

# Gospel of John: Chapters 7–9

## Student Handout

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All Scripture quotations from the English Standard Version (ESV)

## Chapter Seven — Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles

SLIDE 3 — John 7:1–13

### The Brothers' Challenge

- Jesus stays in Galilee — the authorities in Jerusalem are already plotting to kill him (5:18)
- His brothers urge him to go public at the Feast; their counsel is the logic of worldly ambition
- The family who grew up with him did not believe — proximity to Jesus does not produce faith
- Jesus goes privately, not in fear, but in submission to the Father's appointed kairos
  - **kairos**: the appointed moment, the right season — Jesus' life is governed by divine timing, not human strategy

SLIDE 4 — John 7:14–24

### Teaching in the Temple: The Source of Authority

- The crowd marvels: he has learning without rabbinic credentials — the question is about authority
- Jesus' teaching originates with the Father — he is the perfectly obedient channel of divine speech
- The test he offers: the one who genuinely wills to do God's will shall know whether it is from God
- He presses the Sabbath contradiction: if circumcision overrides the Sabbath, why not healing a whole man?

SLIDE 5 — John 7:25–36

### Is This the Christ?

- The crowd applies a messianic tradition: the Christ will appear from an unknown origin
- Jesus turns it: they know his earthly origin but not his true origin — the eternal relationship with the Father
- The arrest attempt fails — his hour has not yet come; divine kairos holds even his enemies' hands
- His word about departure is misunderstood; the irony is that he will go where they cannot follow

SLIDE 6 — John 7:37–44

### Rivers of Living Water

- The last, great day of the Feast — the water-pouring ceremony at its climax; Jesus stands and cries out
- Every element of the Tabernacles liturgy — water, thirst, the wilderness rock — finds fulfillment in him
- The rivers of living water are the Holy Spirit, not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified

- The Spirit's outpouring at Pentecost is the fruit of the cross — the departure makes the gift possible
  - **ekrazen**: cried out, shouted — emphatic, public proclamation into the heart of the Feast's greatest ceremony

SLIDE 7 — John 7:45–53

## The Officers Return — Nicodemus Speaks

- Officers sent to arrest Jesus return empty-handed, bearing testimony instead of a prisoner
- The Pharisees respond with contempt: the crowd that does not know the law is accursed
- Nicodemus — last seen in chapter 3 — speaks from within the council, appealing to due process
- They dismiss him with the Galilean slur; his journey of faith continues quietly toward chapter 19

## Chapter Eight — Light of the World — Before Abraham Was, I AM

SLIDE 9 — John 7:53–8:11

### The Woman Caught in Adultery

- The woman is not a person in this scene — she is a theological instrument to trap Jesus
- Jesus writes on the ground; when pressed, he disarms the accusers with moral clarity, not legal cleverness
- They depart one by one, oldest first — conscience works most powerfully on the most experienced
- “Neither do I condemn you” and “go, sin no more” held together: grace without holiness is sentimentality

SLIDE 10 — John 8:12–20

### I Am the Light of the World

- Second of the seven I AM + predicate sayings; declared against the backdrop of the Feast's torch-lighting
- Light and life are permanently linked in John — to have the Light is to have Life (cf. 1:4–5)
- The Pharisees object: self-testimony is invalid; Jesus: I know my origin in a way no ordinary witness does
- Two witnesses: Jesus himself + the Father who sent him — meeting their own legal standard
  - **phōs tou kosmou**: light of the world — echoes Isaiah 42:6; 49:6; Jesus claims the role of the Isaianic Servant, light to the nations

SLIDE 11 — John 8:21–30

### From Below and From Above

- The fundamental ontological divide: they belong to created existence; he to the uncreated realm of the Father
- “Unless you believe that I AM, you will die in your sins” — ego eimi with no predicate: the divine name
- The lifting up of the Son on the cross will itself be the moment of revelation of his identity
- Even in maximum controversy: “as he was saying these things, many believed in him”
  - **egō eimi (absolute)**: I AM — no predicate; the divine name from Exodus 3:14; appears three times in John 8 (vv. 24, 28, 58)

