



Jesus, the Liberator

Lesson 13 John 7:37 - 8:11

REVIEW

1. In John 7, we found the hostility toward Christ growing as a result of the events in John 5 and 6. Jesus was rejected as the Messiah by His own brothers as well as the Jews in Judea. - 7:1, 5
2. Because the hatred among the Jews had grown so significantly, Jesus no longer walked in Judea. - 7:1
3. The opposition to Christ took place both prior to the Feast of Tabernacles (the hatred of the Jews and the unbelief of His brothers) and during the Feast of Tabernacles after Jesus explained that both He and His teaching came from God. - 7:16-18, 28-29

LESSON OBJECTIVE

1. We will study Christ's teaching about the living water and the division among the people over this teaching.
2. We will discover the confusion among the Sanhedrin over Christ and the unlikely defense of Christ from within their own group.
3. We will explore the heart-touching story of Jesus and the woman taken in adultery and its implications in our lives.

LIBERATION FOR THE SPIRITUALLY THIRSTY (7:37-8:1)

A. The offer of satisfaction - 7:37-39

7:37 "In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. **38** He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. **39** (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given*; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)"

1. The time of the offer - 7:37a
 - a. "Last day" of the feast
 - b. "That great day of the feast"
 - c. Excerpt from "The Words and Works of Christ"¹
2. The offer itself - 7:37b-38
 - a. The Invitation
 - i. "If any man thirst" is the need for satisfaction (salvation)
 - ii. "Let him come" is the personal responsibility for salvation (one must come to Christ)
 - iii. "Unto me" is the source of salvation (Christ Himself)
 - iv. "And drink. He that believeth on me" is the reception of salvation

¹ J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 279-280.

b. The Promise - 7:38-39

- i. *“As the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water”*
 - a) Not explicitly stated in the Old Testament
 - b) Ezekiel 47:1-9
 - c) *“In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.” - Zechariah 13:1*
 - d) More than likely a reference to the rock in the wilderness from which God brought water to the Israelites; Excerpt from *“The Gospel of John: Believe and Live”*² - **Numbers 20:11**
- ii. The fulfillment of this promise was contingent upon Christ’s glorification - **7:39**
 - a) Christ’s glorification is a reference to His own death and resurrection **12:23, 13:31**
 - b) Fulfilled in John 20:22 and following

B. The reaction to Christ and His offer - 7:40-53

1. The people divided - 7:40-44

7:40 *“Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. 41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? 42 Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? 43 So there was a division among the people because of him. 44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.”*

a. Received by some - 7:40-41a

- i. *“Of a truth this is the Prophet” - 7:40*
 - a) *“Of a truth”* means *“truly”*³
 - b) *“The Prophet”* is a reference to the Messianic passage in Deuteronomy 18:14-22
- ii. *“This is the Christ” - 7:41a*
- iii. Their reception of Jesus on the last day of the feast is strongly juxtaposed with the Jewish reaction to Him in the early days of the feast - **7:12-13**
 - a) They were no longer simply calling Him good, but instead were calling Him the Messiah
 - b) They were no longer fearful of public confession, but instead were confessing Him as Christ openly

b. Rejection by others - 7:41b-44

- i. They questioned Christ’s origin. Christ was to come from Judea, not Galilee. **7:41b**
- ii. They quoted the Old Testament about Christ’s birthplace - **7:42**
 - a) Prophesied in Micah 5:2
 - b) Quoted on another occasion in Matthew 2:4-6
- iii. *“Some of them would have taken him”* means *“were wishing to seize him”*⁴ - **7:44**
- iv. A similar desire and restraint is seen after Jesus claimed to be from God - **7:30**

² Elmer Towns, *The Gospel of John: Believe and Live* (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 2002), 74.

³ A.T. Robertson, *Robertson’s Word Pictures of the New Testament*, Vol. 5 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1932), 132.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 133.

c. Respect of the officers - 7:45-46

7:45 "Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? 46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man."

- i. The officers had been commissioned to take Jesus - 7:32
- ii. The religious leaders were puzzled that their directives were not followed - 7:45
- iii. The officers realized the power of Christ - 7:46, 18:6

d. Resentment of the chief priests and Pharisees - 7:47-49

7:47 "Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? 48 Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? 49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed."

- i. "Are ye also deceived?" - 7:47
- ii. "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?" - 7:48
 - a) Their disdain for their orders not being followed
 - b) Did someone within the authoritative group give an order not to take Jesus?
 - c) Was someone a believer?
- iii. "But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed."
 - a) Shows the Pharisees' self-righteous attitude
 - 1) The people are deceived. They don't know the law.
 - 2) "We can't be deceived. We know the law."
 - b) Shows their disdain for the "common man"

e. Rebuttal of Nicodemus - 7:50-8:1

7:50 "Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) 51 Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? 52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet. 53 And every man went unto his own house. 8:1 Jesus went unto the mount of Olives."

