

The Character of Jesus 43
Countering Typical Accusations
John 8:12 - 59
Confronting Convenient Excuses

- Characteristic: Confronting Convenient Excuses
 - This scene occurred during the Feast of Tabernacles, in the latter part of the week, after the scene with the woman caught in adultery. The larger scene started at 7:1.
 - (12 – 20) Rejecting minority opinions
 - (12) Jesus made a bold statement, obviously based on His prior miracles and endorsement by John the Baptist.
 - (13) The general rule under the Law was that at least two witnesses were required. Three was better. (Deuteronomy 19:15). This challenge tried to dispose of Jesus' claim by a narrow use of the Law, like requiring eyewitnesses when there were none but ignoring other physical evidence.
 - (14 – 18) Jesus' rebuttal
 - The absence of witnesses does not make something false, just not provably true by that method.
 - Obviously, Jesus was from God, so He had inside information. They had none, so were not equipped to draw their conclusions. Jesus pointed out that He judged no one, yet they judged everyone, which is silly considering which of them has the better information.
 - Jesus did have sufficient evidence: His miracles.
 - (19) The Pharisees were saying, essentially, that the power behind Jesus' miracles was incomprehensible to them. It did not fit their preconceptions. Jesus suggested that they get to know their God better.
 - (21 – 30) Rejecting different ways of looking at things
 - The Pharisees focused so much on correct performance that faith made no sense.
 - (21 – 24) The performance attitude overlooked the fact that justice must be paid in full. They did what they could and sacrificed as instructed, thinking that the killing of the animal was the payment. Further, unpaid sins were nearly a sure thing even in their system. They did not think about the invisible, that which is not of this world, as being the essential feature. So, they would die unpaid.
 - (25 – 30) Something different must be from another god (a pagan god). Jesus declined to align with their typical definitions (the Prophet, Elijah, Messiah) because those definitions were corrupted in their heads. Instead, He referenced His future execution as proof that He does what He is told to do, and that He already knew that His death was part of the plan.
 - (31 – 47) Rejecting new ideas because they do not fit with their generations-old beliefs.
 - (31 – 40) The Pharisees rejected the idea that they were slaves to sin, even though their ideology focused on doing things exactly right. They constantly sought the line rather than God. The Pharisees clung to their ancestry, failing to recognize that they were no better than slaves rather than family. Jesus' case in point was that they sought to kill Him, which would be contrary to Abraham's personality.
 - (41 – 47) The Pharisees accused Jesus of idolatry because the One He proclaimed was unknown to them. (Some think that verse 41 refers to Jesus' physical parentage. But,

people of that day probably would just think that Mary and Joseph had had a “premature” child, which was common then, too.) Jesus again used their murderous plots against them. In contrast, no one could find misdeeds of which to accuse Jesus.

- (48 – 59) Resorting to insults and ridicule
 - (48 – 51) The Pharisees accused Jesus of being a lowlife and demon-possessed. Clearly, the accusations were baseless, but this is a typical defense mechanism. Jesus pointed out the contradiction: He honored God while they insulted Him.
 - (52 – 56) The Pharisees again refuse to address the unseen, spiritual life. Jesus brought them back to the fact that He could do miracles, so God obviously was with Him. Further, Jesus noted the nature of Abraham’s faith, that He rejoiced that God would solve the justice problem.
 - (57 – 59) The Pharisees resorted to violence at the clear statement of Jesus. They could not fathom that God could come to earth as a person, despite several previous documented events.
- Application: Confronting Convenient Excuses
 - Rejecting minority opinions
 - Is the popularity of an idea important?
 - Who is judging?
 - How is what you have working for you?
 - Rejecting different ways of looking at things
 - How do you propose to pay off justice?
 - What is the probability of qualifying for heaven by your method?
 - I bring this to you because I care. Do you care about me?
 - Rejecting new ideas because they do not fit with their generations-old beliefs.
 - What is the focus of your beliefs? Defining the line or connecting with God?
 - Why would denominational history matter?
 - Are you making progress?
 - Are you able to meet your own objectives?
 - Resorting to insults and ridicule
 - Are insults in keeping with godly behavior?
 - Have you considered the unseen? Physical life ends; then what?
 - How would you characterize Jesus?