

# Gospel of John (Study 16 of 24, Chap 7 Cont)

by G.W. North

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*The sermon emphasizes the necessity of recognizing Jesus as the 'I am' and the importance of a deep spiritual thirst for God and understanding scripture in our faith journey.*

**Duration:** 51:21

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Luke 15:17-20, John 3:3, John 7:34, John 7:45-46

**Topics:** "Christian Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the parable of the lost son from Luke 15. He emphasizes the importance of the son coming to himself and realizing who he is and what he has done with his gifts. The preacher also mentions the significance of the temple and hints at discussing it further in a future sermon. He concludes by highlighting the teaching aspect of parables and how they reveal deeper truths, using the example of John witnessing Jesus' crucifixion and understanding its significance afterwards.

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## Transcript

All right, where Jesus is in the temple and declaring you both know me and ye know whence I am. And I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom you know not. But I know him, for I am from him, and he has sent me.

Then they sought to take him. No man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come. And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done? The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

Then said Jesus unto them, I have never quite decided whether it was to those officers or to everybody, yet a little while I am with you. And then I go unto him that sent me. Jesus seek me, and shall not find me.

And where I am, thither ye cannot come. I think if the Lord had said that to me, I would have died. Where I am, ye cannot come.

And nobody will ever come to Jesus, unless they come to him as the I am. Where I am. Is he I am in your heart? Is he I am in your thinking? Is he I am? That's a wonderful thing.

One of the purposes of the cross is to crush out your I. The big I. That's it. You can illustrate it easily. Here I am.

God crosses me out. He crucifies me. It's this thing.

We are worse than babyish really in our thinking. We think in tedious terms of climbing up somewhere and attaining to something. You say well Paul was attaining to the prize of the high calling.

Yes that's wonderful. But we are not talking about the high calling at the moment. You've got to come to this.

You've got to say I am a sinner or say I am a saint. Saint being the name given to the church. Full of saints.

You've got to get to that position. You get to it by real faith. You see there are certain degrees of faith.

This isn't my point at the moment. But you only switch your mind back to chapter 6. Those 5000 men that were sitting down there didn't have to exercise much faith did they? Just put up their hand and said thank you. Would you call that faith? There are lots of people like that.

Lots of people like that. You are in the part and parcel of God's generosity of grace. And everything like that in the love of God is surrounding you now.

All along. But don't go searching in your mind for something you can think up that you'd like to have or be if it's not primarily Jesus. The whole wonderful truth beloved is glossed over by people who pick texts to preach on.

Never read the whole context that builds up to it and are in the heart of God. That was what I was trying to illustrate this morning. You don't just come this way and see something.

You come this way. The one that inspired it. That's great isn't it? Well I think you'll have to pardon me putting over the things I think are wonderful.

But you and I must understand this. But fancy saying that. Here's a suggestion to you.

Study out, ferret out if you need, these I am's in John's Gospel. Where I am. You can't even come near me.

You can't come. How do you picture Christ? I don't mean trying to get a Holman Hunt picture or something like that. How do you picture him? Imagine him if you like.

What do you think about it? The big thing of Christ's presence, this I am, is beyond the mental pictures. You have to understand by assurances in your own heart. See you're all sitting around here and I'm sitting here.

But who are you? I can see your faces. You see, it's this I am. That's the central part of you.

You have conscious being. What sort of person? That's the thing. You've got to come.

You can't be where I am. What a terrible thing it was to say to those people. Later on he says, you will seek for me and you will die in your sins.

How about that? Seeking hearts because they've never, never come to any kind of understanding beyond bleating out like a lost sheep. But that has to be, it starts with a lost sheep and then it's a lost coin. I'm

constructing truth from Luke 15 now.

Then it finishes up the lost son. You see, it's wonderful. There's a sheep out there.

I don't think it knows it has conscious being. It bleats, it wants and so on and so on. There's a coin that can do nothing.

It's utterly dead. Men place a value on it. Might have been worth sixpence shilling.

Oh sorry, I'm talking in old terms. That's all. You see, I'll try.

How about so? The vital thing in that parable, what would you say it was? Because it's three parts of one parable. What is it? When he came to himself. He had to come to himself.

Who he was. What he was. What he'd done with his gifts.

What the father gave him, the portion filled to him. He had to come to self. Now face yourself.

And learn not to trust yourself anymore. And learn always you've got to get back to the place where you originated, father's house. You've got to get back to the birth condition and position.

That's the thing you have to find out what God gave you life for. Sorry about spitting the infinitive. You have to get back there.

That's what you have to do. You will make no further progress from now on, me having told you, unless you do. Or you can have your head filled up with all the lovely lectures you're getting.

What I'm saying to you, you can fill your head up. But don't you see, you have to sit down among the swine toss if you're there. I'm not trying to assert that you are.