- i. His identity - 7:50
 - a) He came to Jesus by night in John 3
 - b) He was "one of them," a Pharisee
- ii. His indictment - 7:51
 - a) Their practice of law required them to hear a case before making judgment Exodus 23:1, Deuteronomy 1:16
 - b) They were making these judgments without hearing Jesus' case or knowing what He had done
- iii. Their response - 7:52
 - a) False assumption. That Nicodemus was simply a sympathizer with Jesus and the crowd who had received him.

b) False claim, “For out of Galilee ariseth no prophet”

Two possible interpretations

1) Search the *scriptures*, for out of Galilee no prophet has arisen

- i) “It should be noted that God is not confined to precedent. If there had indeed never been a prophet from Galilee, God still would have been able to call a man to this office from that place.”⁵
- ii) Six prophets had come from Galilee (Jonah, Hosea, Nahum, Elijah, Elisha, and Amos). “While some might dispute five of these, Jonah definitely came from the same part of Galilee where Nazareth is located.”⁶

2) Search *Galilee itself*, for out of a place like that no prophet could arise

- i) Similar to Nathaniel’s statement about Nazareth in John 1:46
- ii) The Pharisees seem to have forgotten the promised Galilean ministry of the Messiah in Isaiah 9:1-7

iv. Their frustration - 7:53

v. Jesus went to the Mount of Olives - 8:1

LIBERATION FOR THE SHAMEFULLY TREATED (8:2-11)

A. The setting - 8:2

8:2 “And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.”

1. Time

- a. “Early in the morning”
- b. The morning following the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles

2. Place, “The Temple”

3. People

- a. Jesus
- b. People who “came unto him”

4. Events. Jesus was teaching them.

B. The shameful actions of the scribes and Pharisees - 8:3-6a

8:3 “And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, **4** They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. **5** Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? **6a** This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him.”

1. They brought a woman taken in adultery to Jesus - 8:3

- a. Jesus was not the legal judge
- b. The word “taken” means “to lay hold of, to seize, to overtake”⁷
- c. If verse 2 indicates “the next morning,” it means they would have taken her in the night following Jesus’ offer of salvation on the last day of the feast

⁵ Towns, 75.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Joseph H. Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 332, ref. 2638.

2. They “set her in the midst” means in her shame and in the wrong place (not a court)
3. They exposed her sin to everyone - 8:4
 - a. They named her sin (adultery)
 - b. They caught her in the very act
4. They tried to use the word of God for their own selfish gain - 8:5-6a
 - a. The law condemned this woman - **Leviticus 20:10, Deuteronomy 22:22**
 - b. The Pharisees were not interested in the law of God, rather how they might test Christ and have something to hold against Him - 8:6a
 - c. If they had been truly interested in the law of God, they would have brought the adulterous man as well - **Leviticus 20:10, Deuteronomy 22:22**

C. Christ’s reaction to their shameful actions - 8:6b-8

8:6b “But Jesus stooped down, and with *his* finger wrote on the ground, *as though he heard them not*. **7** So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. **8** And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.”

1. Jesus wrote on the ground - 8:6b
 - a. Many have tried to “guess” at what Christ wrote
 - i. Possibly listing the sins of the accusers
 - ii. Possibly some portion of scripture
 - iii. Perhaps the statement He made in verse 7
 - b. He wrote “*as though he heard them not*” was added by translators because
 - i. Jesus doesn’t answer their question in the way anticipated (showed disdain for their question)
 - ii. The Pharisees persisted in indicating their understanding of Jesus’ act to be one of ignoring their request
2. Jesus confronted their own sinfulness - 8:7
 - a. He pointed out their sin
 - i. Judgment of this woman
 - ii. Other sins
 - iii. Some have argued from the language that Jesus actually tells them, “He who has not committed this same sin cast the first stone at her.”
 - b. He pointed out their inadequacy to judge according to their law
3. He wrote on the ground again - 8:8

D. The Pharisees’ reaction - 8:9

8:9 “And they which heard *it*, being convicted by *their own* conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even* unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.”

1. They heard the words of Jesus
2. They were convicted by their own conscience
 - a. By the word of Christ
 - b. By their knowledge of their own sinfulness
3. They left from the eldest to the last

E. The compassion of Christ - 8:10-11

8:10 "When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? **11** She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."

1. He asked about her accusers, "*Woman, where are those thine accusers?*"
2. He asked about their accusations, "*Hath no man condemned thee?*"
3. He extended mercy and forgiveness, "*Neither do I condemn thee*"
4. He exhorted her to change her ways, "*Go and sin no more*"

LIFE LESSONS

1. If you are spiritually thirsty, come to the Fountain and drink!
2. If you have been shamefully treated by your accusers, find mercy and forgiveness in Christ.
3. As children of God, we should show the same mercy and tenderness of Christ when dealing with people who are caught in their sin.
4. If you are in sin, heed the exhortation of Christ who forgives, "*Go, and sin no more.*"