

**The Gospel of John**  
**Week Twelve**  
**John 7:25-53**

**Day One**

25 At that point some of the people of Jerusalem began to ask, "Isn't this the man they are trying to kill? 26 Here he is, speaking publicly, and they are not saying a word to him. Have the authorities really concluded that he is the Christ? 27 But we know where this man is from; when the Christ comes, no one will know where he is from." 28 Then Jesus, still teaching in the temple courts, cried out, "Yes, you know me, and you know where I am from. I am not here on my own, but he who sent me is true. You do not know him, 29 but I know him because I am from him and he sent me."

v. 25 – After listening to Jesus in the Temple courts, some of the people inquired as to whether or not Jesus was the man the leaders were trying to kill. This rumor obviously was known among some of the people even though others denied it when Jesus later confronted them with that fact. **Could you minister effectively if you knew that some in your audience were trying to kill you?** This is an indication of the trust that Jesus had in the Father. He was not afraid of a random act of violence against His being.

v. 26 – The people reasoned that if this was this man Jesus with a contract on His life and if the authorities were not moving to carry out the death threat, then perhaps Jesus was indeed the Messiah. This was the first time that the people openly used the “m” word – m for Messiah. This is another indication that the appearance of the Messiah was constantly on the people’s minds. They were searching and watching, yet they were greatly affected by their presuppositions, as we will see shortly. **Where are you missing some obvious fact or meaning because of your assumptions about life, God or the Bible?**

v. 27 – Here is an example of one such presupposition. They assumed incorrectly that the Messiah would be a mystery man, suddenly appearing like Melchizedek, with no beginning and no end. John does not indicate where this assumption came from, but it was clearly wrong and affected their ability to see what God was doing in and with Jesus. This is why our thinking must be clear and correct:

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will (Romans 12:2).

v. 28 – Jesus was aware, as always, of what they were thinking and used it as a preaching and teaching opportunity. He confronted their mistaken concept of the Messiah and of Him. They thought they knew where Jesus was from (Nazareth) and that this fact disqualified Him from being the Promised One. They did not know, however, that Jesus had come from the Father. So the people were correct in that they had no concept of the Messiah’s origins, for the people were not expecting a divine Messiah such as Jesus.

v. 29 – Jesus told the Jews that they didn't know the Father! That is so ironic that those who served and sought God did not know God. **Do you know God? Do you know His Son?**

### Day Two

30 At this they tried to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his time had not yet come. 31 Still, many in the crowd put their faith in him. They said, "When the Christ comes, will he do more miraculous signs than this man?" 32 The Pharisees heard the crowd whispering such things about him. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees sent temple guards to arrest him. 33 Jesus said, "I am with you for only a short time, and then I go to the one who sent me. 34 You will look for me, but you will not find me; and where I am, you cannot come."

v. 30 – The Jews were offended and made an effort to seize Jesus to no avail. Nothing could happen to Jesus unless it was in the purpose and plan of God. **Do you realize that the same principle applies to you? May I refer you to a verse that I have mentioned many times in these studies?**

For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3).

For something to get to you, it must get through Him first, since your life is hidden in Him. **Do you function in the knowledge of this truth? Have you put your trust in Him totally and completely? Do you rejoice when something gets to you that is unpleasant or painful?**

v. 31 – While some wanted to arrest Jesus, many put their faith in Him. I have mentioned many, many times throughout these studies that some of the people were more aware of what was happening spiritually than the leaders were. Being a leader does not mean you are more spiritual and being a follower does not automatically indicate that you are less so. **Do you spend time talking yourself out of what you see or discern because you aren't a leader?** If so, then I suggest that you stop.

v. 32 – **How could the Pharisees have heard these whispers?** They were either among the people, spying on Jesus, or they had spies in the crowd. There are always those who are in cahoots with bad leaders, either because they are paid, the leaders manipulate them or they just want to be in favor with the powers that be.

