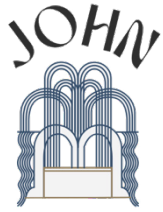


An Exposition of the
GOSPEL OF JOHN



“The Greatest Apostle”

John 7:25-32

Theme: Since Jesus was sent by the Father, we must listen to Him despite society’s confusion about Him and opposition to Him.

Introduction: **[Read Text]** When you step into John 7, you enter a world swirling with opinions, half-truths, political tension, religious hostility, and spiritual blindness. In other words, it looks remarkably like the world we live in today. Jerusalem was buzzing during the Feast of Booths. People were talking about Jesus, speculating about Jesus, arguing about Jesus—yet very few were actually listening to Jesus. Everyone had an opinion; almost no one truly understood.

Into that chaos stands the Lord Himself. In this section, the Spirit provides a clear view of why Christ is, without apology, the **Greatest Apostle**—the highest *Sent One* from the Father. Hebrews 3:1 calls Him “the Apostle and High Priest of our confession,” the One commissioned, authorized, and sent from heaven to reveal the Father, speak the truth, and bring about redemption.

However, the Jewish people have consistently rejected those sent from the Father – cp. [Matthew 23:37](#); [Luke 11:47-48](#). In [Acts 7:51-52](#), Stephen, the first Christian martyr, declared that all who have been sent from the Father—the Jews—have persecuted. Most people, because of their sinful rebellion against God, reject the Lord of Glory and Savior of men, in order to preserve their freedom from the intrusion of God into their lives. Depravity creates an irrational devotion to self and its indulgence.

Therefore, when He speaks in John 7, He ventures right into the storm of human confusion, disbelief, and hostility. The crowds can’t understand Him. The leaders want to arrest Him. The masses whisper about Him. The rulers conspire against Him. Yet, Christ remains unmoved—proclaiming His origin, His identity, and His mission with divine clarity.

In this passage, we will see three movements that expose not only the hearts of the people then, but also the hearts of men today, which I pray you are not a participant:

1. **The Confusion of Society (vv. 25–27)** - The crowds are baffled. They know the leaders want Him dead, yet here He is teaching publicly. Their conclusions about Messiah are shaped by rumor, tradition, and ignorance—not Scripture.
2. **The Credentials of the Savior (vv. 28–29)** - Jesus declares His authority with piercing boldness: “I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true.” He is the Apostle sent from the Father—His origin is heavenly, His commission is divine, His message is truth.
3. **The Contention of Sinners (vv. 30–32)** - Faced with divine truth, sinful hearts do what sinful hearts always do—they resist it. Some try to seize Him; the leaders send officers to arrest Him. Their hostility doesn’t expose His weakness—it exposes their rebellion.

This passage confronts us with an unavoidable reality: **What you do with the Greatest Apostle reveals the true state of your soul.** The crowds were confused, the Savior was clear, and the sinners were combative. Nothing has changed. And the question before us today is simple: *Will we hear the One sent from the Father, or will we join the chorus of those who refuse Him?*

I. The Confusion of Society – 7:25-27

A. The Dilemma of the Teaching – vv. 25-26

1. Jesus has just completed a scathing attack on the hypocrisy and superficiality of the religious leadership in the previous verses.
2. As the crowd listened to Him, they were being drawn to Him by the authority with which He presented His teaching – cf. [v. 15](#) & [v. 31](#).
3. We have observed the different reactions from Jewish groups, from the pilgrims mentioned earlier to the religious leaders (Jews).
4. However, there is one group of people not yet heard from – the resident population of Jerusalem who lived every day under the domination and fear of the Sanhedrin.
5. It is from them that John now records impressions – *“so some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, ‘Is this not the man whom they are seeking to kill?’”* – they were well aware of what the pilgrims did not realize – cp. [v. 20](#).
6. They couldn’t believe that the domineering, oppressive, and authoritarian religious leadership (the Jews) wasn’t taking action to stop Jesus’s aggressive and authoritative teaching – *“Look, He is speaking publicly, and they are saying nothing to Him.”*
7. *“Speaking publicly”* literally reads “saying all” and emphasizes the freedom with which Jesus spoke – that He was afraid to say nothing
8. Instead of confronting Him, the Jews were afraid to challenge Him, knowing they were "outmatched."
9. Because of the Sanhedrin’s hesitation, the people of Jerusalem, accustomed to their control, were scrambling to understand their reluctance.
10. The only conclusion they could draw was that perhaps *“the rulers”* had acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah, but they struggled with it and questioned in disbelief – *“the rulers do not really know that this is the Christ, do they?”*
11. Consequently, the Word of God as taught by Christ Jesus was so powerful and persuasive as to create a dilemma for those who were bent on the

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rejection of the truth – they didn’t know what to do with it.

B. The Disdain for the Teacher – v. 27

1. Since faith is not merely placed in a body of truth as a mental acceptance, but in a Person as a spiritual embrace, the issue departed from the teaching of Jesus Christ and focused upon the Person of Jesus Christ.
2. When this occurred, those who were confused by the teaching were polarized by the Person – they rejected Him altogether, the opposite of what He said was necessary in the discourse regarding the Bread of Life.
3. *“However...”* addresses the stabilizing of their feet of unbelief as they comforted themselves with “bona fide” reasons not to accept Jesus as Messiah – *“we know where this man is from; but whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He is from.”*
4. There were two basic schools of thought concerning the Messiah’s origin – one was indicative of the “pop” theology of the day, the other was Biblical.
5. Apparently, a belief had gained popularity among the people at large that the Messiah would simply appear out of nowhere – with His origin remaining a mystery – this is the view expressed by the people of Jerusalem.
6. The other view was officially endorsed by the Sanhedrin and was the result of the prophecies in *Micah 5:2* & *John 7:42*.
7. Just like many people today, they jumped at the opportunity to validate their rejection of Jesus, failing to even validate the premises used to draw their conclusions.
8. They say: “What I know is good enough to make a decision – I don’t need to investigate further, even to see if my ‘knowledge’ is accurate.”
9. The tendency for people to approach Jesus Christ with biases and predispositions remains a major reason why we must rely on the truth of God’s Word to pierce the hearts of men – and not on our persuasiveness or slick approaches that minimize truth – cp. *1 Corinthians 2:1-5*.
10. However, in the hands of God’s Spirit who quickens sinners to faith, the Gospel itself is the power of God unto salvation – *Romans 1:16*; *1 Corinthians 1:18*.

