

Confused And Condemned

John 7:25–36

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³² The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things concerning Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him. ³³ Then Jesus said to them, “I shall be with you a little while longer, and *then* I go to Him who sent Me. ³⁴ You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come.”

³⁵ Then the Jews said among themselves, “Where does He intend to go that we shall not find Him? Does He intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? ³⁶ What is this thing that He said, ‘**You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come**’?”

Introduction

A [new survey](#), released September 28 by Ligonier Ministries and Lifeway Research, reveals some not so-surprising results about the state of churches in the United States. We have pointed out many times that there is a great lack of in-depth teaching, very little (if any) teaching on apologetics (how to defend the faith), and a great deal of compromise (especially compromise on Genesis 1–11) in many churches—and some of these are the churches who claim to be “evangelical.” So many people from churches in America don’t really know what they believe or why, and many don’t really understand the basics of Christianity.

Now this survey is rather expansive, so I can’t cover all of it in this blog. But I’ll list some highlights (really lowlights), which show how confusion and compromise have infiltrated the church. Most of the survey questions had five possible ways to answer (Agree strongly, Agree somewhat, Disagree somewhat, Disagree strongly, Not sure). I’ll combine the

“strongly” and “somewhat” agree answers below for illustrative purposes.

The Not-So-Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

64% of Americans agree that “God accepts the worship of all religions, including Christianity, Judaism and Islam.”

Only 52% agree that “the Bible alone is the written word of God.”

Only 58% agree that “God is the author of Scripture.”

65% agree that “everyone sins a little, but most people are good by nature.”

44% agree that “the Bible, like all sacred writings, contains helpful accounts of ancient myths but is not literally true.”

51% agree that “the Bible was written for each person to interpret as he or she chooses.”

Only 47% agree that “the Bible is 100% accurate in all that it teaches.”

59% of Americans agree that “worshiping alone or with one’s family is a valid replacement for regularly attending church.”

Only 45% agree that “churches that do not preach from the Bible should not be considered a Christian church.”

Only 49% in churches agree that “sex outside of traditional marriage is a sin.”

Only 49% agree that “abortion is a sin.”

42% agree that “the Bible’s condemnation of homosexual behavior doesn’t apply today.”

38% agree that “gender identity is a matter of choice.”

45% agree that “modern science discredits the claims of Christianity.”

52% agree that “by the good deeds that I do, I partly contribute to earning my place in heaven”

Only 60% agree that “Jesus Christ’s death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of my sin.”

Only 52% agree that “it is very important for me personally to encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior.”

Only 54% in churches agree that “only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God’s free gift of eternal salvation.”

Theology and Apologetics Are Not Being Taught in Churches

These numbers are very troubling. When 40 to 50 percent of Christians don’t believe the Bible is accurate in all that it teaches, that Christ is the only sacrifice for sin and the only means for salvation, or that they should witness to non-Christians, there is something fundamentally wrong.

Sadly, our once-Christian nation has drifted far from its roots. Few people are taught solid, biblical theology and, as a result, biblical illiteracy is rampant throughout our country.

Confused About Who God Is

Also disconcerting are the confused or even contradictory answers given in this survey. While 65% of Americans agree that “God is a perfect being and cannot make a mistake” and 58% agree that “God is the Author of Scripture,” only 47% agree that “the Bible is 100% accurate

in all that it teaches.” How can that be? Many just don’t understand what it means that God is the infinite Creator God—infinite in wisdom and knowledge and that “God is not a man, that He should lie” ([Numbers 23:19](#)).

Here’s another example. 69% in churches agree that “there is one true God in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit,” but 53% agree that “Jesus is the first and greatest creature created by God” and 56% agree that “the Holy Spirit is a force but is not a personal being.” So people can believe that Jesus is God yet was created, and that the Holy Spirit is God yet is not a personal being?

