

Matthew 19-09-01b

We are ready now to resume our study in Matthew chapter 7 via John chapter 7, and we're looking particularly at what it means to stop judging. Obviously we need to judge, we're going to see Jesus tell us to exercise judgment as we move forward in this chapter, so it is not simple judging, it is the kind of judging that needs to stop, and that is illuminated in the context when Jesus says, you've got a plank in your eye, once you remove it, then you can see clearly. Now you can engage in moat removal, but you've got to stop trying moat removal until you fix the plank in your eye.

So his injunction to stop judging is related to there being a problem in the current moat, right? That's what we see here. So as we continue now in John chapter 7, in verse 20, the people answered and said, you have a demon who is seeking to kill you. They don't see the plot, they don't know what Jesus knows, and because they can't see it, they don't believe it.

Look around, do you see any arrest parties? Do you see Pharisees calling to soldiers? Do you see swords and chains? Who is seeking to kill you? I don't see it. Jesus answered and said to them, verse 21 of John 7, I did one work and you all marvel. I did one work, and you have to go back to the preceding context to find out what that is.

I did one work and you all marvel. Moses therefore gave you circumcision, and this work that he's talking about is healing on the Sabbath. Moses gave you circumcision, not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers.

Of course, circumcision began with Abraham, and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. So bringing a proselyte, notice he says circumcise a man, not circumcise a baby, but if it was a baby and it's the eighth day, if the eighth day falls on a Sabbath, what did they do? Did the law say circumcise a child on the eighth day, unless it's a Sabbath, in which case do it on the seventh day or do it on the ninth day. If the eighth day falls on a Sabbath, they still have the circumcision.

Jewish communities do this to this day. They have the guy that's assigned to do that. He's not even a medical doctor, and people have raised all kinds of cane about circumcision in general, and ritual circumcision in particular, and there's all kinds of flack, pro, and con, but Jesus says you have no problem bringing a child or a proselyte into the community via circumcision on a Sabbath.

He says if a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses should not be broken, i.e., circumcised on the eighth day, are you angry with me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath? If he's a leper and he's not qualified to be in the community, now he's completely well. He's already circumcised, but he's diseased. He's defiled.

He's ritually, ceremonially unclean. I have made him completely whole on the Sabbath, and you find fault with that. Judgment.

Creno. I judge this man to be unrighteous because, in my view, healing is work. Jesus typically never even touches these people, right? He just says, stretch out your arm.

Go show yourself to the priest. It doesn't touch them, but in my view, it's work, and you're working on the Sabbath, therefore you can't be from God. Creno.

Stop that kind of judging, Jesus says. I made a man completely well on the Sabbath. Notice verse 24, John 7. Do not judge according to appearance.

What was the appearance when he told his brothers, I'm not going to the feast? What was the appearance when he said, they're trying to kill me? Look around. Who's trying to kill you? Do not judge according to appearance. Well, in my superficial, half-baked understanding of the law, it must be wrong to heal someone on the Sabbath.

What a mighty work that is. Mighty work, wait, work, Sabbath, that can't be right. It's a superficial judgment.

Eat your flesh, drink your blood, superficial judgment. Not seeking the truth. Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.

Do not judge, but judge. If you take the qualifiers out of there, what is he saying? Don't judge, judge. Judge not until you're doing it right.

Don't drive until you've had driver's ed. Don't start up the chainsaw until you've read the instructions. Don't until you can, and until you can do it right, and until you're doing it for the right reasons.

Now, verse 25, we're going to move a little more quickly here. Now, some of them from Jerusalem said, isn't this he whom they seek to kill? But look, he speaks boldly and they say nothing to him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is truly the Christ? Have they called off the parties because they've been won over? What did Jesus just get through saying? Don't judge according to appearances.

Well, it appears that they're not trying to arrest him. Why is it they're not trying to arrest him? It's because he caught them off guard. Even his brothers, people have asked his brothers, hey, where's your brother Jesus? And they can truly say, he told us he's not coming.

Which does what? Prepares the way so that he can come and can teach at the temple. Jesus knows his brothers are going to be questioned. People see him.