The leaders responded by sending the temple guard to arrest Jesus. They were determined to prove that they were still in charge, determined that this man Jesus was not going to lead their people astray. Yet even those in authority could do nothing to Jesus until it was the Father's time to allow it to happen. Once again I ask: **are you worried about what may happen to you? Can you see how futile that is, for you are in the palm of God's hand?** He is in control of your life and you are safe (read Psalm 91).

v. 33 – Jesus told the crowd that He was in control of His own purpose and life, or rather that the Father was in control. He was only going to be with them for a short time, not by the will of the leaders but by the will of the Father.. What confidence Jesus had in the Father and it was not misplaced.

v. 34 – Jesus had a purpose in which the people could not follow, but then He would go back to the Father. Only those who had faith in Him could follow Him there. In their current state, the unbelieving Jews could never follow Him or understand where He was going. Yet anyone who does know Jesus, can know where He is:

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me (Matthew 16:24).

### Day Three

35 The Jews said to one another, "Where does this man intend to go that we cannot find him? Will he go where our people live scattered among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks? 36 What did he mean when he said, 'You will look for me, but you will not find me,' and 'Where I am, you cannot come?'" 37 On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." 39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

vs. 35&36 – The Jews still didn't understand Jesus. They misunderstood almost everything He said in John 6 about being bread and the Jews needing to eat His flesh and drink His blood. Here He referenced His earthly mission of doing what no one else could do, and the Jews thought He was referring to a mission to the Jews scattered abroad.

This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment (1 Corinthians 2:13-15).

v. 37 – The Feast of Tabernacles was an eight-day festival, and the last day was a solemn convocation. During the Feast, the Jews celebrated God sending rains for their crops during the previous year by pouring out a water offering before Him. When Jesus referred to Himself as a source of water for the thirsty, He was tying His remarks to the ceremony of the day. Of course, just like in John 6, Jesus was not referring to literal thirst, but spiritual thirst. This was probably a theme He used throughout His ministry:

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled (Matthew 5:6).

v. 38 – Jesus equated “drinking from Him” with believing in Him. There is only one way to satisfy spiritual thirst and hunger and that is in the person of Jesus. Not only will Jesus pour into a believer’s life, but those same streams will flow out of the person who believes. The person who believes in Jesus will be a source of spiritual sustenance for others, but the source is never that person – the source is God Himself.

When the water flows out of you, however, it should not have a bitter or salty taste. It will have a taste that can only come from you. **What do I mean by that?** You will still use your vocabulary, draw from your experiences, and function with the gifts that the Spirit has given you. Water will flow from you, but it will still be very much like the person that God made you to be. The gospel authors wrote the inspired word of God, yet they did so in a style of writing that was distinctly his own. They wrote from their unique perspective, which is why they wrote about the same stories but saw different things. **Are you being true to whom God made you to be, or are you trying to be someone else?**

v. 39 – John explained that this stream would result from the presence of the Spirit in the believer’s life. This abundant flow had not been released yet, although the Spirit was obviously at work in the ministry of Jesus and the life of His followers. This kind of flow was more obvious from the day of Pentecost as people were actually baptized in the Holy Spirit.

**Do streams of living water flow from you? Whom do they reach and touch? Who is watered and refreshed by your presence?**

#### Day Four

40 On hearing his words, some of the people said, "Surely this man is the Prophet." 41 Others said, "He is the Christ." Still others asked, "How can the Christ come from Galilee? 42 Does not the Scripture say that the Christ will come from David's family and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?" 43 Thus the people were divided because of Jesus. 44 Some wanted to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him.

v. 40 – These words of Jesus had life for some, and they concluded that Jesus was the Prophet who was to precede the Messiah’s coming. He was not of course, for John the Baptist had fulfilled that role. The gospels are full of references to people who were desperately trying to figure out who Jesus was. That is still true today. People assign many different labels – moral teacher, religious leader, prophet, deceiver, founder of Christianity. It is ironic that Jesus spent a lot of time and effort trying to tell people who He was, yet they persisted in trying to come up with their own titles and description.

