

# Where was Jesus From?

John 7:25-36

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**Introduction:** The final eight months of Jesus Ministry produced a steady decline in His popularity. His claims to be the “bread of life” drove most of the followers in Galilee away. His brothers wanted Him to pull it back together...come to the Feast of Tabernacles...do some more miracles and feedings....[the people love that stuff] and get His disciples back. Then He could become the ruler and king everyone wanted.

But Jesus declines to go up to the feast and do what His brothers desire. When He does go up to Jerusalem in the middle of the Feast week, He immediately resumes His astounding claim to be from heaven and to be delivering authoritative teaching directly from God who personally gave it to Him in His presence. The Jews are beside themselves. If these things are true then Christ is the Messiah of Israel. But Jesus is not the Messiah they want. They want a religious and political Messiah. They want one that is exactly the way they have imagined. And...this is humanities problem with Christ. He does not and cannot be stuffed into the boxes that men have made for Him. He will not be a God created in the image of man.

And so Jesus defies their man-made religion. At one point He heals a man on the Sabbath. His explanation....

**John 5:17-18** "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working." <sup>18</sup> For this reason therefore 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.

And now Jesus is at the feast, just six months before His crucifixion, and He is pressing this point very hard. If He did not intend to say that He was the One True Son of the Living God...this was the perfect time to say so. He has alienated almost everyone with this claim. Let's stand with the crowd on the temple mount and listen to what is being said....

**John 7:25-36** <sup>25</sup> So some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, "Is this not the man whom they are seeking to kill? <sup>26</sup> "Look, He is speaking publicly, and they are saying nothing to Him. The rulers do not really know that this is the Christ, do they? <sup>27</sup> "However, we know where this man is from; but whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He is from." <sup>28</sup> Then Jesus cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, "You both know Me and know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. <sup>29</sup> "I know Him, because I am from Him, and He sent Me." <sup>30</sup> So they were seeking to seize Him; and no man laid his hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. <sup>31</sup> But many of the crowd believed in Him; and they were saying, "When the Christ comes, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He?" <sup>32</sup> The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about Him, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to seize Him. <sup>33</sup> Therefore Jesus said, "For a little while longer I am with you, then I go to Him who sent

Me. <sup>34</sup> "You will seek Me, and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come." <sup>35</sup>  
The Jews then said to one another, "Where does this man intend to go that we will not find Him? He is not intending to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks, is He? <sup>36</sup> "What is this statement that He said, 'You will seek Me, and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come'?"

The importance of where Jesus came from is crucial. Jesus has been preaching this at every opportunity for some time now. John starts out His gospel with this truth.

**John 1:10-11** <sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. <sup>11</sup> He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.

**John 1:18** No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

**John 3:13** <sup>13</sup> "No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man.

**John 6:38** <sup>38</sup> "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

**John 6:51** <sup>51</sup> "I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."

Jesus never ever backed away from the assertion that He came down directly from heaven to earth. He left the presence of the Father to live on the earth. He received His teachings directly from God...The One True God and He received them while He was in heaven with The Father. When faced with rising hostility and death because of this teaching, Jesus doubled down on it. Christ was not a psychopath who wanted to die. He was the Son of the Living God who wanted to give life to all who would trust Him to be their Savior. If you are wrong about who Jesus really is, it does not matter if you believe in Him or not. It is therefore crucial to saving faith for men to know the true Christ.

- Men must know where Jesus came from [25-27]
- Men must know why Jesus came [28-30]
- Men must know where Jesus went [31-36]

### **Men must know where Jesus came from [25-27]**

**John 7:25-27** <sup>5</sup> Some of the people of Jerusalem therefore said, "Is not this the man whom they seek to kill? <sup>26</sup> And here he is, speaking openly, and they say nothing to him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Christ? <sup>27</sup> But we know where this man comes from, and when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from."

**Some of the people of Jerusalem therefore said, "Is not this the man whom they seek to kill?":** John introduces a new group of people to the narrative at this point. They are not the crowd that is visiting for the feast and they are not the Jews who are plotting to kill Jesus. They are a bunch of locals who know that the Jews are trying to kill Jesus. Their question is phrased in such a way as to demand a "YES" answer.

**Here he is, speaking openly, and they say nothing to him!:** They are amazed...knowing what they know....that Jesus is humiliating the Jews publicly and they are not doing anything about it. The word "openly" is the Greek word for boldly or without restraint. He was telling it straight. Putting into words the hypocrisy of religion and the hateful nature of human hearts.

**Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Christ?:** They are trying to figure out why a brood of hypocritical and vicious snakes like these Pharisees would let a man continue to speak openly when they had the power to stop him. Maybe they have discovered that he is the Messiah. Unlike the first question that was phrased so as to demand a yes answer this one requires a no answer.