What's the first source of information on where Jesus is when they see these brothers walk into town? Do you think the Pharisees and all the rest of the interested parties are

not going to ask James and Joseph and Simeon and these other brothers, hey, where's your brother? What can they honestly say? Told us he's not coming. Oh, well, send the soldiers home. Jesus lets his brothers off the hook.

They don't believe in him, but they're giving an honest report that allows Jesus to prepare the way. Do the rulers indeed know that this is truly the Christ? They're judging by appearances. Do the rulers think that Jesus truly is the Christ? No, this is a faulty conclusion.

They're not trying to kill him because he prepped his brothers with a story that put them off the scent, because Jesus has a time. Now, could people get all indignant and say, I can't believe that Jesus would deceive. Every time Jesus hides himself in Nazareth when he taught in the synagogue and they took him to the brow of the hill and were going to cast him off and kill him.

And then somehow they just couldn't see him. It's like the people that came to arrest the prophet and were suddenly blind. And he takes him to the king and feeds him a dinner and sends him home.

Remember that? That is preventing someone from perpetrating an evil act by deception, a sin? Not in the Bible. Rahab, I recommend it to you again, tells a bald faced lie in the interest of God's plan and purpose. So do the rulers know indeed that this is the Christ? However, we know where this man is from.

Faulty conclusion number two, they don't know where he's from. There's been a superficial story running around that he's from Galilee and that he was born in Galilee is the assumption. We know where this man is from.

When the Christ comes, no one knows where he is from. Is that true? Is there not Old Testament scripture that says Bethlehem Ephrathah? But they think he's not from Bethlehem. Why? If they were really interested, they would have set aside their prejudices and done a little investigation.

The wise men, why did they find where Jesus was actually born and when he was living? Because they were seeking, where is he? Herod was seeking him and the angel comes to the wise men and says, you need to depart another way. Deceive Herod, don't give him the information he's looking for because it's not time for him to be killed. If you think about it, could there have been some sort of redemption and righteousness by the baby Jesus being killed? Could that not have been the government-sponsored execution that God could credit? It wasn't the time.

Jesus had an earthly ministry. He had to live. He had to be tested in all points like as we are yet without sin.

It wasn't the right time and so those who have nefarious purposes are not let in on the

truth because they're not seeking it. The only people who find the truth are those who are seeking it and we're going to see that coming up here. So no one knows where he is from, is there a quote? Then in verse 28, John chapter 7, Jesus cried out as he taught in the temple saying, you both know me and you know where I am from and I have not come of myself but he who sent me is true.

As he said earlier, he's not there to glorify himself, to promote himself, to advertise himself, to make himself a candidate for government. He who sent me is true whom you do not know. You know me, quote unquote, you think you know me but you don't know the one who sent me.

I know him, I am from him and he sent me and those who know the father, you think about Simeon and Anna and the ones who knew when he was being presented at the temple that they had been waiting and watching and they were both in old age. By the way, another interesting little tidbit that came to me while I was investigating something completely unrelated. Anna, the really old lady who hung out at the temple and had a circle of acquaintances who were also looking for the hope of Israel and she goes and shares it with them.

Go look at her description because it tells you something about her. There's a biographical detail that seems incidental but you remember that there was a northern kingdom and a southern kingdom, 10 northern tribes, Judah and Benjamin in the south and in 721 BC the Assyrians come in and the northern kingdom is destroyed and taken into captivity and the people are replaced and that's where you end up with the Samaritans in Jesus' day. Go back and look at Anna because it tells us what tribe she is from.

Everybody says the 10 lost tribes, well they weren't lost in Anna's day because Anna is from one of those 10 northern tribes and there was a line of belief and the ones who continued faithfully, even though the northern kingdom was destroyed, come all the way down and despite the destruction, 150 years before the southern kingdom goes out, not only are there survivors from some of those tribes but they know what tribe they're from and Anna is from a northern kingdom tribe. A little free no charge tidbit there. So, I am from him and he sent me, verse 30 John 7, therefore they sought to take him, they find out, somebody runs and says he's here after all, but no one laid a hand on him because his hour had not yet come.

And many of the people believed in him and said when the Christ comes, will he do more signs than these which this one has done? Is there going to be a Christ that is more qualified than this one? And notice they're not picking nits about well, where was he born or what does he look like or what has he done on the Sabbath? They say, will he do more signs? Never man spake like this man. Never man healed like this man. He's unique and he fits the Old Testament expectation.