This is evidence of our fallen state, for having eaten from the knowledge of good and evil, we reserve the right to figure things out for ourselves from our limited perspective.

vs. 41&42 – Some landed on the correct answer: Jesus was the Anointed One of and from God. Yet others dismissed that conclusion, because Jesus was from Galilee. For some

reason, many had reasoned that this was impossible. They thought correctly that the Christ would come from David's family but took that too far to assume that the Christ would have to come from Bethlehem.

Yet if the people had done more research, they would have discovered that Jesus did qualify according to their reasoning, for He was both of the tribe of Judah and born in Bethlehem. It intrigues me that the events surrounding Jesus' birth were matters of public record, but no one was able to connect the facts in this case.

When they [the shepherds] had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them (Luke 2:17).

v. 43 – The people were divided because of Jesus. This is nothing new for people are still divided over His identity. Jesus had alluded to this phenomenon in another gospel:

Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn " 'a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—a man's enemies will be the members of his own household (Matthew 10:34-36).

**Is your family divided over Jesus? Your denomination? Your church?** Just like in Jesus' day, people are looking for their Savior, but don't always want to receive who He is. They want to fashion and follow their own Savior if you please. This is man's desperate attempt to save himself, which of course will never work. Either you accept God's plan of salvation or you don't. You can accept or reject it, but you cannot change it.

v. 44 – Then there was still the element of the Jews who wanted to seize Jesus, and they would eventually win the day, so to speak. Yet they could not seize Jesus at that moment for His time had not yet come. It was only when God's plan required them to seize Jesus that it would happen. This makes me think of the psalm that states

My times are in your hands; deliver me from my enemies and from those who pursue me (Psalm 31:15).

You can trust in the Lord that nothing will reach you that is not in His will and purpose.  
**Can you rest in that fact today?**

### Day Five

45 Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why didn't you bring him in?" 46 "No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards declared. 47 "You mean he has deceived you also?" the Pharisees retorted. 48 "Has any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in him? 49 No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law—there is a curse on them."

vs. 45-47 – One almost forgets that the leaders had dispatched guards to take Jesus into custody, for the focus of this account was on Jesus, where it should be. The guards returned empty-handed, unable to seize Jesus. The Jews asked why they had failed to carry out their assigned duties and the guards explained that they were impressed and held in check by Jesus' words.

The word of God is able to withstand and hold back any evil attack. The Word is powerful and Jesus not only spoke the Word but He was the Word, which was the source of His strength and power. Jesus had integrity, which literally means wholeness. He was consistent through and through, in what He said and who He was. There was no "shadow of turning" as the hymn accurately states.

The guards gave testimony not just that Jesus was a good speaker but that no speaker like Him had ever existed. They were correct, of course, but this raises the question: **If the guards saw that dynamic, why didn't the leaders see it?**

That is simply an indication of how spiritually dead and hardened they had become. This is why Jesus was so harsh with them at times. They were almost beyond the point of repentance, guilty of blaspheming by attributing God's great works to the work of the devil. The leaders stated that Jesus was a deceiver! What blasphemy! What poor judgment and discernment on behalf of the leadership.

Those leaders loved to sit and study the Law and Torah, yet they refused to sit and study Jesus to come to the proper conclusion. Instead they led people astray. Those who accused Him of being a deceiver were themselves deceived.

v. 48 – The Pharisees knew the power of an endorsement from leadership and they were refusing to give it. Every leader has power and each one is accountable for how he or she uses or applies it. These leaders abused their power, for they used their influence to lead people incorrectly.

v. 49 – The Pharisees saw themselves as superior to the people since they were more knowledgeable in the Law. This caused them to speak arrogantly and condescendingly to everyone else. In other words, they were proud and God hates pride:

The Lord detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished (Proverbs 16:5).