**But we know where this man comes from:** Continuing the discussion among themselves they quickly decide that he is not the Messiah because they knew He came from Nazareth. They were not even right about this fact let alone what follows.....

**When the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from:** This is not at all true. Like many religious hypocrites they rely on themselves for knowledge rather than the Word of God. They are repeating things they have heard said by preachers or others but have never bothered to look into them from the Scripture. So... they are discussing a theory or teaching of the Rabbis' as if it were fact. They are so certain that it is settled in their mind. The Scribes in Matthew 2, on the other hand, seemed to know where the Messiah would be from when Herod asked them.

**Matthew 2:4-5** <sup>4</sup> Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet:

In their quest for some new teaching to distinguish themselves from the crowd some of the Rabbis had come up with this idea based on a verse in Malachi. If the Messiah were coming suddenly to the temple then His place of origin must be unknown.

**Malachi 3:1** "Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming," says the LORD of hosts.

The crowd here reasoned that since they knew Jesus was from Nazareth then He could not be the Messiah. Jesus seizes on this discussion to press the point that He has been making for some time now.

## **Men must know why Jesus came [28-30]**

**John 7:28-30** <sup>28</sup> So Jesus proclaimed [cried out], as he taught in the temple, "You know me, and you know where I come from? But I have not come of my own accord. He who sent me is true, and him you do not know. <sup>29</sup> I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me." <sup>30</sup> So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come.

**So Jesus proclaimed, as he taught in the temple:** Up until now He has been speaking in a normal voice, but now He raises His voice and begins to shout at the top of His lungs.

**"You know me, and you know where I come from?":** There are two ways you can say these same words and they have entirely different meanings. One is a statement of fact...You know me and you know where I come from. The other is a question..."You know me??? And you know where I come from?? You think you know me and where I come from. It is clearly the latter that is in view here.

**I have not come of my own accord.** He does not bother to correct their theological error. He could have said...like the Scribes in Matthew...that He came from Bethlehem just like Malachi said He would. But there is a larger issue here. His earthly place of birth fulfills prophecy to be sure, but lots of men were born in Bethlehem...BUT none...absolutely none were sent from heaven directly by God the Father to the earth. Jesus is back to talking about the theme of His preaching. He was with the Father in Heaven. The Father sent Him to Earth. The Father is the God you claim to know and worship. "My Father is Yahweh!"

**He who sent me is true:** This is way more than just saying that God tells the truth. The phrase "is true" means "the real deal." The one who in every respect corresponds in reality to every idea and thought of God the Father. Jesus could not make this more pointed. **Paraphrase:** He who sent me is the one and only true God of Creation.

This is profoundly simple. There can be NO misunderstanding what Jesus is saying. Nothing ambiguous or confusing. "You think you know where I came from do you? I will tell you! I came from the presence of The God you claim to worship...."

**And him you do not know:** Again... a bold assertion. "You think you know me and you claim to know God...but I am from God...from heaven where God is and you cannot recognize me as God? I am doing everything God does. I rule creation and even have power over death. The reason you don't know me is because you do not really know God at all." Later to the Colossians Paul would say this...

**Colossians 1:15-19** <sup>15</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. <sup>16</sup> For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created through Him and for Him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn

from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. <sup>19</sup> For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,

**I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me:** “On the other hand I do know Him. I have come from His presence in heaven and I came because He told me to come. When you look at me you will see God. If you do not see God then you do not know what God is like....You do not know God.”

**John 6:45-46** <sup>5</sup> "It is written in the prophets, 'AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me. <sup>46</sup> "Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father

**John 14:8-9** <sup>8</sup> Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." <sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and *yet* you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how *can* you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

**So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come:** We are back to this now. This passage starts out with some Jerusalemites wondering why this guy that the Jews wanted to kill was allowed to just go about teaching and preaching. They knew the Jews wanted Him dead, so why didn't they just kill Him?

The answer is important. Men were not driving these events....God was. Jesus would be arrested and murdered at the time of His choosing not theirs. Until that time He would say exactly what He wanted to say. He would do exactly what He wanted to do. He is the Sovereign God of Creation and it did not matter what they wanted or did not want.

**John 10:17-18** <sup>17</sup> "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. <sup>18</sup> "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."

Peter would later preach the same idea to the same people as we find milling around in this text:

**Acts 2:22-24** <sup>22</sup> "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know-- <sup>23</sup> this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death. <sup>24</sup> "But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

Where did Jesus come from? Not from Nazareth and not even from Bethlehem. He came down from heaven. From the throne room of the God of Creation. He left there to become a flesh and blood human being.

