

## *That You May Believe* – The Gospel of John

### Lesson Five – John 7-8

#### Chapter 7:

- I Jesus decides not to go with his brothers to the Feast of Tabernacles.
  - A. This feast was celebrated in the fall at the end of the harvest. *It had become a kind of Thanksgiving feast.*
    1. This was one of four feasts each year for which the Jews were to go to Jerusalem.
    2. Jews built temporary shelters and lived in them for 7 days to commemorate the wilderness wanderings.
  - B. Jesus' brothers urge him to go to the feast.
    1. Most likely these are Jesus' younger siblings, born of Joseph and Mary. (Mark 6:3 mentions four brothers by name and also mentions sisters.)
    2. Verse 5 says they did not believe in Him.
      - a. Maybe they just misunderstood and wanted Jesus to be a more public figure.
      - b. Maybe they knew of the Jews plot to kill him and wanted him dead.
  - C. Jesus tells them his time has not yet come.
    1. Jesus operated on God's timetable and not his own as did his brothers.
    2. Jesus' brothers belonged to the world, but Jesus belonged to the Father and was therefore rejected (hated) by the world.
  
- II Jesus chooses to go later to the feast.
  - A. Jesus goes secretly. He did not want to bring all the quiet controversy about who he was out in the open.
  - B. Halfway through the feast, Jesus begins to teach publicly.
    1. The Jews were amazed that Jesus was so knowledgeable about the scriptures even though he had not ever been a disciple of a recognized rabbi.
    2. The more Jesus teaches the more the crowds idea about him changes. Look at the following verses:
      - a. 12a: "He is a good man."
      - b. 12b: "He deceives people."
      - c. 20: "You are demon-possessed."
      - d. 26: "Have the authorities really concluded that he is the Christ?"
      - e. 31: "When the Christ comes will he do more miraculous signs than this man?"
      - f. 40: "Surely this man is the Prophet."
      - g. 41: "He is the Christ."
  - C. Jesus defends his teaching and says that it comes from the Father.
    1. If a person chooses to do God's will they will realize that Jesus' teaching comes from God.
    2. Jesus did not come to honor himself (as did so many teachers of the law), but he came to honor the Father who sent him.
  - D. Jesus confronts the Jews about their plot to kill him.
    1. The Jews deny this charge. They think he must be demon possessed if he can know what they are up to.
    2. He explains how their judgment of him is hypocritical.
      - a. They do the Lord's work (circumcising babies) on the Sabbath.
      - b. Why should he do the Lord's work of healing on the Sabbath?
    3. Notice – Jesus does not say it is wrong for them to judge.

- a. They were wrong because they were judging by appearances.
- b. Jesus challenges them to make a right judgment instead.

### III The people are divided over Jesus.

- A. Many people believed he was the Christ or the Prophet. (While some Jewish traditions blended the role of the Prophet and the Christ, others saw them as separate.)
  1. He was speaking publicly and no one was trying to arrest him at first.
  2. They saw his miracles as proof that he was from God.
  3. His teaching about living water caused many to believe. How is Jesus like water?
    - a. We need him for life.
    - b. He makes us clean.
    - c. He quenches our thirst.
- B. Many others believed that he could not be the Christ
  1. Jesus was disqualified in their eyes because he came from Galilee.
    - a. Some thought that no one would know where the Messiah came from.
    - b. Others said the Messiah must come from Bethlehem, from David's line.
    - c. The Jews in Jerusalem thought the people from Galilee were country hillbillies.
  2. Many wanted to seize him but did not.
    - a. Maybe because so many believed and a riot would have started.
    - b. Maybe prevented by the Holy Spirit until the proper time

### IV John uses irony effectively in this chapter to show that Jesus is superior to the Jews

- A. vs. 25-29 – The Jews thought they know where Jesus had come from but they were wrong.
  1. In a physical sense – Jesus was from the family of David and was born in Bethlehem, although he was raised in Nazareth in Galilee.
  2. In a spiritual sense – Jesus was actually the Son of God who came from heaven.
- B. vs. 33-36 – They misunderstood Jesus when he said he would go where they could not follow.
  1. They scoffed at the idea he might go and preach to the Greeks.
  2. Jesus' message did go out from Judea to the whole world.
- C. vs. 45-46 – The temple guards were so impressed with Jesus' message that they did not arrest him as told.
- D. vs. 47-52 – Nicodemus stands up to the Pharisees.
  1. The Pharisees act superior to everyone and point out that none of them has been deceived by Jesus.
  2. Nicodemus points out that Jesus should have a fair hearing.
    - a. This made them look bad, because of their previous statement.
    - b. They accuse him of being a Galilean – a cut down in their eyes.
  3. They make another wrong statement by saying a prophet does not come from Galilee.
    - a. Jonah was from Galilee.
    - b. Isaiah 9:1-7 says that the Messiah will come from Galilee.