**Do you have any arrogant or proud attitudes or behavior?** Don't answer too quickly. Ask the Lord to show any that you may have.

### Day Six

50 Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier and who was one of their own number, asked, 51 "Does our law condemn anyone without first hearing him to find out what he is

doing?" 52 They replied, "Are you from Galilee, too? Look into it, and you will find that a prophet does not come out of Galilee."

vs. 50&51 – Nicodemus had courage, for he was at least willing to ask a question that challenged the pronouncement that all were against Jesus on the ruling council. It takes great courage to challenge authoritarian leadership, especially when they are set on preserving their own world and power. The council had become dictators and saw themselves as vastly superior to “the people.” They considered the people under a curse due to their ignorance of the Law, which meant that the leaders’ studies and knowledge had set them free. They did not and could not see their bondage.

The leaders did not allow people to speak freely or openly; everything had to be said in “whispers.” They attempted to rule by fiat and edicts, telling the people what they could or could not do and believe.

The interesting point here is that Nicodemus was correct! The Law did require that the accused have a hearing, but the leaders were not interested in due process or procedure here. They were only interested at that point in ridding the earth of Jesus’ presence. Therefore, their judgment was clouded and biased. That makes Nicodemus’ comment all the more courageous and a harbinger of things to come, for Jesus would have an impact on that Council for many years to come. In fact, Jesus’ presence and their ultimate decision about what to do with Jesus both contributed to the end of that leadership council thirty years later.

**How courageous are you to stand up to authority that has gone bad? Are you whispering, saying what you think needs to be said, but hiding it from those who would disapprove? Are you saying what you believe about Jesus in the settings where He has placed you?** Remember what Jesus said in another gospel:

*If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels (Luke 9:26).*

v. 52 – The council members turned on one of their own and rebuked Nicodemus, accusing him of being from Galilee and thus sympathetic to Jesus due to parochial influence. The Council was so certain that no good could come from Galilee that they dismissed Jesus because of where He lived! This was the equivalent of discrimination or bias, which also renders leadership ineffective when they operate in it.

Throughout these studies, I have been “hard” on leaders. Leadership requires much development and great skill; it isn’t just a gift. All leaders, even spiritual ones, have the power to do great good or cause great upset and evil. We see the effects of poor leaders throughout history, the Bible and current affairs. That is why I am passionate about leaders developing and training themselves to be all God wants them to be. Leaders are not and never will be perfect, but they have the responsibility to perform at the highest level possible, admitting mistakes along the way.

**What kind of leader are you? What kind of leader do you want to be? What price are you willing to pay to be a great leader?**

### Day Seven

((The earliest and most reliable manuscripts and other ancient witnesses do not have John 7:53-8:11.)) 53 Then each went to his own home.

If you read John 7:53 through 8:10, the story does seem out of place or like it has been inserted after-the-fact. What does this mean for Scripture?

1. It means very little. Look at how many verses are in John's gospel. These represent a small percentage of the entire work.
2. John's gospel is 2,000 years old. It was preserved countless times by being hand copied. So to have it that well preserved is remarkable.
3. As I have stated many times in these studies, the same Spirit who inspired the Word is capable of preserving the Word for 2,000 years or more.
4. The story of the woman caught in adultery is a good story and consistent with Jesus' approach to ministry. The lesson in the story has a biblical sound to it. So when we study it, we are not doing damage to the overall message of Scripture.
5. There is the chance that this story existed in some other form – a list of other short stories about Jesus. It could have been imported from another source, so that even if John did not pen the words, the story could be factual and accurate.
6. The Bible remains a remarkable book, well-written and easy to read. It has power because its author is still alive and its message is still effective.

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16).

v. 53 – Each man returned to his home after this great and intense encounter with Jesus. At the end of the day, that is what we do – we go home. **Where is home for you? Where do you go when all is said and done? Is your home all that it can be as a place of spiritual refuge and peace?**