So in verse 32, the Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things concerning him and the Pharisees and chief priests sent officers to take him. Carino, judgment. They heard the back and forth in the crowd.

They've heard arguments pro and con. Which side are they on? Can't be the Messiah. He's talking bad about us.

Jesus said to them, and you notice there's a text note on to them and because the chief priests and officers are the ones that have showed up, I don't think that's original. I would cross out to them. Jesus said, I shall be with you a little while longer and then I go to him who sent me.

You will seek me and not find and where I am you cannot come. Then the Jews said among themselves, where does he intend to go that we shall not find him? This doesn't make sense. How can he go somewhere where we can't find him? We can track down anybody sooner or later.

See, he came to the feast and initially we didn't know, but we found him. The information came to us. Where can he go that we shall not find him? Does he intend to go to the dispersion, the diaspora among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? Is he going to leave Israel and go somewhere else? He thinks we won't find him.

Remember later on, they're going to send Saul of Tarsus clear off to Damascus outside the land to track down people. We can always find people. Creno, judging based on my experience, what I believe to be true.

The belief comes first and it's a plank in the eye. What is this thing that he said? You will seek me and not find me and where I am you cannot come. It's nonsensical.

Now, is it nonsensical to us? Where is Jesus? Can they seek him and find him? Actually, they could. Seek and ye shall find. I am the way, the truth, and the life.

You come to the Father by me, but if you're looking for me in the physical, if you're looking for me with a body and a location, it's not going to happen. You don't understand what's behind the metaphor. You don't understand what eating the flesh is.

And drinking the blood really means. You don't understand spiritual truth and you're not seeking it. If you were seeking it, it would make sense, but the will comes first.

So then verse 37, on the last, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out saying, if anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. What did we see at the beginning of Matthew chapter five about the thirsty? Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after what? Righteousness. Not self-declared righteousness, not subjective righteousness.

If anyone hungers and thirsts after righteousness, blessed are they because they shall be filled. Jesus returns to that idea here. If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.

He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. This he spoke concerning the spirit whom they believing in him would receive. The Holy Spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Therefore, verse 40, many from the crowd, when they heard this saying said, truly, this is the prophet Creno. They've made a judgment. He's not the Messiah, but he's the prophet that Moses spoke of.

There will come another one like me who is going to call you to God and call you to covenant faithfulness. So they go that far and they say, well, he's the one Moses spoke of, calling him back to the law. Others said, this is the Christ, but some said, can't be the Christ.

He's from Galilee. The Christ doesn't come from Galilee. And that was enough to fob off the notion.

I found a nit I can pick. Everybody says he's from Galilee. Well, the Christ doesn't come from Galilee.

They just got through saying, no one knows where the Christ comes from. Other people said, the Christ, no one knows where he is from. Now they say, well, he's from Galilee.

It can both be true. Just looking for an excuse to reject. Now, is it possible to want to believe a thing? We were talking about this yesterday.

There's a thing called confirmation bias. I've mentioned it before. You want to believe a thing.

You want to believe that angels are actively working in your circumstances. Remember that this has been some years ago now back around 2000. So everything was angels, angels in the architecture, Paul Simon wrote.

They're just everywhere. There are books on angels. Angels are here, angels.

Everybody wanted to believe in angels. Well, angels are doing this. Angels are smoothing my way.

And then there's this huge fantasy world about angels. Is it possible to want to believe in a thing and then assemble the facts so that you believe in it and you're just completely wrong? Is that possible? Yes, it is. So if we want to believe in God and then we assemble all the facts and say, see, there is a God, because that can happen, does that mean that we're wrong? There is a large market in the antiquities world for fake relics.

They will get old pieces of blank papyrus and a guy will make some old style ink and write a few letters on it, age it, rub it, bury it in the ground for a while, bring it back up, and then sell it as though it's part of the Dead Sea Scrolls or it's some ancient artifact just worth thousands, if not millions of dollars. The James Ossuary, they found a little box that supposedly had the bones of James, the brother of the Lord. And there was a huge debate.

