



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

Christ takes precautions!

I read my prescribed chapters this morning (I follow Murray McCheyne's Bible reading calendar which I commend to you) and I noticed the first verse of John chapter 7.

I could not but share with you a few thoughts on this verse.

"After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him."

1. This action on the part of the Saviour followed His display of divine power. He had fed the 5000 near Bethsaida and had declared the glorious truth that He was the 'Bread of life' and without the feeding upon Him, no man could have eternal life, 6:1-14, 35, 51.

2. Great murmuring and resentment was raised amongst men for stating this simple but glorious truth, verses 41-42. His reiteration of this wonderful truth brought a deepening of men's opposition and a turning of the back upon Him, verses 35-66.

3. This resentment was so intense that the Saviour withdrew Himself from amongst those that were a threat to Him in order to preserve His life. In the light of the recent controversy over the submitting to the regulations brought in because of the threat of the Coronavirus, there are those who must surely see this action as an act of cowardice since it is on the same basis as the withdrawing by some of us from where the virus spreads and that caused us to be labelled 'cowards' by those who have latterly decided to defy the regulations! As ever, the Saviour is our example to follow, 1 Peter 2:21.

However, we agree with the comments of the great Baptist preacher and predecessor of CH Spurgeon, John Gill, on this passage.

"Because the Jews sought to kill him; for healing a man on the sabbath day, and for asserting his equality with God: not that he was afraid to die, but his time was not come; and he had work to do for the glory of God, and the good of men; and therefore it was both just and prudent to withdraw and preserve his life; for like reasons he advised his disciples, when persecuted in one city, to flee to another: and very lawful and advisable it is for good men, when their lives are in danger, to make use of proper means to preserve them, for further usefulness in the cause of God, and for the benefit of men."

We are thankful for the comfort of the Word of God and the wise words of wise men in the midst of this controversy and the hurtful 'brickbats' thrown at us!

Ivan Foster.