the eight-day festival (verse 14). However, being present was required by the Law, so He fit it in His schedule in a way that did not conflict with His goals.
 - (51) Although the introduction may read like His last visit to Jerusalem, Luke, with avowed chronology, has that last visit in chapter 19.
 - (52) The advance guard was not sent to Jerusalem to prepare the crowds, since this was a less obtrusive event, Jesus did send people ahead to prepare food and lodging. As was His custom, He took the direct route from Galilee to Jerusalem, through Samaria.
 - (53) Although Jesus had a warm reception in John 4, the animosity between Samaritans and Jews ran deep.
 - (54 – 55) I presume the James and John were confident that they could do this. They were reacting as was culturally expected rather than maintaining focus on what was right. Although Jesus used violence twice (John 2:13 – 16, Matthew 21:12 – 17 and parallels) in cleansing the Temple, He had legal reasons for the cleansing. This was just racism.
 - (57 – 58) Jesus did not accept volunteers without first being certain that they knew what they were getting into. Numbers was not the point.
 - (59 – 60) Jesus solicited this new disciple. The delaying tactic was addressed for what it was. The task of managing a family funeral (a big deal in that time) could be handled by another family member. Again, Jesus focused on the reality of the task.
 - (61 – 62) The third example (either solicited or volunteer) also had a delaying tactic. Jesus' reality was, "Just do it."
- Application: Focus
 - To what religious cultural expectations do we fall prey?
 - Jesus was low-key when necessary, but sent advance advertisers other times.
 - Word-of-mouth often is more effective than big buildings and entertainment formats. It depends on the objective.

- Attracting people to an event misses the point of building a family, understanding the nature of God, or the promises of God.
- Do we allow the objectionable qualities of our society to elicit knee-jerk responses?
 - “What have I to do with judging those who are outside?” (1 Corinthians 5:12)
 - Highlighting the sins of the world to the world is not our job,
- Do we make sure that interested parties hear the uncomfortable parts of the gospel, too?
 - Living sacrifice, reserved for godly purposes, miraculous unity, servant, suffering.
 - Evangelism, sharing.