Well, is it real or is it fake? Why did they have that debate? Because there are a boatload of fake antiquities coming out of Israel. So you find a piece of broken inscription or a pot shirt or something that's got stuff written on it. And people say, you know, most of the antiquities that are being found now are fake.

Well, can you say, well, that one is fake also? Because the world is swarming with fakes. Sometimes it's real. Sometimes when you are looking for a thing and you find it, it is real.

Just because there are a lot of counterfeits doesn't mean that there's not a real. And you can't argue that there can't be a real because look at all the counterfeits. You can, in fact, and because there really is a God and there really is righteousness, those who are seeking it and find it are like when you find the genuine antiquity, when you find the genuine treasure, there are a lot of counterfeits.

There are a lot of fakes for a lot of things, but it doesn't mean the whole reason there are counterfeits is there is a real, you don't, there's not counterfeits of something that doesn't exist. When you find a physical object and it's, it's very, very close to something true. That's, that's how they make a fake.

They put a hundred dollar bill on the copier and they've got such nice copiers now that they can, if you use the right paper, you can fool the unpracticed eye. That doesn't mean that there aren't real hundred dollar bills. And if you're looking for a hundred that you can't find it.

And the truth of God is real and is available to those who seek it. But many of the crowds say, well, he's the prophet. Others said, this is the Christ.

Some said the Christ can't come out of Galilee. Has not the scripture said that the Christ comes from the seat of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was now, didn't they just get through saying that nobody's going to know where he's from. So there was a division among the people because of him.

That's the point. There is always going to be a division because there are those who are seeking and those who are not. And the seeking comes first seek and you will find.

Now, some of them wanted to take him, but no one laid hands on him. Then the officers came to the chief priests. This is verse 45, John seven.

The officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees who said to them, why haven't you brought him? The officers showed up, but they heard him talking. And they heard the people talking. The officer said, no man ever spoke like this man.

I looked at him and he didn't look like a criminal to me. He doesn't sound like what you say he is. He's not a blasphemer.

He's not, he's not doing anything wrong. Crino, the officers are smarter than the Pharisees who sent them, who are supposedly the doctors in the law. And these are the flunkies, the knowledgeable, the educated are ready to arrest him and kill him.

But those who were sent to do the job, listen to him speak. And they say, nobody's ever talked like this. There's something to this.

And it's the power of the truth of God coming from the lips of the Lord Jesus. No man ever spoke like this man. So the Pharisees answered them and said, are you deceived? Are you deluded? Are you crazy? Have any of the rulers of the Pharisees believed in him? This is appeal to authority.

If he was the real deal, we'd be believing in him. Or the educated. But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed.

The ad hominem argument. Anybody believes him, they don't know anything. They're ignorant.

Anybody smart like us would never believe in this guy. Nicodemus, he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them, said to them, remember Nicodemus, John chapter three, that's where you get 3.16, when Jesus said, God so loved the world, he was talking to this man. Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing? Please look at that verse closely.

What is the first verb? Does our law crino a man? Do you judge based on the law before you hear him and know what he's doing? The Pharisees are getting reports. The Pharisees are sending a few and coming back. But as a group, their collective judgment, Nicodemus says, why are you judging him according to the law when you haven't heard him and you don't know what he's doing? They answered and said to him, are you also from Galilee? Search and look for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee.

These guys think he's from Galilee and he's not. If they bothered to check, he was born in Bethlehem. Could have asked the brothers.

They know the story. They know the journey down when all the land is being taxed in the days of Caesar Augustus. They know about the flight to Egypt and the return.

This is family lore. This is family history. Haven't even bothered to check with the

brothers.

All they're asking the brothers is, is he coming to the feast? What did Nicodemus do? Why is Nicodemus a believer? Nicodemus was a seeker and he went to Jesus and asked him questions and got the interview and heard about being born again and responded because he was a seeker of truth. And he's trying to get these guys to consider the possibility. Maybe you ought to hear.

Maybe you ought to know before you judge based on your law. They're taking the law, which is righteous, holy, and good, and using it as a weapon to club people over the head and to destroy Jesus. So Jesus went to the Mount of Olives early in the morning.

He came to the temple. All the people came to him. He sat down and taught them.

The scribes and Pharisees, this is 8.3 of John, brought to him the woman caught in adultery. This is that pericope. We'll skip that for now.

