

“They Would Not Believe on Him” Sermon

Introductory Anecdote: “Wishing It Was Scribner’s”

At the height of the last Christmas rush, a slightly befuddled matron wandered into Dutton’s Bookstore. “Is this Scribner’s?” she inquired of a clerk. “No, madam,” was the reply, “it’s Dutton’s.” “Oh,” said the lady. “I saw the sign “Dutton”” on the window, but I thought it might be Scribner’s.” - Tan, P. L. (1996, c1979). Encyclopedia of 7700 illustrations

Psalms OT Hymnal Calls to “Believe” -

Psa. 78:22 Because they did not believe in God
And did not trust in His salvation.

Psa. 78:32 In spite of all this they still sinned
And did not believe in His wonderful works.

Psa. 106:24 Then they despised the pleasant land;
They did not believe in His word,

Psa. 119:66 Teach me good discernment and knowledge,
For I believe in Your commandments.

Message Context - Closing of the Period of Consideration in John’s gospel, At the passover, Jesus had provided an amazing meal with leftovers, shown that sign, then calmed the storm and proved that His kingdom was not of this world, is questioned by the Jews about His signs and after a sermon where He explains the plan of salvation, is left with 12 who would “walk” with Him including 1 betrayer and 1 denier.

John 7-12: Period of Conflict in John’s Narrative Fall AD30 Feast of Tabernacles through the Palm Sunday

(Note how the Jews oppose Christ: 7:1, 19, 23, 30, 32, 44; 8:6, 37, 48, 59; 9:22, 34; 10:20, 31–33, 39; 11:8, 16, 46–57; 12:10.)

“No man laid hands on Him, because His hour was not yet come.” (7:30)

A. Conflict over Moses (7:1–8:11)

John 7 in three Acts: Doubt, Debate, Division

Doubt - 7:19 - Jesus begins the debate “Why do you seek to kill me?” and declares: 7:37 - **“If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’”** (John 7:37–38 NAS95) John gives commentary: “But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.” (John 7:39 NAS95)

Debate rages even today over concepts of Christ- (John 7:10-36)

1. His Character
2. His Doctrine
3. His Works
4. His Origin
5. His Warning - “The “little while” that Christ spoke of lasted about six months.” - Wiersbe

Division-

“Nicodemus enters the picture again, and this time we see him defending Christ’s legal privileges. **In John 3, he was in the darkness of confusion; but here he is experiencing the dawn of conviction, willing to give Christ a fair chance.** Because of this, Nicodemus learned the truth, for a willingness to obey the Word is the secret of learning God’s truth (v. 17). In John 19 we see Nicodemus in the daylight of confession, openly identifying himself with Christ. How did he come to make this decision? He studied the Word and asked for God to teach him. The rulers told him, “Search and look!” and that is just what he did. Anyone who will read and obey the Word of God will move out of darkness into God’s marvelous light.” - Wiersbe

8:1-11 - The woman brought in adultery Case Study
Contrasts in John 8: Light/Dark; Heaven/Earth; Freedom/Slavery; Children of God/Children of Satan; Honor/Dishonor;

B. Conflict over Abraham (8:12–59)

Key Concept: Jesus pointed out the characteristics of the children of the devil:

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- A. They will not give place to the Word of God (v. 37).
- B. They trust in the flesh—human birth, works (v. 39).
- C. They hate Christ and seek to kill Him (vv. 40, 44). Satan is a murderer and his children imitate him.
- D. They do not love Christ or the things of Christ (v. 42).
- E. They do not understand the Word—blinded by Satan (v. 43).
- F. They are liars and love lies more than the truth (v. 44).
- G. They will not hear the Word of God; they hate it (v. 47).

Key Question: How does knowing “the truth” set a person free (vs. 32)?