II. The Credentials of the Savior – 7:28-29

A. The Repudiation of Faithlessness – v. 28

1. Jesus, knowing their wicked hearts of unbelief, immediately confronts their

errant presuppositions with authority – *“Then Jesus cried out in the temple, teaching and saying ...”*

2. Jesus here uses sarcasm or ridicule as He addresses the ignorant assertions about His origin: *“You both know Me and know where I am from ...”*
3. He indicates to them, *“So, you think you know where I’m from ... Nazareth in Galilee? You have no real awareness at all of where I am from ... neither the immediate place (Bethlehem) nor the ultimate place (Heaven).”*
4. Because of their faulty conclusions springing out of hardened hearts of unbelief, they saw Christ Jesus as a self-appointed aspirant, even as did the Jews – cp. v. 15.
5. Jesus’ response to their hearts’ impressions was: *“and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know.”*
6. Although the people profess to be close to God, they were under “delusions of grandeur” – they were so far from God that they couldn’t even recognize One sent from God.
7. They viewed God’s ultimate Apostle of Love as a skewed fabrication, a renegade religious innovator – when their own view of the Messiah was just such a fabrication.
8. *“True”* [ἀληθινός] – refers to what is genuine or authentic - the “ultimate reality.”
9. Jesus’ argument is that we need to leave the establishment of truth to the One who is *“true”* – God Himself, and find ourselves embracing what He does instead of demanding that somehow God fit within our perceptions of reality – *“He who sent Me is true.”*

B. His Relationship with the Father - v. 29

1. Jesus then proceeds to address the relationship He possesses with the Father – the One who is genuine – *“I know Him because I am from Him.”*
 - a) His **Solidarity** with the Father: *“know”* [οἶδα] – describes a knowledge of intimate acquaintance or relationship that provides experience.
 - b) His **Source** from the Father: *“... because I am from Him”* – describes that the message He delivers is a heavenly message – not from His own mind.
 - c) His **Sovereignty** with the Father: *“... and He sent Me.”* – describes how He carries the Father’s full authority.
2. All of these statements require and demonstrate Jesus’ preexistence – an elaboration of how John began His Gospel – cp. *John 1:1*.

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3. Far from the errant views of where the Messiah would come from, embraced by the people of Jerusalem, Jesus, the Son of God, comes from God, from Heaven itself.
4. He is not a usurper, but the consummate apostle – the Anointed One of God – *“He sent Me.”*
5. Since Jesus was from the One who is true, and directly sent by Him, He alone can make the Father known – *Matthew 11:27*.

III. The Contention of Sinners – 7:30-32

A. The Hindrance to Sinners – God’s Sovereignty – vv. 30-31

1. Because of their hardened hearts, the people’s immediate response was to silence the voice of this man who taught with such logic, passion, and authority – *“So they were seeking to seize Him ...”*
2. However, as “in control” as men think themselves to be, they are under the sovereign authority of God – *“... and no man laid his hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.”*
3. God’s plan was specific – the Lamb of God must die during the Passover – therefore, *“His hour had not yet come.”*
4. Consequently, God did not allow the depravity and spiritual bankruptcy of these angry, self-willed unbelievers to be fruitful ... yet.
5. It reminds us that sinners who believe that they are “the masters of their own destinies” are under the mercy and grace of God, not only to restrain the lawlessness that is at home in their lives, but also for the provision of the grace needed to believe in the saving work of Jesus Christ.
6. This is evident as *“many of the crowd believed in Him; and they were saying, ‘When the Christ comes, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He?’”*
7. Although this “belief” was likely an unstable, non-saving faith based on miracles and signs, it was an indication of grace amid horrible hostilities – cp. *John 2:23-25*.
8. But it is evidence of the grace of a merciful God, willing to extend grace amid the barren and arid hearts of people who deserved none of His favor – *people just like us*.

B. The Hostility of Sinners – Godless Striving – v. 32

1. Nevertheless, men with hardened hearts continue to resist the truth of

God concerning Jesus Christ.

2. As the religious leadership began to hear the crowd giving credibility to the teaching of Jesus, they recognized that to preserve their primacy as religious leaders, they had to rid themselves of this “rival” – *“The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about Him, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to seize Him.”*
3. This is the classic ungodly approach to self-elevation – tear everyone else down.
4. We’ve already seen that God would not allow anything to happen to Jesus – that His hour had not yet come.
5. These spiritually dead people had no contact whatsoever with the will of God, nor were they interested in it.

So What?

1. **How is the noise of our culture – its opinions, traditions, assumptions, and misunderstandings – shaping my view of Jesus more than Scripture does?**
2. **Since Jesus speaks with the full authority of the Father, what specific area of my life needs to bow to His truth today?**
3. **Since my response to the One sent by the Father reveals the true state of my soul, what does my current pattern of listening, obeying, and loving Christ say about the spiritual condition of my heart?**

Theme: Since Jesus was sent by the Father, we must listen to Him despite society’s confusion about Him and opposition to Him.