Go down to verse 13. The Pharisees said to him, you bear witness of yourself. Your witness is not true.

You're a circular argument. You're asking us to believe what you say, but it's just you talking. Jesus answered and said to them, even if I bear witness of myself, my witness is true.

If all you have to go on when you dig up this relic is the characteristics and quality of the relic itself, that should be enough to establish its authenticity. If it's a fake, the fakeness will show, but you have to look at it and you have to know what a genuine painting looks like. Somebody says, we have found a lost Van Gogh.

Who do they take it to to find out if it's real or if it's an imposter painted it? Somebody that knows Van Gogh inside out, knows his brushstrokes, knows his palette, knows the materials that he works with, knows the typical kind of canvas that he used and the kind of colors and what they were made of, does chemical analysis. You take it to somebody who knows and somebody who's interested in Van Gogh and loves Van Gogh is going to learn all about it. They're not interested.

They're going to take one look at it and say, well, that can't be Van Gogh. Jesus says, even if I bear witness of myself, my witness is true. If you're familiar with truth, if you're a truth seeker, you're going to recognize truth in what Jesus says and does.

It's going to ring true because you're a truth seeker. But if you're interested in a story that makes you feel good or in a story that vindicates you and you're seeking your own glory, Jesus said, I'm not seeking my own glory. My witness is true.

I know where I came from and where I am going. You do not know where I come from

and where I am going. This is why they said he must be going to the Diaspora if he thinks we can't find him.

And he's from Galilee. They don't know where he's from and they don't know where he's going. Why? Superficial dismissal.

I've got a system of false righteousness and false truth, and I like it, and I'm not going to test it. I'm not going to check it. I'm not going to consider this.

Notice verse 15, you judge, krino. That's our word from Matthew 7.1. You judge according to the flesh. I judge no one.

Are you kidding me? Jesus says, I judge no one. What does he say right before he leaves? All authority has been given to me in heaven and earth. The Father has granted all judgment to the Son.

And he says here, I judge no one. What does he mean? I am judging no one yet. Is there a day of judgment? It is appointed to man once to die, and after that, the judgment.

There is a judgment. The righteous are going to shine like the sun. The rest of them, not so much.

Outer darkness. You judge according to the flesh. What kind of judging is Jesus saying? Stop doing it.

It's plank in the eye judgment. It's judging according to the flesh. What is the flesh? Eat my flesh? Drink my blood? Oh no.

That's just crazy talk right there. I'm leaving. This guy's a nut.

Judging according to the flesh. Can't see past the superficial. Can't see past the self-serving.

And yet if I do judge, verse 16, my judgment is true. And this is a first class. If and it's true.

And it's more or less when I judge. I judge no one. And yet when I do judge, my judgment is true.

For I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent me. This is what saves us from ourselves. We ask, how can I escape my subjectivity? How can I escape my tendency to see things the way I want to see them? Does everybody get to pick their truth? Does everybody get to judge according to whatever makes sense to them? Remember in Judges, everyone did what is right in his own eyes.

Well, everybody can't be right. Is there no absolute truth? Truth is what you make it.

Truth is what you choose.

Or is there an absolute? Jesus says, my truth is absolute. My judgment is true. Why? I'm with the Father who sent me.

There is an absolute standard of truth and rightness and justice. And the more we learn, the more we know, the more we allow ourselves to be transformed by the renewing of our minds and have that truth become a part of our nature. And it's a lifelong process.

We fall short and make many mistakes, but we know where to look. We know where to go. You come to the Father through Christ.

No one comes to the Father, but by me. The one who comes to God, Hebrews 11.6, must first believe that he is and that he is a rewarder. He will give a benefit to those who do what? Diligently seek him.

Seek first the kingdom. These things will be added. Seeking comes first.

If you're not seeking, you're never going to find. Can't expect God to drop it on your head with no parachute. It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true.

I am one who bears witness of myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness of me. They said to him, where's your father? Who are they looking for? Joseph, who's apparently dead by this time because he's not mentioned in Jesus' adult life. So they say, where is your father? Jesus says, you know neither me nor my father.

You don't know. You're making a judgment on things you don't know. Why do you not know? Because you haven't sought.