And you have to come to yourself. And that's the thing that has to be crucified. Back he went.

Hallelujah. May God help us to see truth. You can have lovely sermons and it can tickle your ears.

I know, what not a wonderful word this morning. But have you come to yourself. The I am.

Now you've got to say, I am this. I am, well I make the faith claim. You might as well not waste breath in saying it.

You've got to come back to what, who, why, these lovely little questions. That's all. God's waiting for the when you come back.

You come to yourself. After that he could come back to father and home. Oh what a marvellous truth is this book.

Talk about psychologically perfect. Spiritually perfect too. We go on here.

Look at that quarter of an hour has gone already. Let's go on shall we. He says all these things.

You shall seek me. Shall not find me. Whither I am, you cannot come.

Not yet does he say thou shalt die in this. He gradually comes up to it. He couldn't pour it all over them in the first blow and instead all be laid out.

But here's the truth. The Jews said among themselves, whither will he go? That we shall not find him. I mean everything will find him anywhere.

He's so popular in the country. Alright. Where I am, you cannot come.

In the last day, verse 37, now you take this. The last day. That great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried saying, if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.

He that believeth on me as the scripture hath said, not as he thinks he should. If he that believeth on me must leave the commer out. The punctuation was never inspired of God.

It's been put in by men to what they, where they think the full stop should come and where they think. I often ignore them. And then you get at truth.

If you believe on me, not as you think, not as you, any old way, you've got to think, believe on me as the scripture says. Of course the scripture, we know the scripture says you've got to believe on him. Oh no, not because the scripture says, but as the scripture says.

Hallelujah. Isn't that wonderful. Perhaps you're not really believing as the scripture says, but you're believing based on Kenneth Copeland or somebody, Hagen or somebody.

You've got to soak in this book till you begin to understand the truth. Till you get into the spirit of it. Amen.

Let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me as the scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.

For the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. Amen. How wonderful that is.

They that believe on Jesus, if you say you believe on Jesus, then you've got to confess next that the Holy Ghost is in you and flowing out of you. That's what you've got to be able to say. And don't think because you haven't had an experience that knocks you up the wall like say the Toronto Blessing or as it's called.

Don't think that means you haven't received the Holy Ghost. You see. Never look to outward manifestations.

Never. You can talk about them perhaps with a little bit of envy, but don't worry about that. Not really.

That will go out. These things move, they come, they go, something else comes. God simply wants to show you that he's a very versatile God and nobody can tell him what he's got to do to prove anything.

You know, when the Holy Ghost came in the church in which I was at the time, the thing that I saw were tears, pools of them, wet themselves, pools. None of this extraordinary jumping over about four benches in one step. I believe it could happen.

I'm not criticizing. You get all the blessing you can. No matter what it is.

You can't get too much blessing as long as you don't arrange with God if you could. It must come along the Toronto corridor. Amen.

Here's the great wonder, beloved. I want to know this and this I shall know by being intimate with you in the proper spiritual sense. That is, weather rivers of living.

Water is just the medium he's using. Weather rivers of life are flowing out of you. Constantly.

And because you might shout hallelujah 50 times straight off in a meeting is no indication that there's any life in you at all. Keep that absolutely right. No, you will fail.

You won't stand up on St. Paul's Cathedral and shout hallelujah. But God won't give you wings. You have to see, beloved, what it's all about.

Be sure the devil will get language twisted and ideas all mixed up in this. We're so human. One thing and another.

But I saw tears filling up the bottoms of chairs. They were solid bottoms. They came through pure, holy, perfect, perfectly aligned.

And that's how it all started in things I've been mixed up with. But if God makes them come through laughing their heads off, that's fine. As long as in the end they don't turn to have an ass's head on.

You've got to know what it's about, beloved. You're on holy ground. And it's so wonderful to know what it's about.

But I have no hope of you unless you don't have a great longing heart in you that longs to have God, Father, Son and Spirit as he longs to have you. He could do so much with you if he got you. So much.

Derek would even invite you to come and give lectures next year. Here is the truth, beloved, to know what it's about. But do you know what it depends on? Something that's quite natural in you, because it is natural in the Spirit.

It's called thirst. Thirst. And just because, friend, you didn't know this, Jesus wrote that word on the cross.

But he didn't write on, unless you've got a mind that can go with me, I'm not giving you anything. I thirst, he said on the cross, crying for you. He wasn't thirsting for God.

He was doing the thing you ought to have done. Alright, you ought to have borne your sin and the punishment of it, but Jesus hung there and what. You ought, I could have gone, go through it all.

Don't you see? You ought to be in before God, I thirst, I thirst. Oh God, I thirst. I must have drink.

Come unto me and drink, he said. But most of us only get tied up in, I'm heavy laden, bearing a burden of sins, I'll come to Jesus, he takes them away. Praise God he does.