Why did Jesus come? He was sent by the Father to reveal the God that many people claim to know. The Jews had His law, His prophets, His religion, His rituals, His priesthood and were even His chosen people. When God appeared in their midst they did not recognize Him. Jesus' mission was to do the will of the Father on earth. His reasons for coming included service for you. Jesus came to serve you by paying for your sin and giving you His righteous standing before God. At the end He will raise those who trust Him to live a full and blessed human life for eternity.

**Matthew 20:28** the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

**John 6:38-39** <sup>38</sup> "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. <sup>39</sup> "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.

### **Men must know where Jesus went and how to follow [31-36]**

**John 7:31-36** <sup>31</sup> Yet many of the people believed in him. They said, "When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done?" <sup>32</sup> The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest him. <sup>33</sup> Jesus then said, "I will be with you a little longer, and then I am going to him who sent me. <sup>34</sup> You will seek me and you will not find me. Where I am you cannot come." <sup>35</sup> The Jews said to one another, "Where does this man intend to go that we will not find him? Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? <sup>36</sup> What does he mean by saying, 'You will seek me and you will not find me,' and, 'Where I am you cannot come?'"

**Yet many of the people believed in him. They said, "When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done?":** In spite of all the opposition, murmuring, plotting, criticizing and misinformation there were still many people who trusted Him. They reasoned that the Messiah could not be more God-Like when He came....so this must be the Messiah. This point still resonates when Christ is preached today.

**The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest him:** They may have feared the crowd and been paralyzed when He attacked their hypocrisy and lying, but they are watching their hold on the people dissolve before their eyes. Being the big shots that they are....they send some temple police officers to arrest Jesus. This would be just like a bunch of lawyers...When criticized they could say, "We didn't arrest him it was these temple police that did it."

**Jesus then said, "I will be with you a little longer, and then I am going to him who sent me:** In the meantime, Jesus continues to preach. He is making His closing remarks now. Like any good preacher He is going to summarize what has been said so far. He has taught them that He came from heaven and not from Nazareth or Bethlehem. He now tells them that He will leave and return to heaven. He is not going to die and be put in a permanent grave to decay....He is going back to heaven. This is what God would do if

He became a man. He would have a unique conception, a unique life, a unique death. It was all planned and carried out to the smallest detail by God. Peter in the first sermon of the Church in Jerusalem, after having quoted King the prophet, summarized it this way.

**Acts 2:29-33** <sup>29</sup> "Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. <sup>30</sup> "And so, because he was a prophet and knew that GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT *one* OF HIS DESCENDANTS ON HIS THRONE, <sup>31</sup> he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY. <sup>32</sup> "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. <sup>33</sup> "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.

**You will seek me and you will not find me. Where I am you cannot come:** Now this is a problem because Jesus has been telling them that He is the bread of life they must eat. He is going to tell them in just a bit that He is the living water that a man must drink if he is to live. But now He is telling this unbelieving crowd that wants Him dead that in a short time He will go where they will not be able to find Him because they cannot follow Him there.

**The Jews said to one another, "Where does this man intend to go that we will not find him? Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?"** <sup>36</sup> **What does he mean by saying, 'You will seek me and you will not find me,' and, 'Where I am you cannot come'?"**: These guys have not been able to process a single thing Jesus has been preaching. They are supremely confident in their own power. "Where does "this man" intend to go that WE will not find him? We can find him anywhere....even if He leaves Israel and goes out among the gentile nations we will be able to find him.

But the problem goes deeper than their denseness. Despite all that Jesus has done before their eyes...despite His explanation that He is doing what His Father does...despite His assertion that He came from the Father and is going back to Him....These men will not accept Christ's deity. Although they are offended by His claims to the point of murder...at the same time they cannot understand the simple declaration that He is going to return to heaven from whence He came.

## CONCLUSION

These three points still sum up the gospel message today. In order for a man to have saving faith in Christ, he must know and believe them:

- He must know where Jesus came from. Not just born in a manger in Bethlehem, but instead the Eternal Son of the Living God who came down from Heaven and became a flesh and blood human man.

- A man must know why Jesus came. Not to be a great teacher or found a religion. He came to reveal the invisible God to us. To show the side of God that is full of love, grace and mercy. He revealed that perfectly at the cross where he took the punishment for sin that you deserved and willingly died in your place. He will raise all who trust in Him up to an eternal, meaningful life with Him.
- A man must know where Jesus went. He returned to the Father. He rose from the dead because death cannot hold God. Death cannot hold those who cling to Christ in Faith. We have trusted that the one who came from heaven and returned to heaven will make certain that we too will join Him there.

When Jesus told His disciples that He was returning to heaven they were deeply troubled. They loved Him and had experienced His love for them. Their hearts were troubled, but Jesus said...

**John 14:1-6** "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup> "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also. <sup>4</sup> "And you know the way where I am going." <sup>5</sup> Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?" <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.