



**One More Chance
The Heart of Jesus Reflected
John 12:37-50**

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We are with Jesus as John takes us through His last week of ministry here on earth prior to the cross.

John has taken us from Bethany to Jerusalem and the Temple. We have been with Jesus for the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem and now we have also been with Him as Greeks wanted to see Him. His time is very short and learning of the Greeks wanting to talk to Him helped Him to realize and state the hour has come.

As we finished up last time, Jesus had removed Himself from the Temple. He is the one in control of events and timing.



John 12:37–41

“But though He had performed so many signs in their sight, they still were not believing in Him. This happened so that the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke would be fulfilled: “LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?” For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, “HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART, SO THAT THEY WILL NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED, AND SO I WILL NOT HEAL THEM.” These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke about Him.” (NASB 2020)

For many of us, as we have traveled along with Jesus here in John and have been told of the various miracles He has done, we stand in awe of the unbelief of the majority of the people and the Sanhedrin. He took a man who had not walked in a very long time and healed him (John 5:1-8). But the leadership was upset that He did so on the sabbath. Then in His conversation with the leadership, He called God His Father which was understood by them as Jesus making Himself equal with God. They wanted Him dead for this (John 5:18).

He then spends some extended time in the north where He continues to perform miracles.

This includes the feeding of over 5,000 followed by an evening of strolling out on the water in order to catch up with His team headed back to their base of operations.

He remained up north until it was time for the Feast of Tabernacles. He once again comes to Jerusalem and starts teaching in the Temple. As He does so, He once again upsets the leadership.

First there is the teaching on the final day of the feast followed by ongoing discussion about Him as the Messiah.

Jesus then publicly embarrasses the Pharisees and finishes off with a claim of divinity.

John 8:58

“Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.”” (NASB 2020)

Of course, the Temple leadership wanted Him dead over this, but then He performs a miracle which is one only Messiah could do, He heals a man born blind.

In further conversations He asserts that He is the good shepherd tying Himself in with the prophecy of Zechariah.

A few months later, during Hannukah, He is cornered by the Sanhedrin, and they ask for a clear definitive statement. He gives them one.

John 10:30

“I and the Father are one.”” (NASB 2020)

The reaction is predictable, the Temple leadership want Him dead and sooner rather than later would be good. But it is not time yet.

He doubles down on the statement drawing in the Divine Council of which He is coregent. And now they truly want Him dead.

So, Jesus lays low for a few months preparing His disciples for the future, not the Kingdom. That is not being offered any longer.



One more miracle first. Lazarus, a well-known person in Jerusalem, dies. Jesus does not arrive until four days later.

Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead. This is the final straw for the ruling elites in the Temple. Now they officially form a conspiracy to have Him murdered.

So here we are, the week of Passover and the city has 2 million or so visitors in it from all across the Roman Empire, and Jesus is back in town. In fact, He showed up on the exact day as predicted by Daniel by presenting Himself as Messiah. He also presented Himself for examination as the Lamb of God, but very few picked up on that.

So here is the thing, considering all those miracles, how could anyone possibly deny that the Messiah is in the house?

John 12:37

“But though He had performed so many signs in their sight, they still were not believing in Him.” (NASB 2020)

That is a mind-blowing statement, but for those of us who have read and studied Isaiah, totally expected.

Even John points this out.

What is one of the ways that we know that Jesus is Messiah? Simple. No one believed what they saw. A dead man walks out of a grave after four days and rather than believe it took place, there are plans made to kill Lazarus. Insane. Insanity is also a predicted trait growing from denial, unfaithfulness and disobedience.

Isaiah 53:1–2

“Who would have believed what we just heard? When was the LORD’s power revealed through him? He sprouted up like a twig before God, like a root out of parched soil; he had no stately form or majesty that might catch our attention, no special appearance that we should want to follow him.” (NET 2nd ed.)