The Sad Fruits of Biblical Illiteracy

This is what we see played out in this survey. God’s clear teachings on His Person and His Word are not understood because they are not clearly taught in many churches. We also see that moral and social issues like marriage, gender, sexuality, and sanctity of life have all been reinterpreted based on man’s fallible opinions and desire to accommodate sin. The exclusivity of the gospel is considered antiquated (and in many places as “intolerant”), and the Great Commission has been sacrificed to the “all-paths-lead-to-God” mentality. If all paths lead to God, then why did Christ have to come to earth and go to the Cross to die for our sins? This type of theology makes Christ’s sufferings and sacrifice pointless.

Review

When the Lord came to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles (7:2), only about six months remained before He would again come to Jerusalem for His crucifixion (at Passover the following spring). From this point forward, now more than ever, Jesus would walk in the looming shadow of the cross.

As the Feast of Tabernacles approached, Jesus' brothers had urged Him to make a grand entry into the city and thus openly declare Himself to be the Messiah (vv. 3–5). But Jesus declined, choosing instead to go privately to the feast (v. 10), arriving halfway through it (v. 14). When He entered Jerusalem, He immediately went to the temple and began to teach (v. 14), where both His unexpected appearance and unprecedented authority (vv. 45–46) caused a stir. The Jewish leaders responded with predictable hostility (vv. 15–19), even attempting to have Him arrested (v. 32). The people, on the other hand, were deeply divided over Jesus—some violently opposed Him (v. 30), while others enthusiastically believed in Him (v. 31).

Over the next six months, as He ministered primarily in the towns and villages of Judea, opposing the devilish Judaism that dominated the people at its core, the hostility exhibited on this day would only intensify. As John stated at the outset of his gospel,

Christ “came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him” (1:11). The reality of this conflict

manifested itself at the beginning of His ministry. After the Lord cleansed the temple, the outraged “Jews then said to Him, ‘What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?’ Jesus answered them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ The Jews then said, ‘It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?’ ” (2:18–20). Later, when Jesus realized that the hostile “Pharisees had heard that [He] was making and baptizing more disciples than John, ... He left Judea and went away again into Galilee” (4:1, 3). After He healed a sick man, “the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath” (5:16). And when the Lord defended Himself by asserting His equality with the Father, “The Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God” (v. 18). The crowd in the Capernaum synagogue demanded of Him, “What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform?” (6:30)—an astonishing demonstration of unbelief since Jesus had miraculously fed thousands of people just the day before (vv. 1–13). Reacting to His claim to be the Bread of Life, “Many of His disciples, when they heard this said, ‘This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?’ ” (v. 60), prompting Jesus to note sadly, “There are some of you who do not believe” (v. 64). The tragic result was that even many who claimed to be His followers “withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore” (v. 66).

John began this chapter with the somber note that “Jesus was walking in Galilee, for He was unwilling to walk in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him” (v. 1). It records the Lord’s dialogue with His unbelieving brothers (vv. 3–8), during which He observed, “The world ... hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil” (v. 7). The chapter goes on to reveal the deep controversy that surrounded Him, dividing the crowds in Jerusalem (v. 12) even before Jesus arrived in the city. But whether it was from the Jewish leaders, the Jerusalem crowds, or the Lord’s own brothers, the hostility Jesus faced all stemmed from the same source: unbelief.

Despite the opposition, Jesus never mitigated or moderated His claim to have been sent from God (cf. vv. 16–18; cf. 5:30; 6:38–39, 44). This section again records how the crowds responded to Him. It reveals their dense confusion, divided conviction, and derisive contempt.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (pp. 300–301). Chicago: Moody Press.

Lesson

I. The Confused Crowd

II. The Condemned Pharisees

I. The Confused Crowd

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²⁵ Now some of them from Jerusalem said, “Is this not He whom they seek to kill?”

