

G O S P E L O F J O H N

Chapters 7–9

Rick Metz • [Scripture-Knowledge.com](https://www.Scripture-Knowledge.com)

All Scripture quotations from the English Standard Version (ESV)

John 7:1–53

Chapter Seven

Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles

The Brothers' Challenge

“For not even his brothers believed in him.” — John 7:5

- 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*

Teaching in the Temple: The Source of Authority

“My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me.” — John 7:16

- 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?

Is This the Christ?

“I have not come of my own accord. He who sent me is true, and him you do not know.” — John 7:28

- 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 indeed go where they cannot follow

Rivers of Living Water

“If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.” — John 7:37

- 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 its 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*

The Officers Return — Nicodemus Speaks

“No one ever spoke like this man!” — John 7:46

- 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

John 7:53–8:59

Chapter Eight

Light of the World — Before Abraham Was, I AM

The Woman Caught in Adultery

“Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.” — John 8:11

- 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

I Am the Light of the World

“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” — John 8:12

- 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 the Isaianic Servant (Isaiah 42:6; 49:6); Jesus claims the role of the light to the nations

From Below and From Above

“You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.” — John 8:23

- 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 of Man 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), escalating each time

The Truth Will Set You Free

“If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” — John 8:36

- 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 is defined by continuing in the word; the freedom given is permanent, not provisional*

Before Abraham Was, I AM

“Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” — John 8:58

- The authorities exhaust their theological arsenal — Samaritan slur + demonic accusation; he 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; created becoming vs. uncreated being*

John 9:1–41

Chapter Nine

The Man Born Blind — Light in Action

The Man Born Blind: The Healing

“It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.” — John 9:3

- Disciples ask who sinned; Jesus refuses both options — reorienting the question 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

The Investigation: Faith Under Pressure

“His parents said these things because they feared the Jews.” — John 9:22

- 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; not merely religious*

The Man's Unanswerable Testimony

“One thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see.” — John 9:25

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

Full Sight: The Confession of Faith

“Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. — John 9:38

- 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; the man’s faith reaches its fullest expression in adoration*

Key Themes: Chapters 7–9

- 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