John tells us that the amazing unbelief, despite the evidence, is there to fulfill prophecy. Isaiah said it would be like this for His Servant. The people cannot see simply because they have made themselves to be blind. This blindness is one which was prophesied.

The leadership is so into power that they simply cannot see what is right in front of their eyes. The outcome of unbelief is outlined for us in Deuteronomy 28. The entire nation has already been there and went into exile for it.

That did not solve the problem. After returning from Babylon, things looked good, for a few years, but by the time Zechariah is ministering to the people, they have already started the process of unbelief one more time. This time it is the religious leadership, the Priests who led the way and by the time Jesus arrives on the scene, the rotten fruit is all over the Temple.

Deuteronomy 28:28–29

“The LORD will make you lose your mind; he will strike you with blindness and confusion. You will grope about in broad daylight like a blind person, and you will not be able to find your way. You will not prosper in anything you do. You will be constantly oppressed and robbed, and there will be no one to help you.” (GNB)



Amazing as it may seem, the nation has once again placed themselves into the same place spiritually, that they were in just prior to the exile with Babylon. Zechariah prophesied this in Zechariah 11 when he revealed they would indeed reject the good shepherd. Zechariah outlined what would happen.

Jesus came and most of the flock of Israel rejected Him. Zechariah demonstrated this rejection as he dealt with the Temple flock. A flock doomed to be sacrificed.

One of the problems with a flock like this especially since it is normally hired hands who are taking care of it, is that they do not receive the best care. It is almost as if they have been abandoned and left to simply survive until time to die. No one would risk anything on these sheep. Yet the Priests wanted these still healthy sheep to reproduce as they needed a viable flock for sacrificial purposes.

The Good Shepherd, as we read in Matthew 23:37-39, did indeed want to take good care of His people, His sheep, but the sheep did not want it. We have already discussed how Jesus had already been rejected by the time He arrived in Jerusalem for Passover week. He is there to fulfill Passover, not the Feast of Tabernacles.

So as a result, they are subject to judgment, just like the sheep who have already been identified for and are subject to being slaughtered.

Just like the flock Zechariah took over which had been intentionally neglected by those shepherds who had been appointed to care for them, Jesus will also find His flock at the time of His first coming, poorly taken care of and abused by those shepherds who were charged to take care of them. That would be those political leaders, as well as the Temple leadership.

The leadership of Judea at the time of Christ's first coming was corrupt. The Romans had created a system where turncoat Jews served as tax collectors fleecing the flock.

Add to that willing blindness, Satan is also busy blinding them to reality. And this isn't all. When Isaiah was commissioned as a Prophet during the time of prior to the exile, He was told about this problem in the Temple by the Lord. Fast forward to the time of Jesus and it is still an issue in the leadership.

Since the time of Zechariah, the religious establishment had created a professional hierarchy on top of the priests with various groups vying for power and riches while trying to maintain the status quo of getting along and fleecing the flock as well. The flock was reproducing, but not like they should be.

As we see in John 9 and 10, they had developed numerous reasons to marginalize those who they should be caring for and had become arrogant and proud.

They were prime for judgment and the flock was primed for slaughter.

More from Isaiah.

Isaiah 6:9–10

"He said, "Go and tell these people: 'Listen continually, but don't understand. Look continually, but don't perceive.' Make the hearts of these people calloused; make their ears deaf and their eyes blind! Otherwise they might see with their eyes and hear with their ears, their hearts might understand and they might repent and be healed.'" (NET 2nd ed.)

There was another generation that was just as blind in the face of overwhelming evidence. The generation that walked out of Egypt and across the Red Sea on dry land with Moses.



Deuteronomy 29:3–4

“Your eyes have seen the great judgments, those signs and mighty wonders. But to this very day the LORD has not given you an understanding mind, perceptive eyes, or discerning ears!” (NET 2nd ed.)

With the exception of Joshua and Caleb’s families, that generation which had seen yet refused to believe, did not enter into the land of promise.