Unlike the pilgrims visiting the city (v. 20), **some of the people of Jerusalem** were well aware of their leaders’ murderous intentions toward Jesus. (The Greek grammar of

the question, “**Is this not the man whom they are seeking to kill?**” expects an affirmative answer.) Yet those same leaders had listened in paralyzed silence as Jesus openly condemned their hypocrisy (vv. 19, 21–24). Perhaps the authorities feared debating Him in public, knowing they would come out on the losing end (cf. vv. 15–18). Or they may have been awed by His commanding presence, remembering how He boldly cleansed the temple (2:14–16). They may have also been concerned that seizing Jesus in public might spark a riot (for which the Romans would have held them accountable; cf. 11:48), since many in the crowd still had a favorable impression of Him (cf. v. 12).

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (pp. 301–302). Chicago: Moody Press.

26 But look! He speaks boldly, and they say nothing to Him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is truly the Christ?

Astonished, both by their rulers’ speechlessness and by the Lord’s fearlessness, the Jerusalem residents exclaimed, “**Look, He is speaking publicly, and they are saying nothing to Him.**” (The term *parrēsia* [publicly] can also mean “boldly,” or “confidently.”) In contrast to the leaders’ silence, Jesus’ authoritative proclamation captivated the people.

Isaiah 50:7–9, one of the four Servant songs (messianic soliloquies) in Isaiah’s prophecy, pictures the bold

confidence that Christ possessed. In that song Messiah says,

For the Lord God helps Me,
 Therefore, I am not disgraced;
 Therefore, I have set My face like flint,
 And I know that I will not be ashamed.
 He who vindicates Me is near;
 Who will contend with Me?
 Let us stand up to each other;
 Who has a case against Me?
 Let him draw near to Me.
 Behold, the Lord God helps Me;
 Who is he who condemns Me?
 Behold, they will all wear out like a garment;
 The moth will eat them.

Like Jesus, the Spirit-filled early church also displayed supernatural boldness.

Acts 4:31 records that “when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.”

The Sanhedrin was amazed at the bold confidence of Peter and John (Acts 4:13). Immediately after his conversion Paul spoke “boldly in the name of Jesus,” both in Damascus (Acts 9:27) and in Jerusalem (v. 28).

Acts 13:46 records that “Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, ‘It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge

yourself unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.’ ”

The two missionaries “spent a long time [in Iconium] speaking boldly with reliance upon the Lord” (Acts 14:3).

Acts 18:26 notes that Apollos “began to speak out boldly in the synagogue.” When he arrived in Ephesus, Paul “entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God” (Acts 19:8).

Imprisoned in Rome, Paul nevertheless was “preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness [*parrēsia*], unhindered” (**Acts 28:31**).

He later asked the Ephesians,
(Eph. 6:19–20)

“Pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak” (Eph. 6:19–20).

To the Philippians he expressed that same desire: **(Phil. 1:20)**[It is] my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death” (Phil. 1:20).

In his first letter to them, he reminded the Thessalonians, **(1 Thess. 2:2)**“After we had already

suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition” (1 Thess. 2:2).

Not only was Paul bold in person (cf. 2 Cor. 3:12), but also in his letters to the churches (cf. Rom. 15:15; 2 Cor. 10:1).

The people were shocked to find that the **rulers** said **nothing** in response to Jesus, despite being publicly humiliated by Him. Some were so surprised that they began to voice the unthinkable: “**The rulers do not really know that this is the Christ, do they?**” Perhaps the leaders had received further information about Jesus, and decided (privately) that He was the Messiah. Perhaps that could explain their failure to arrest Him. But the idea seemed so farfetched that it was immediately rejected. *(This time the Greek construction indicates that the question expected a negative answer.)*

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (pp. 302–303). Chicago: Moody Press.

27 However, we know where this Man is from; but when the Christ comes, no one knows where He is from.”

Verse 27 explains why some of the crowd rejected the possibility that Jesus might be the Messiah. “**We know where this man is from,**” they reasoned; “**but whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He is from.**” Their argument was a combination of misinformation and popular legend. Despite their confident

assertion, they really did not **know where** Jesus was **from**; they thought He was from Nazareth (cf. 1:45–46; 6:42; Matt. 21:11) where He had been raised (Luke 4:16). Apparently, they did not know that He had actually been born in Bethlehem (Matt. 2:1).