“Remember, these “children of the devil” were not grossly immoral people; they were self-righteous religious people who rejected Christ. Many people today are deluded by Satan into an outward form of godliness that lacks the power of the Gospel, but these people think they are truly saved and going to heaven.” - Wiersbe

EGW Quote - “Those who will consent to enter into covenant relation with the God of heaven are not left to the power of Satan or to the infirmity of their own nature. They are invited by the Saviour, “Let them take hold of My strength, that they may make peace with Me; and they shall make peace with Me.” Isaiah 27:5. The spirits of darkness will battle for the soul once under their dominion, but angels of God will contend for that soul with prevailing power. {DA 258.6}

C. Conflict over His Sonship (9:1–10:42)

This chapter presents the sixth of seven special miracles recorded in John’s Gospel as witnesses to Christ’s deity (20:30–31). The first three signs show how a person is saved: through the Word (water to wine), by faith (healing the nobleman’s son), and by grace (healing the impotent man). The last four signs show the results of salvation: satisfaction (feeding the 5,000), peace (stilling the storm), light (healing the blind man), and life (raising Lazarus).

Man Born Blind Case shows how Christ saves the Sinner - The Cure; The Controversy; The Confession

A. The man has the characteristics of the lost sinner.

(1) He was blind (Eph. 4:18; John 3:3; 2 Cor. 4:3–6). The unsaved, though intellectual like Nicodemus, can never see or understand spiritual things. See 1 Cor. 2:14–16.

(2) He was begging. The unsaved are poor in God’s sight, though perhaps rich in the eyes of the world. They are begging for something to satisfy their deepest needs.

(3) He was helpless. He could not cure himself; others could not cure him.

B. The cure shows how Christ saves a sinner. - Wiersbe

(1) **He came to the man in grace.** Christ could have passed him by, for it was the Sabbath and He was supposed to rest (v. 14). While the disciples argued about the cause of the blindness, Jesus did something for the man.

(2) **He irritated the man.** A speck of dirt irritates the eye; imagine how cakes of clay must have felt. But the dirt in his eyes encouraged him to go wash. It is just so with the preaching of the Word: it irritates sinners with conviction so that they want to do something about their sins. (See Acts 2:37.)

(3) **He cured the man by His power.** The man proved his faith in Christ by being obedient to the Word. “Religion” today wants to give men substitutes for salvation, but only Christ can deliver from the darkness of sin and hell.

(4) **The cure glorified God.** All true conversions are for God’s glory alone. See Eph. 1:6, 12, 14; 2:8–10.

(5) **The cure was noticed by others.** His parents and neighbors saw a change in his life. So it is when a person is born again—others see the difference it makes (2 Cor. 5:17).

John 10 - Shepherd & His Sheep-

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Illustration; Explanation; Application;

Key Passage: ““For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. “No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.”” (John 10:17–18 NAS95)

D. Conflict over His power (11:1–12:11)

Wiersbe: The Case Study of Bethany and the resurrection of Lazarus
Lazarus represents the lost in 7 ways:

1. He was Dead
2. He was Decayed
3. He was Raised and given life
4. He was Loosed
5. He Witnessed to Others
6. He fellowshipped with Christ
7. He was Persecuted

The Case of John 12 - Feast at Simon’s House, Sabbath before the
Passover (Day Before Triumphal Entry)

1. Christ & His Friends; vv. 1-19
2. Christ and the Gentiles; vv. 20-29
3. Christ and the Jews; vv. 34-50

Crisis #2: They would not believe on Him (12:12–50).

Key Passage: ““While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light.”

These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid Himself from them. But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him. This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: “LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?” For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, “HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART, SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED AND I HEAL THEM.” These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him. Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him,

but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.” (John 12:36–43 NAS95)

Summary: The Period of Conflict within John’s gospel finalizes the last year of Christ’s public ministry with a condemnation by the Jews and a reception by the gentiles.

Jesus foretells His death and the last chapters of John (13-21) are the climactic last week and glorious afterlife recorded for our benefit to believe.

“But Jesus shouted out, “The one who believes in me does not believe in me, but in the one who sent me, and the one who sees me sees the one who sent me. I have come as a light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in darkness. If anyone hears my words and does not obey them, I do not judge him. For I have not come to judge the world, but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not accept my words has a judge; the word I have spoken will judge him at the last day. For I have not spoken from my own authority, but the Father himself who sent me has commanded me what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. Thus the things I say, I say just as the Father has told me.”” (John 12:44–50 NET)