In other words, a remnant believed, and it was the children who enjoyed what the generation of unbelief had rejected. And this is about to happen again.

As John outlined for us, the generation that had witnessed and seen the great miracles done by Messiah, did not believe. Some did, there is a remnant, just like before with Moses, but the majority would not enter into the Kingdom, which had indeed been offered and rejected, but a generation of their children, would. Just like what took place earlier back in Exodus.

Isaiah saw the Lord, He had been with the Divine Council, he repented and became a faithful prophet. Just as Christ would do, Isaiah would model in His ministry.

Isaiah was commissioned into his ministry and was told upfront; he would not be listened to and would be rejected. Ultimately, he would be murdered by the same people he came to minister to.

And so he is commissioned—but with the chilling prospect of being ignored, scorned and rejected by the people to whom he is to speak. God commands Isaiah to undertake this ministry in the full knowledge that the results will be negative; indeed, such preaching to these people evokes a negative response, is in some sense the cause of the negative response. (Carson 1991, 448)

John 12:41–43

“These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke about Him. Nevertheless many, even of the rulers, believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, so that they would not be excommunicated from the synagogue; for they loved the approval of people rather than the approval of God.” (NASB 2020)

Isaiah saw His glory. He willingly undertook his mission simply because of that. What is being said is that He saw the pre-incarnate Christ in His glory. Jesus is God and Isaiah saw it. Isaiah saw the suffering servant and knew just as He would be rejected, so would his words as well.

Just as there would be some who would listen and believe in the wilderness, there would be some in the ministry of Isaiah who would believe and the same with the ministry of Jesus.

Even some of the leadership, members of the Sanhedrin, would believe. But the hatred of the Sanhedrin was so complete, that they had threatened to excommunicate anyone who confessed to believe Jesus.

That is not simply an idle threat. It is a loss of community to include business relationships as well as family relationships.

Excommunication was an awesome ritual, pronounced with the sounding of the shofar in front of the open ark while those in the congregation held black candles that were symbolically extinguished as the ritual was completed. Biblical curses were hurled at the person being excommunicated, and a public warning was issued forbidding all to associate with him. (Eisenberg 2004, 608)

Ezra was the first to talk about this as a tool to be used to turn hearts back to the Lord. But it was later misused.



Ezra 10:7–9

“And a proclamation was made throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all the returned exiles that they should assemble at Jerusalem, and that if anyone did not come within three days, by order of the officials and the elders all his property should be forfeited, and he himself banned from the congregation of the exiles. Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin assembled at Jerusalem within the three days. It was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month. And all the people sat in the open square before the house of God, trembling because of this matter and because of the heavy rain.” (ESV)

Following Christ was costly for a Pharisee or anyone in leadership.

Following Christ can be costly today too. Following Jesus today could mean a loss of business. Being marginalized on campus. Or being accused of being a hater, intolerant, ignorant and behind the times. There is a hostility toward Christians and Christianity at least as irrational as any anti-Semitism. In fact, recently in the United States overt hostility toward certain Christians has been far greater than overt hostility toward Jews. (Yancey and Williamson 2015, 11)

There is a reason why our Podcast is titled, The UnSafe Bible. For many across the world today, following Christ is indeed unsafe. For us here in the west, as we conform to a Biblical lifestyle, we became very unsafe to the culture and unsafe to the ideas the culture has embraced as being important. For someone in Iran, it could be a death sentence.

Jim Elliot, who was killed for his faith while bringing the gospel to the Auca tribe in Ecuador, said this. “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.” (Wiersbe 2004, 152)

John 12:44–46

“Now Jesus cried out and said, “The one who believes in Me, does not believe only in Me, but also in Him who sent Me. And the one who sees Me sees Him who sent Me. I have come as Light into the world, so that no one who believes in Me will remain in darkness.” (NASB 2020)

We do not know where Jesus is. We were told in verse 36 that “He went away and hid himself.” So, whether He is still in the Temple or not, we just do not know. What He says though is an appeal to the lost sheep, one more offer of salvation.