Their statement that “**whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He is from**” expressed a popular belief. Based on a misinterpretation of such passages as Isaiah 53:8, “Who will declare His generation?” (nkjv) and Malachi 3:1, “The Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple,” this tradition held that the Messiah would be unknown until He suddenly appeared to redeem Israel. The author of the apocryphal book of 4 Esdras wrote, “He said to me, ‘Just as no one can explore or know what is in the depths of the sea, so no one on earth can see my Son or those who are with him, except in the time of his day’ ” (4 Esdras 13:52 rsv; cf. 7:28; 13:32). Trypho, the Jewish opponent of the second-century Christian apologist Justin Martyr, said to Justin, “But Christ —if He has indeed been born, and exists anywhere—is unknown, and does not even know Himself, and has no power until Elias come to anoint Him, and make Him manifest to all” (*Dialogue with Trypho* 8). Since they knew Jesus’ background (cf. Matt. 13:55–56), they assumed that meant He could not be the Messiah.

This popular belief, however, ran completely contrary to the Old Testament, which clearly predicted that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2; cf. Matt. 2:4–6)—a point that others in the crowd later

acknowledged (John 7:42). Although the misconception was obviously false, Jesus did not take the time to show how it contradicted the Old Testament. Nor did He protest that although He had been raised in Nazareth, He had been born in Bethlehem. Instead, He responded by directly confronting their hard-hearted unbelief. The fact that **Jesus cried out**, meaning that He yelled so as to be heard by all, stressed the critical nature of what He was about to say (cf. v. 37; 1:15; 12:44).

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (pp. 303–304). Chicago: Moody Press.

²⁸ Then 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, whom you do not know.** ²⁹ **But I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me.**”

A comparison of the Lord’s words, “**You both know Me and know where I am from**” with His declaration in 8:19, “You know neither Me nor My Father,” reveals that His comment here was intended as irony. Jesus certainly would not contradict Himself, nor would He affirm that His opponents knew Him, but not the Father (cf. 5:23; 8:19; 15:23; 16:3). And He would hardly have said that those

who regarded Him as an impostor and a charlatan actually knew Him. In fact, Jesus was asserting that they did not know Him, saying in effect, “So you think you know Me and where I am from, do you?” This was another of their false assumptions of spiritual knowledge.

There was ample evidence that Jesus was not the self-appointed false prophet and pseudo-Messiah the leaders accused Him of being. In reality, as He declared, **“I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true.”** He had **not come** on His own, but rather had been **sent** by the **true** God. But to the unbelieving crowd, and more shockingly to the religious leaders, Jesus said, **“you do not know [the God you profess]”** (cf. John 8:41–47).

That statement was a devastating indictment and a stunning rebuke, especially to the scribes and Pharisees. As Israel’s religious elite, they had devoted their entire lives to the study of the Old Testament. They prided themselves on their knowledge of God. To them, as Paul noted, “belong[ed] the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises” (Rom. 9:4; cf. 2:17–20).

Yet despite all those privileges, they were woefully ignorant of the very God they so proudly professed to know. Like the sons of Eli, they were “worthless men; they did not know the Lord” (1 Sam. 2:12). They were like those of whom Jeremiah wrote, “The priests did not say, ‘Where is the Lord?’ And those who handle the law did not know Me” (Jer. 2:8; cf. 8:8–9). Through the prophet Hosea God lamented, “My people are destroyed for lack of

knowledge” (Hos. 4:6), while Paul wrote that “they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge” (Rom. 10:2). Sadly, their preoccupation with the minutiae of self-righteous legalism, along with their devotion to the rabbinic traditions, had blinded them to the true knowledge of God (cf. Matt. 12:7; 23:23; Mark 7:10–13). They were “blind guides of the blind” (Matt. 15:14; cf. 23:16, 24), who made their followers twice the sons of hell that they themselves were (23:15). Not surprisingly, Jesus frequently denounced them as unbelieving hypocrites (cf. Matt. 15:7; 22:18; 23:13–15, 23, 25, 27, 29; Luke 12:56) and even children of Satan (John 8:44).