I don't know squat about ballet. You know why? I'm not interested in it. I don't know up from down about what arias come from what operas.

You know why? I don't seek it out. I'm not interested in opera. Don't listen to it.

Haven't looked into it. I know there's the Mikado, and I can't even think of very many names of them. The most of what I know comes from cartoons.

You know the Barber of Seville, and what Bugs Bunny and Elmer Fudd sang about. That's, you know, what's opera do is my sum total knowledge of opera. Why? I don't seek it.

There are people who you play five notes, and they'll tell you what opera and what scene in the opera, and who the famous people are that have sung that. You know Pavarotti and these other people. Beverly Sills, and I know there are newer ones that are great singers.

They know because they seek it. Am I qualified to judge good and bad opera, good and bad performances, good and bad tenors and sopranos and mezzo-sopranos and the rest of it? Am I qualified? Not only no, but heck no. Why? I don't know anything about it.

I'm not qualified. So why should I opine and pronounce judgment about that which I do not know? And I will tell you today that a lot of the critics of Christianity actually don't know what they're talking about. When they make pronouncements, they're just like these Pharisees.

Well, he's from Galilee, and the Christ doesn't come from Galilee. They don't know that he's not from Galilee, that that's a false perception. They think that he, at best, if he's doing miracles, he's doing them by the prince of demons, if they came and listened to him speak, they would know that there's nobody more opposed to Satan than Jesus is.

And he says, what? Satan's kingdom is divided. He's working against himself. I am manifestly putting his demons to flight.

If you bothered to look into it, if you were seeking the truth, you would know. But they don't know. So what happens to their judgment? How can they crino things that they know nothing about? I've told you before that somebody posted a bunch of stuff from the Skeptics Bible, just copied and pasted it in on the one chat board I've ever participated on and that I administrate, and listed, I don't know, 60-odd contradictions and problems and criticisms in the Bible.

And they just wanted to swamp me with, look at how overwhelming the evidence is that the Bible is full of mistakes and errors. And I went through one by one and answered every one of them. In fact, that's on our website.

If you remember your login, if you don't, and you want to look at it, contact me and I'll tell you what your login is. The bulletin board, amazingly, is still running on our website. And that document, I copied and pasted it in.

And every one of these alleged questions is fully answered in there. And nearly all of them are misperceptions. People don't actually know.

They didn't even read the context. If they read the context, the question would have answered itself. And the questions sound so, so killingly final.

And when you read the answer, you realize whoever asked this question didn't know diddly about the Bible. They copied it from somebody who copied it from somebody who copied it off a website somewhere, and they've never actually even read the passage. Go one up and it tells you.

Anyway, so he says, you judge according to the flesh. I am one, verse 18, who bears witness of myself and the father who sent me bears witness of me. Where is your father?

You don't know me or my father, verse 19.

If you had known me, you would have known my father also. Basically, what he's saying is if you knew the father, you would know me. It's reverse order here in English.

But he says, if you were Simeon or Anna or Peter, James, Andrew, John, Philip, Bartholomew, any of these other guys that already had a relationship and were seeking the father, you would have recognized me because you would have the knowledge. Why do you think the 12 haven't asked these questions? Well, Peter has already said, you're the Christ, the son of the living God. How can he say that? And scripture says that he's from Bethlehem and this man's from Galilee.

Why didn't that put off the 12? The Pharisees say, do you see any of us believing in him? Why don't you look at the people who do believe in him? What do they know that these guys with all of their alleged qualifications don't know? So Jesus said in verse 21, I'm going away and you will seek me and will die in your sin. Where I go, you cannot come. What is he going to say in John 14, three, I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I come, if I come again, I receive you to myself so that where I am there, you may be also, we are going to be collected and taken. But he says to these people, they cannot come. Why? Not seeking, not accepting.

The Jews said, will he kill himself? Because he says, where I go, you cannot come. This is again, judging according to the flesh, human logic, bad judgment, plank in the eye. He said to them, you are from beneath.

I am from above. You are of this world. I am not of this world.

You can't take materialistic standards. You can't take secular logic and apply it to heavenly things. You have to be someone who is seeking the immaterial seeking truth.