## Chapter 8:

- I The woman caught in adultery. (*Note on verses 1-11: In the early Greek manuscripts this story is found in different locations in the book of John and sometimes even in other gospels. Although it does not appear to be an original part of the book of John, scholars agree that it is reliable as an actual event from the life of Jesus.*)
  - A. The Pharisees and teachers of the law bring the woman to Jesus.
    1. According to Jewish law in order to execute someone there must be a witness to the act.

- a. They must have set her up because they let the guilty man go.
  - b. They can easily find sin in others but don't see it in themselves.
2. They were just using the woman as bait in their trap to catch Jesus.
  - a. If He lets her go, He breaks the Mosaic law.
  - b. If He condemns her, He breaks the Roman law.
- B. Jesus ignores them as if He never heard them and stoops down to write in the sand.
  1. Why ignore them?
    - a. Perhaps he was so angry he needed time to collect himself.
    - b. Maybe he was embarrassed for the woman's sake.
  2. What did he write in the sand? There is no way to know for sure.
    - a. Maybe he listed the sins of the men present.
    - b. He might have written down a passage of scripture like Exodus 23:1, "Do not help a wicked man by being an unrighteous witness."
    - c. Perhaps he just took some time to collect his thoughts.
    - d. The Romans had a practice of writing out a verdict before it was pronounced.
- C. Jesus gives his judgment. "If any of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone."
  1. In Jewish law the witnesses to the sin would throw the first stones. Jesus is pointing out that the witnesses sinned by setting this woman up.
  2. The oldest leave first. They not only had the most sin, but also were the first to realize Jesus' point.
- D. Jesus challenges the woman to leave her life of sin.
  1. He does not condemn her, nor does he declare her forgiven.
  2. He shows her mercy and calls her to repent.

## II Jesus has a long discussion with the Pharisees.

- A. Jesus proclaims, "I am the light of the world."
  1. Light was an important symbol during the feast of Tabernacles.
    - a. God led the people through the desert at night with a pillar of fire.
    - b. As a symbol of this, the people would walk behind a golden candelabra.
  2. Think of as many ways as you can that Jesus is like light.
    - a.
    - b.
    - c.
- B. Jesus defends his testimony about himself.
  1. The Pharisees criticize Jesus for being his own witness.
    - a. Jesus says his testimony is acceptable because the Father testifies with him.
    - b. According to Jewish law if two witnesses agreed then their testimony was valid.
    - c. The Jews ask where his father is – possibly an insult referring to the mysterious circumstances surrounding his birth.
    - d. In John 5:31 Jesus says his testimony is not valid. He means the Jews rejected it.
  2. Jesus again makes claims to be from God.
    - a. vs. 19 – "If you knew me you would know my Father."
    - b. vs. 21 – "Where I go you cannot come."
    - c. vs. 23 – "I am from above...I am from another world."
  3. The Pharisees still do not understand. It seems they do not want to.
    - a. vs. 22 – "Will he kill himself?" Wishful thinking on their part, maybe.
    - b. vs. 25 – "Who are you?"
    - c. vs. 27 – "They did not understand he was telling them about his father."

4. Jesus hints about the crucifixion, saying they will understand when he is "lifted up."
- C. The conversation shifts from Jesus origin to that of the Jews.
1. Jesus says that if they know the truth about him it will set them free.
  2. They Jews say that as children of Abraham they had never been slaves to anyone.
    - a. What about the Egyptians? Babylonians? Assyrians? Romans? – Hello?
    - b. John loves irony.
  3. Jesus tells them they are slaves to sin.
    - a. If they were Abraham's children they would do what Abraham did – have faith.
    - b. The Jews then claim that their only Father is God.
      - i. They just said that Abraham was their Father. They can't decide.
      - ii. They felt superior to everyone as God's chosen people.
    - c. Jesus tells them that their true father is Satan.
      - i. They want to kill Jesus and Satan is a murderer.
      - ii. They keep lying and Satan is the Father of lies.
- D. Jesus claims to be God himself.
1. The Jews say that Jesus must be demon possessed.
    - a. They are getting desperate now.
    - b. *Like a little child when he can't think of anything else to say – "Oh yeah? Well, your just stupid!"*
  2. Jesus makes claims about himself.
    - a. He had the power to deliver people from death.
    - b. His glory comes not from himself but from God.
    - c. Abraham rejoiced at the thought of Jesus' coming.
  3. The Jews laugh at the idea that Jesus who is not even 50 years old could know Abraham.
    - a. Jesus says, "Before Abraham was born "I am."
    - b. "I am" was the name God used for himself in the Old Testament
  4. Jesus makes seven other "I am" statements in the book of John.
    - a. 6:35 – "I am the bread of life."
    - b. 8:12 & 9:5 – "I am the light of the world."
    - c. 10:7,9 – "I am the gate."
    - d. 10:11,14 – "I am the good shepherd."
    - e. 11:25 – "I am the resurrection and the life."
    - f. 14:6 – "I am the way, truth and life."
    - g. 15:1,5 – "I am the vine."