On the other hand, Jesus truly did **know Him**, sharing the same eternal essence and omniscience **because**, as He declared, “**I am from Him, and He sent Me.**” As noted in the exposition of 7:16 in the previous chapter of this volume, the fact that Jesus was sent by the Father is foundational to the gospel.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (pp. 304–305). Chicago: Moody Press.

30 Therefore they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.

31 And many of the people believed in Him, and said,

“When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this *Man* has done?”

Infuriated by what they considered blasphemy, **His enemies were seeking to seize Him**. This was evidently a spontaneous effort by some in the crowd, as opposed to the official attempt to arrest Him described in verse 32. Why they failed, humanly speaking, to **seize** Jesus is not stated, but it was likely because many in the crowd were protective of Him (v. 31).

John quickly gave the divine aspect when he stated that the reason **no man laid his hand on Him** was **because His hour had not yet come**. As noted in chapter 23 of this volume, Jesus always operated according to God’s sovereign timetable. Nothing, including impulsive mob violence, could precipitate His death before the appointed **hour**. As always, redemptive history at that moment was perfectly on schedule; God’s sovereign purpose would not be thwarted (cf. Job 23:13; Ps. 33:10–11; Prov. 19:21; 21:30; Isa. 14:24, 27; 46:10; Eph. 1:11).

The sovereign timing of Christ’s death—that it would take place at the exact hour chosen by God—is a repeated theme in this gospel. In 8:20, as in this passage, His enemies were prevented from seizing Him “because His hour had not yet come.” As the time for His death drew near, Jesus told His disciples, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified” (12:23; cf. 13:1) and prayed, “Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I

came to this hour” (12:27; cf. 17:1). Jesus Christ would die at the appointed time (cf. 1 Cor. 5:7) and in the appointed manner (as laid out in the Old Testament [Matt. 26:24; Luke 24:25–26]), not during the Feast of Tabernacles at the hands of an unruly mob.

Jesus’ exalted claims forced people to decide about Him, and the result was division. That was exactly what Jesus had said He would bring. In Matthew 10:34–36 He cautioned,

Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man’s enemies will be the members of his household.
(cf. Luke 12:49–53)

So it was on this occasion. Some angrily rejected Jesus, and wanted to seize Him (v. 30). **But** on the other hand, **many of the crowd believed in Him**. Their rhetorical (the question in the Greek text expects a negative answer) question, “**When the Christ comes, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He?**” explains what convinced them of Jesus’ authenticity. They were familiar with Old Testament prophecy, which foretold that the Messiah would perform miracles (e.g., Isa. 29:18; 35:5–6; cf. Matt. 11:2–5); and they could not imagine that **the Christ** (Messiah) would **perform more signs than those** that Jesus had performed (John 2:23; 3:2; 6:2). The

pilgrims from Galilee would have remembered the wedding where Jesus made wine out of water (2:1–11) and the miraculous meal where thousands were fed (6:1–13). And the Judeans would have known about the sick man Jesus healed at the pool of Bethesda (5:1–9). In addition, all would have been aware of the multitude of other miracles that Jesus performed (cf. 2:23; 3:2; 6:2).

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (pp. 305–306). Chicago: Moody Press.

II. The Condemned Pharisees

³² The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things concerning Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him. ³³ Then Jesus said to them, “I shall be with you a little while longer, and *then* I go to Him who sent Me. ³⁴ You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come.”