And truth is an abstraction. Truth is not something you taste, touch or handle. Therefore, I said to you, you will die in your sins for if you do not believe that I am, you will die in your sins.

They said to him, who are you? Are you kidding? Jesus said to them, just what I have been saying to you from the beginning, I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, Creno. I have many things to say and to judge. Didn't he just say, I judge no man, but there are things that he judges concerning you.

But he who sent me is true. Jesus always directs them back to the father, to the creator, to the covenant God of their fathers. I speak to the world, those things which I heard from him.

They did not understand that he spoke to them of the father. Jesus said to them, when

you lift up the son of man, then you will know that I am. You can scratch out he in both of these.

You see it's in italics. He is reminding them of the God revealed at the burning bush. Whom shall I say has sent me, Moses asks.

I am has sent you. And when Jesus says, I am, these supposed experts in the law realized that he is claiming identity with God. When you lift up the son of man, you will know that I am and I do nothing of myself, but as the father taught me, I speak these things.

So when you reject Christ, who are you really rejecting? He is representing the father. When we are the body of Christ on this earth, representing him, who are we really representing? The father. No man comes to the father, but by me.

He who sent me is with me. The father has not left me alone for I always do those things that please him. As he spoke these words, many believed in him.

These words, notice Jesus didn't whip out a miracle. He didn't dazzle them with some supernatural power. The truth appeals to those who are seeking the truth.

You recognize a genuine article when you know and love that which is genuine. Jesus said to those Jews who believed in him, notice he has turned his attention now to the ones who are seeking and in the process of finding. If you abide in my word, you are my disciples indeed and you shall know the truth.

If you abide in my word, you will recognize, identify and know the truth. Why? You have passed through that filter of self-serving disbelief and unbelief and you're going to find your seeking rewarded and your understanding confirmed. You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.

They take this verse 32 and it's above the Library of Congress or some famous building and they put it without the context. It says, and you shall know the truth. What's the condition? If you abide in my word, you shall know the truth.

You come to it, you dwell in it, you think about it, you come to know it. If you know my word, you will know the truth and that truth sets you free. Everybody needs release from slavery.

They answered him, we're Abraham's descendants and have never been in bondage to anyone. Still plank in the eye, judging according to the flesh. We've never been in bondage to anyone.

Is this true? There's a little thing in 721 BC called the Assyrian captivity, a little thing in 586 called the Babylonian captivity. We've never been slaves to anyone. So maybe they're just talking about their generation.

They're enslaved to their system. They're enslaved to each other, impressing each other, trying to prove their righteousness to each other. How can you say you will be made free? Jesus answered them, assuredly I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.

The pericope we skipped, let he who is without sin cast the first stone and nobody can because everybody knows all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Whoever commits a sin is a slave of sin and a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore, if the son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

I know you're Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill me because my word has no place in you. I speak what I've seen with my father and you do what you have seen with your father. They answered him and said, Abraham is our father.

Jesus says, if you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God. Abraham didn't do this.

You do the deeds of your father. They said, we were not born of fornication. We have one father, God.

Jesus said, if God were your father, you would love me for I proceed forth and came from God, nor have I come of myself, but he sent me. Why do you not understand my speech? Because you are not able to listen to my word. You've got a plank in your eye.

Your judgment is faulty and you're unwilling to consider that fact. You are of your father, the devil and the desires of your father. You want to do.

He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own for he is a liar and the father of it. But because I tell you the truth, you do not believe me.

Notice the fundamental reaction. I don't like the truth. I don't want the truth.

I'm not really seeking the truth. I'm going to invent my own truth. Which of you convicts me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? He who is of God hears God's words.

Therefore you do not hear because you are not of God. The Jews answered and said, notice they've always got an answer. They've always got an excuse.

They've always got to come back. Do we not say rightly that you are a Samaritan and have a demon? So now he's not just from Galilee, he's from Samaria and he has a demon. This is always the response.

When you run out of arguments, it's ad hominem. There's something wrong with you. You're deceiving yourself.

You're crazy. Jesus answered. I do not have a demon.

I honor my father and you dishonor me. And I do not seek my own glory. There is one who seeks and judges.

Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he shall never see death. Once again, faulty judgment. The Jews say to him, now we know you have a demon.

