



The Word Abides in True Believers

John 5:30-38

And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not (John 5:38—KJV).

You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent (John 5:38—NASB).

You do not have his word abiding in you, because you do not believe him whom he has sent (John 5:38—NRSV).

Two leading religious factions opposed Jesus. The Pharisees, who debated and enforced their religious rules and traditions among the Jews, condemned Jesus for disobeying and undermining their applications of God's laws. The Pharisees remained close to the Jewish people and tried to regulate their lives according to their interpretations of the rules they revised from the Old Testament. The Sadducees, who politically controlled the Jewish population, condemned Jesus for undermining their authority over the temple (like their control of the moneychangers). The Sadducees remained close to the ruling elite, to the wealthy residents of Jerusalem, and to the Romans who controlled Judea and made them important collaborators in keeping the peace and suppressing rebellions. Both groups knew how to apply specific Scripture passages to help them maintain their sense of superiority and retain their control over others. Though they might be considered very religious, they did not practice or develop a lifestyle consistent with the most important teachings in the Old Testament including the prophets; rather, they used their religious interpretations to manipulate others. When Jesus proclaimed the true meaning of the Scriptures and applied them to people's lifestyle and practice, the religious leaders automatically opposed Jesus. If Jesus were right, they would have needed to admit they were wrong and would have needed to change their lives. The Bible's real meaning had gone in one ear and out the other; so, the word of God could not dwell within them and lead them to believe in Jesus. Unable to surmount Jesus' personal example, loving care for others, and teaching of God' word, they decided their only option was killing Jesus.

Thinking Further

1. What are some of the actions that Jesus can take without consulting His Father?
2. What did Jesus mean when He said His testimony about himself was not true?
3. Who did Jesus say truly testified about Him?
4. Why did Jesus refer people to the human testimony of others? Why do we tell others about Jesus?
5. What and/or who did Jesus say was a greater testimony than John's testimony?