³⁵ Then the Jews said among themselves, “Where does He intend to go that we shall not find Him? Does He intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? ³⁶ What is this thing that He said, ‘You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come’?”

³² The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things concerning Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him.

When **the Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about** Jesus, they became alarmed. They did not even want people to speak of Jesus (v. 13); yet here some were quietly suggesting that He might be the Messiah. The Pharisees were so distressed by the popularity of Jesus that they joined forces with their archrivals the Sadducees. Though the two groups historically were at opposite ends of the theological spectrum, the mutual hatred they felt for Jesus drove them together (cf. v. 45; 11:47, 57; 18:3; Matt. 21:45–46; 27:62).

After consulting with each other (possibly in a formal meeting of the Sanhedrin), **the chief priests** (Sadducees who were former high priests and members of important priestly families) **and the Pharisees sent officers to seize** Jesus. **The officers** (temple guards) were a kind of police force consisting of Levites, who were responsible for maintaining order in the busy temple grounds (especially at feast times), though the Sanhedrin could also employ them elsewhere in matters not affecting Roman policy.

This section strikingly illustrates the nation's division over Jesus. While some were prone to hail Him as the Messiah and would do so at the start of Passion Week (Luke 19:37–39), others sought desperately to silence Him. And the leaders, who should have been the first to recognize His authenticity, led the effort to have Him eliminated.

³³ Then Jesus said to them, “I shall be with you a little while longer, and *then* I go to Him who sent Me. ³⁴ You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come.”

As will become evident later in the narrative (vv. 45–46), the officers of the temple guard could not fulfill their assignment and failed to arrest the Lord. **Therefore Jesus** continued to boldly proclaim the truth about Himself, declaring, **“For a little while longer I am with you, then I go to Him who sent Me.”** In a few months, at Passover the following spring, Jesus would be crucified. He would then rise from the dead and ascend **to the Father who sent Him.**

Jesus continued by solemnly warning His hearers, **“You will seek Me, and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come.”** Those who reject Jesus will never come to where He was going when He ascended and currently rests at His Father’s right hand in heaven, because they will die in their sins (8:21).

John 8:21–24 (NKJV)

²¹ Then Jesus said to them again, “I am going away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come.”

²² So the Jews said, “Will He kill Himself, because He says, ‘Where I go you cannot come’?” ²³ And He said to them, “You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. ²⁴ Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins.”

(Jesus would later tell His disciples that they would not be able to follow Him to heaven immediately [13:33], but would do so later [v. 36].)

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (p. 307). Chicago: Moody Press.

³⁵ Then the Jews said among themselves, “Where does He intend to go that we shall not find Him? Does He intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? ³⁶ What is this thing that He said, ‘You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come’?”

Instead of heeding the Lord’s warning, **the unbelieving Jews** merely ridiculed Him. “**Where does this man**

intend to go that we will not find Him?” they scoffed. **“He is not intending to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks, is He?”** They found the idea that the Messiah would minister to Gentiles to be preposterous. The **Greeks** they scornfully referred to were probably Gentile proselytes to Judaism. (Ironically, it was because of Israel’s spiritual blindness in rejecting her Messiah that the gospel would indeed reach the Gentiles who had no interest in Judaism [cf. Rom. 11:7–11].) Mockingly, they offered Jesus’ **statement, “You will seek Me, and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come,”** as support for their derisive suggestion.

Tragically, these scoffers missed Jesus’ point completely.

Like Isaiah, who wrote, **“Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near”** (Isa. 55:6),

Jesus was warning His opponents not to delay conversion until it is too late.

As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, **“Behold, now is ‘the acceptable time,’ behold, now is ‘the day of salvation’ ”** (2 Cor. 6:2);

and the writer of Hebrews pleaded, **“Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts”** (Heb. 4:7; cf. 3:15).

Jesus Himself promised, **“I am the bread of life; He who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.... All that the Father gives Me**

will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out” (John 6:35, 37).

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (pp. 307–308). Chicago: Moody Press.