Abraham is dead and the prophets. And you say, if anyone keeps my word, he shall never taste death. Are you greater than our father, Abraham, who is dead and the prophets are dead? Who do you make yourself out to be? Oh, the wonder of human logic.

Jesus answered. If I honor myself, my honor is nothing. It is my father who honors me of whom you say that he is your God.

Yet you have not known him, but I know him. And if I say I do not know him, I'd be a liar like you. But I knew, do know him and keep his word.

Your father, Abraham rejoiced to see my day. He saw it and was glad. The Jews said to him, you're not yet 50 years old.

And have you seen Abraham? Jesus said to them, once again, most assuredly, I say to you before Abraham was, I am. Then they took up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them. And so passed by.

He deceived them as to his whereabouts. And that's how he left. Well, then you have in John chapter nine, the man born blind, which we had time to cover that, but skip down to the end of that.

The testimony of the formerly blind man, when they bring him in to question him beginning in verse 27, they say, what did he do to you? How did he open your eyes? What was the mechanism? What was the, what was the magic? He answered them. This is a nine 27 of John. I told you already.

And you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples? Then they reviled him and said, you are his disciple. We are Moses disciples.

We know that God spoke to Moses. As for this fellow, we don't know where he is from. Once again, why do they not know where he's from? They don't know where he's from geographically.

And they don't know where he is from in reality, from the father, the man answered and said to them, why this is a marvelous thing that you don't know where he is from yet. He has opened my eyes. Now we know that God does not hear sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, he hears him since the world began.

Listen, this is the blind man teaching the Pharisees. It's, it's just classic. Since the world began, it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind.

If this man were not from God, he could do nothing. They answered and said to him, you were completely born in sins. And are you teaching us? And they threw him out ad hominem.

You were born in sins. You were born blind. Blindness is sin.

You're blind. You're sin. Even the disciples who sinned this man or his parents that he's born blind.

Jesus says, you don't understand what this blindness is about. God's glory is going to be revealed in him. That's why he was, we are born in sin.

Why? So that when we are rescued and set free, God's glory can be revealed in us. Jesus heard that they had thrown him out. And when he found him, he said to him, do you believe in the son of God? He answered and said, who is he Lord that I may believe in him.

Jesus said to him, you have both seen him. And it is he who is talking with you. He's seen him two different ways.

He's seen him because Jesus gave him sight, but he has seen him because in his heart, he says, this man has to be from God because look at what he's done. Then he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshiped him.

And Jesus said, what? This is our theme for Creno, for judging, for judgment, for judgment. I have come into this world that those who do not see may see. And that those who see may be made blind.

Those who see may be made blind. Some of the Pharisees who were with him said these, heard these words and said to him, are we blind also? Jesus said, if you were blind, you would have no sin. But because you say now we see your sin remains.

What does it mean? If you would acknowledge your blindness, you would be given sight. If you would look outside yourself for the knowledge and the truth, it would be given to you. Ask and it shall be given.

Seek and you will find. But you have to be interested in that genuine truth. Because you say we see, we've got it all figured out, your sin remains.

And the problem is sin. Whatever else you want to talk about, there is only one sin removal available, and it is the blood of Jesus Christ. What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. That's what they're missing. That's what they're blind to.

They have a righteousness that they've established on their own terms, and they like it. And they're not interested in the righteousness that is of God. Jesus said, I'm testifying to you of my Father's righteousness, but you say we see.

I've already got something I like. Your sin remains. And with that sin comes judgment.

Judgment. Well, we'll pick up here in Matthew chapter 7, see if we can get to verse 2 next week. Let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the wonderful truth of your word. Thank you for the full revelation of it in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank you for salvation through him.

We thank you that we are in this age related to you through him in a special way. We are here on this earth to represent him, to be a light that shines in the darkness, to be those who can reflect your truth and communicate your truth as we await the day when the Lord Jesus returns to take us to himself and present us before your throne. We pray that we can find those limitations to our own sight that God, the Holy Spirit, using the power and truth of your word will reveal to us where we still have obstructions to our judgment, to our vision.

Help us to see clearly. We pray with the psalmist in Psalm 51 to purge us with hyssop that we may be cleaned, wash us so that we can be whiter than snow. We pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.