But you shouldn't. Thirst. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst, after righteousness they shall be filled.

If I could, I'd like to come and ask each one of you separately, were you thirsty? Are you thirsty for Christ? Are you thirsty for God and the Holy Ghost? Are you thirsty? Or is it something that builds up in the meeting on Sunday morning and by Sunday night you're thinking about playing football or whatever it is. Having a good supper before you go to bed. What is it that you're after? This thirst has got to consume you.

And if I may remind you, next to air, which is the first requirement of a newborn babe, comes drink. I must breathe, I must drink. Not old enough to eat meat yet, or even mammoth.

And do you know where you get your milk from? The same one that gave you birth. Keep that in mind. Thus men, we feel right out of it now.

It's so glorious, beloved, to understand this simple Bible it's simple on basic principles. It only gets complicated when you move off that and don't live properly or step toward the fulfilment of these things. Oh, I love it.

Would I, to use the figure, if I knew you, would I feel the rivers running out of you? I was going to meet that woman, I was going to meet that man again. Oh, they're full of the Holy Ghost. I'm so thirsty, I'd love to be in their company.

They may not be your chosen pals, but the Lord ought to taste, of course. He'll change you if you let him. So, here we come then.

Jesus is just talking on basic things. Isn't he? Just talking on basic things. I love him, he's such a simple God, on basic things.

So here we go. He was speaking of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive. For the Holy Ghost was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Now you can start glorifying Jesus, first by focusing your eyes on him, secondly by longing for him, by wanting his company, prepared for that, that you should let any man or any woman go, any company, anything. I want you, Lord Jesus. Even Jesus, if you will allow me to say this, got fed up with company, even left his disciples behind him at times, went off alone where he's far away.

You've got to be like that, will you? Have to be. I'm not demanding great things, I'm only demanding simple things. Here it is, beloved.

We say, but what do we do? Many of the people, therefore, when they heard this, they said, of a truth, this is the prophet. Others said, this is the Christ. Now, I tell you, there's real danger here.

This is the Christ. Others said, shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said that Christ cometh as the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? So there was a division among the people because of him, and some of them would have taken him. But no man laid hands on him.

Very wonderful, isn't it? They knew. The stories being gathered together for us, the story of his life being written down by these four men that have written the Gospels. The beloved, they should have known that.

They should have known that. Perhaps it might have been that there were some people, might have been mums and dads, or some people that were going to get married. They heard the story of the angels of nature, everything.

But they didn't tell their children that this man was on earth. They didn't say it. Quite modern, that disease is, it gets into people's lives.

They hear things. It all began with hearsay. Shepherds heard the angels, for instance, and so on, and so on.

Beloved, don't you be neglectful. You have a duty, an unborn generation perhaps. You will be held responsible for being a man or a woman.

How wonderful it is, though, that God knows this way. Now we are coming towards the end of the chapter. Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees, and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? The officers answered, Never a man spake like this man.

I tell you what, are you going to grow up and be preachers? I don't want to blow your mind, don't want you to get big ideas, but are they going to say, You know, I never heard anybody else preach like him. Or a woman. Aim at being that.

Aim at being that. I don't mean your origin, after position, or admiration, or anything like that. Beloved, what are you going to be? What is your ambition? I'm going to be a missionary.

You know, I said that to my mother when I was about five. I was brought up in that kind of household. Do you see what I mean? These people, he never spoke, I never heard anybody talk like him.

Anybody. Then answered the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers of the Pharisees believed on him? But these people, who knoweth not the law, are cursed. Nicodemus said unto them, He that came to Jesus by night, being one of them, Doth our Lord judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doeth? They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search him, look, for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

And every man went unto his own house. Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives. That chapter division absolutely ruins the truth.

You should never stop reading at the end of a chapter. More often than not it will betray the truth that the Bible is set forth to teach. They all went to their house.

Jesus hadn't got a hole to go to. He said, Foxes have holes, birds of the air have nests, but nowhere for me. Wonderful, isn't it? He spent his night under an olive tree, I suppose.

Under an olive tree. But what a connection. For not only is the Holy Ghost here likened to water flowing, he is also likened to oil poured out.

Olive oil. That's the wonder of it, beloved. Everything that Jesus did, I wish I could say this of my life, was ordered and appointed.

There was a parable in his position, I mean for the heart, a parable for the heart. There was a parable in what he said, how he looked, how he stood, where he went. A parable.

Because all the things about Jesus are an earthly story with a heavenly meaning and a heavenly man and a heart. Everything. And it's so wonderful, isn't it? I mean, you stood round the cross and perhaps you might have said, I saw the Lord crucified.

That might have been true. But it's a parable. It's the truth, it's not a story.