We see the heart of our Lord. He truly desires to see all come to a saving knowledge of Him. This is a summary of His message.

When He was speaking earlier in the Temple, He told the people that they would have the light only for a little bit longer. Here is takes that idea, as well as His consistent message that He is simply being obedient to the Father and makes a logical extension from that thought.

As we come to know Jesus and give our life to Him in faith believing that He died on the cross for us, we are not only believing in Him, but we are also expressing faith in and believing the Father as well. Jesus is God’s personal agent and the one who believes in Him believes also in the Father at the same time. They cannot be separated.

The Sanhedrin though was trying to separate the two. They were saying that they were followers of YAHWEH while, at the same, rejecting Jesus and all the work He did.

Here, Jesus is also saying that idea, is not possible. The work of the Father is so intertwined with the work of the Son that to believe in one is to also believe in the other.



This means that the God of the Sanhedrin, may look like YAHWEH, but they have gone off into creating a God that they can manage. When they rejected Jesus, they also rejected YAHWEH.

To see Jesus is to see God. The more we become like Jesus as we follow Him, the more we become like God. When we are obedient to what Jesus asks of us, we are being obedient to God. Jesus is God.

When we first were introduced to the book, we learned that He is life and light, the two ideas were pulled together by John.

John 1:4–5

“In Him was life, and the life was the Light of mankind. And the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not grasp it.” (NASB 2020)

Jesus is the source of this life and only this type of life can provide light. The word light is φῶς (phos), we get photon from this word and phosphorus. In other words, the Word, Jesus Christ, is the only way any of us can truly live. Without Him, that is not possible. Only He can make us glow in the darkness as we reflect Him.

If we have not recognized that He is truly the source of light, then we are living like we are wandering around looking for the light switch.

When we learn who is the source of life and look to Him as that source and really begin to live, then we can perceive the truth, because we are in the light. But if we are still looking for the light switch, we are in the dark.

The light that shattered darkness on the first day of creation was not light emitted by heavenly luminaries (these were created on the fourth day, 1:14–19); it was, rather, the light mandated by Elohim to negate the darkness of chaos when he initiated an orderly universe. The representations in Genesis of the first day of divine creative activity offer no reason to insist that the account is merely mythical and in no way factual. (Henry 1999, 136)

He is light in all aspects that the word would mean. Light is a constant.

He is God, He is constant. “Of course, if the behaviour of light were not constant but arbitrary and variable, nothing would be certain, for the universe would be characterised by utterly random fluctuations and sheer irregularity. That is to say, what we regard as the universe would constitute chaos, not a cosmos, and certainly no objective or rational knowledge could emerge within it. The universe is profoundly intricate and mysterious and full of surprises, but far from being arbitrary it manifests everywhere throughout all change and fluctuation an integrity and trustworthiness which are to be associated with the invariant properties of light. (Torrance 1998, 80)

That is to say, the universe would have no ultimately reliable base for its rational order, if the primacy and constancy of physical light were not ultimately grounded in the self-sufficient uncreated Light of eternal God. (Torrance 1998, 81)

The darkness that Jesus is talking about though here though is much worse than darkness simply being an absence of light. This darkness is sin, a complete absence of light and reflects nothing.

The light shines in the darkness and never ceases to shine. The darkness is real, it is intelligent evil involving fallen members of the unseen realm, and they have been defeated by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And they operate like cockroaches.



Jesus is preparing to go to the cross and that darkness is the one He will destroy as a result.