SLIDE 12 — John 8:31–47

### The Truth Will Set You Free

- The freedom is freedom from sin — not intellectual liberation; the context is about slavery to sinful practice

- Everyone who practices sin is a slave — sin is not merely behavior, it is a form of bondage
- Abrahamic descent is biological; the lineage that matters is moral: would you do the works of Abraham?
- “Whoever is of God hears the words of God” — receptivity to Jesus is evidence of one’s relationship with the Father
  - **menō**: to abide, remain — discipleship defined by continuing in the word; the freedom given is permanent, not provisional

SLIDE 13 — John 8:48–59

## Before Abraham Was, I AM

- The authorities exhaust their arsenal — Samaritan slur + demonic accusation; Jesus answers only the latter
- Abraham rejoiced to see my day — a prophetic anticipation linking Jesus to the Abrahamic covenant
- The grammar is the key: Abraham ‘came into being’ (aorist); Jesus ‘I AM’ (timeless present) — uncreated being
- They pick up stones for blasphemy — they understood exactly what he claimed; he was not misunderstood
  - **prin Abraam genēnai, egō eimi**: before Abraham came into being [aorist], I AM [present] — the supreme Christological claim of chapter 8

## Chapter Nine — The Man Born Blind — Light in Action

SLIDE 15 — John 9:1–12

### The Man Born Blind: The Healing

- Disciples ask who sinned; Jesus refuses both options — reorienting from causation to destination
- No human suffering is beyond divine purpose; the works of God are to be displayed through this man
- Spittle + clay evokes Genesis 2:7 — Jesus performs a new creation work on eyes that never functioned
- The Pool of Siloam means “Sent” — the man washes in the pool named for the one the Father sent
  - **Silōam**: Sent — John’s explanatory note connects the pool’s name to Jesus’ own identity as the one sent by the Father

SLIDE 16 — John 9:13–23

### The Investigation: Faith Under Pressure

- The Pharisees open a formal investigation — the Sabbath violation (making clay) gives them a legal hook
- Division within the council: “not from God” vs. “how can a sinner do such signs?” — an honest rupture
- The parents confirm: yes, their son, yes, born blind — then retreat to the edge of what they will risk
- Excommunication (aposynagōgōs) = social death: loss of community, commerce, family standing, identity
  - **aposynagōgōs**: put out of the synagogue — formal exclusion with severe social, economic, and familial consequences

SLIDE 17 — John 9:24–34

### The Man’s Unanswerable Testimony

- Pressed to repudiate Jesus, the man anchors his testimony in unassailable personal experience
- He can’t match them in rabbinic scholarship — but they cannot touch the fact of his transformation
- His logic devastates: God does not hear sinners; yet he opened eyes blind from birth — therefore...

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- They cast him out — the threat of verse 22 is executed; he loses everything for refusing to deny what happened

**SLIDE 18** — John 9:35–41

## Full Sight: The Confession of Faith

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- Jesus hears he has been cast out and goes to find him — this is the pattern of grace throughout John
- “Who is he, that I may believe in him?” — readiness to believe; he asks not whether but in whom
- From “the man called Jesus” (v. 11) to “Lord, I believe” — a chapter-long journey to full sight
- The Pharisees who claim to see are declared blind; the man who was blind now truly sees
  - **prosekunesen**: he worshiped — the word for worship of God; his faith reaches its fullest expression in adoration

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## Slide 19 — Key Themes: Chapters 7–9

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- Divine kairos governs every movement of Jesus — his life is not reactive but purposefully timed
- The Feast of Tabernacles: water and light ceremonies become the canvas for Jesus’ greatest claims
- ego eimi (I AM): three times in chapter 8, each escalating toward the absolute divine name
- Chapter 9 is a parable in action: physical blindness healed, spiritual blindness exposed
- To claim “we see” while rejecting the Light of the World is the most dangerous form of blindness