The darkness of the world is a hostile power full of resistance to the true light of the Logos. The shining of the light in the darkness is, therefore, always an invasion of the territory held by the darkness, a challenge of the power of darkness, a battle to destroy this power, a victory robbing the darkness of its prey. It is thus that the light shines in the darkness. Far from the darkness invading the light or putting it out, the opposite takes place. Moreover, the light or luminary is never in the least affected by the darkness—this luminary is the eternal, unconquerable life of the eternal Word and as such it shines and shines in triumphant power. (Lenski 1961, 44-45)

Satan and his minions are like cockroaches. As long as its dark, you can't see them, and they think we don't know that they are there. We have a gut feeling that they are, but we just can't put it together. But when the light of Christ comes and illuminates, they run off. They cannot stand to be in the light.

For the person who places their trust in Jesus Christ, the moment the light come in, the darkness flees. They are now on the outside; they still want in and every so often we do dumb things to crack open a door and provide a nice dark place for them to hide. Here is the thing, when we come to Christ, the Holy Spirit moves in.

The light fills every single corner making it impossible for the darkness to remain. All it takes to take advantage of that light is to simply believe, that's it.

For many, that seems to be way to simple because the gulf between God and man is just so wide. No way it could be just believing to eliminate the gulf. But it is.

Romans 10:9–11

“If you confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from death, you will be saved. For it is by our faith that we are put right with God; it is by our confession that we are saved. The scripture says, “Whoever believes in him will not be disappointed.”” (GNB)

What does it mean though to remain in darkness. To see the light and reject it by not believing. Jesus talks about that too.

John 12:47–50

“If anyone hears My teachings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. The one who rejects Me and does not accept My teachings has one who judges him: the word which I spoke. That will judge him on the last day. For I did not speak on My own, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me.”” (NASB 2020)

This is entirely consistent with what Jesus and Nicodemus chatted about a couple of years earlier. Jesus' mission when He came the first time was not one of judgement, but one of redemption.

Again, Jesus used much the same terminology in His talk with Nicodemus, so since this is a commentary on those thoughts, let's take one more look at that from chapter 3.

John 3:16–18

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but so that the world might be saved through Him. The one who believes in Him is not judged; the one who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.” (NASB 2020)



Between what Jesus says to Nicodemus and what He is saying here in John 12, for the one who hears the good news and then rejects it and does not believe, in the here and now, today, they are already judged.

Another way to look at it is that for those who do not know Jesus yet, they are potentially, dead men and women walking. I say potentially because as long as they still live and breath, the opportunity exists to accept His teachings, believe, and not fall under judgment. But as long as they remain in the unbelieving status, they also remain in the judged status. Judged because of the rejection of the God's love as expressed by Him through Jesus Christ.

Jesus told Nicodemus a bit more of what that means.

John 3:19–21

“And this is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the Light; for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light, so that his deeds will not be exposed. But the one who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds will be revealed as having been performed in God.” (NASB 2020)

And there is the example of light again. As we come to Christ, we choose to reflect His light and we invite Him to not only fully illuminate us with His light, but His light comes inside of us in the person of the Holy Spirit, and we then begin to fully reflect Him.

Jesus tells us that it is the word He speaks that was rejected that will be used as evidence in judgment. Judgment will indeed take place as the rejection of what Jesus says is a rejection of what the Father says and is a rejection of God Himself. Jesus speaks on behalf of the Father.

He is also reflecting that the entirety of His ministry has been reflecting, at all times, the Father. He has followed the Father's commandment as to what to say. It has not been harsh restrictions.

The words Jesus has spoken in His ministry “does not simply speak of life eternal, nor is it the case that keeping it leads to life eternal (as NIV, “leads to eternal life”). The commandment is life eternal. It is God's great love acting upon us, and acting upon us for our salvation. “Therefore” (the word is important; NIV has “So”) the things that Jesus speaks he speaks just as the Father has spoken to him. (Morris 1995, 541)

Just as John reflected to us at the very beginning of John, we now have affirmed for us, Jesus is the Word of God.

Jesus is God.

Where are you on that truth?

As we discussed earlier, it is simply believing in Him, that He died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead, that is the key.

ABC's of Salvation

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.



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