The parable is this, that in his act you were crucified too. We call that, that's the teaching that comes out, that's what the parables are, they're a teaching. You know, the four different kinds of ground, if you take the famous one of the sower, they're all teachings.

I mean, John stood with Jesus, Mother Mary at the cross, the only disciple had the guts to stand there. That's what he, he saw him crucified, but afterwards he knew that it was him being crucified. For him.

So wonderful, isn't it? Once you really come to understand what the Bible is all about, it's not just something to believe in, it's something you identify with. And he became that for your sake, so that you should know it was you being crucified there because you're so horrible and filthy and sinful. That's right.

And he loved you. And he shed the blood at the same time, this is the miracle of the cross, so that you could be cleansed from all your sin. Isn't that marvellous? And so I could go on and on about these things, but it's great.

And of course dear old Nicodemus is mentioned here. I'm sure that Nicodemus was on track. He came to Jesus first in Jerusalem, told him he must be born again.

He said, does any man condemn before he's heard him? Because Nicodemus had heard him. He'd heard him say, you must be born again, Nicodemus. You marvel because I said you must be born again? No man should marvel, or woman, to know that they must be born again.

If they haven't got to the state where they realise that they're so dead toward God, even though they believe scripture upon scripture upon scripture, but the living, moving, working, flowing spirit isn't in you. It's got to flow out of you, the Holy Ghost, when you're not talking. I mean I'm so often talking, I'm sorry about that, but it's just my lot.

But here's the thing, it's got to flow out of me when I've got my back toward you and don't know you're there. And it's got to be like that with you, every one of us. That's what it's about.

Not only in my conscious I am position, well I know that I am, and then you can pile up all the things that you know I am. Oh I'm this, I'm a liar, I'm a cheat, I'm a blah blah blah. Go through them all, don't be afraid to name them, in your own room, quietly away with God.

You see? Where you might get real with yourself. This is the thing. And then he says, does our Lord judge anyone before he'd hear him? He didn't say, no I've heard him.

Perhaps they all thought, oh we know you went to him in that dark night in Jerusalem sort of thing. I don't know. But he heard him.

Now when you've heard him, one thing will dawn on your soul. I want to be like him. No man speak like this man.

Not the substance of what he said, but how he said it. That's what comes out. You can go back over your conversation, the substance of what you said, but that's not what any man taught of God ever listens for.

He might say yes or no. It's you. How he sounds.

How you sound. That's you. You are what comes through your voice.

It wasn't as if you've had some accident that's now half torn your throat to pieces, and you croak instead of speak. I'm not talking about that. I apologise for the way I have to go now and again.

You know I had a stroke some time back. Perhaps you didn't. But you see, beloved, that's the thing.

How do you sound? Do I hear a boaster coming out? Do I hear false claims being made? For instance, you know the tone in which you speak. I sit here, there's a nice young lady in front of me, and I'm about 25 or something like that. And you look pretty.

And I say, I love you. You wouldn't believe that. You wouldn't believe that.

I love you. You wouldn't believe it. You wouldn't want to be engaged to me.

You've got to live with that. Take it to your heart. Don't try and practise the right way to pronounce something.

Because everybody will see that it's all acted. We're so blinded though. So deaf.

Go wrong on it. It isn't words you see. It's the tone in which you say them.

The attitude that counts. May I give you a personal testimony? I was in Germany, preaching. This young lady will be picking up her ears.

Nothing to do with pyramids. But I was in Germany, of course, doing the speaking. And a young lady came in.

Have I told you this before? No? If I have, I like telling it. She stood there, in front of me. She had a baby in her arms.

And I talked to her. Then she just said to me, You know why I'm here? I said, No. She says, Because you loved me.

She didn't say, You preached a marvellous sermon, or anything like that. Perhaps I've never preached a marvellous sermon. Here it is, beloved.

You loved me, she said. That girl was brought back from the depression, and I don't know what. She'd gone down the pit, scraping the bottom.

Now she's a lovely young lady. Got her lovely baby in her arms. And her husband, who was hovering about, said, That's true.

You see? It's that. Somehow she must have felt love. I wish everybody could feel love from me.

That's what Jesus wanted to do. He didn't start quoting the Bible. You see how little he quoted of the Old Testament.

He'd go through it and find out. He didn't quote Isaiah 53 and Psalm 21. He didn't quote anything like that.

He just spoke from the Spirit of Him. That's what you're doing. Without even trying.

You are doing it. But what am I hearing, when I hear you? You see, beloved, that's what it's about. He could have said, you've heard all this about doctrine, and you'll know the doctrine, and you'll know this,

and you'll know that, and what Moses said about this, and you'll know the Bible, which was only the Old Testament then, gathered into one, and you could quote it.

You'll know, but I went on my own to Jesus. It was a dark night. He never gave me a chance to sleep.

He just told me, except you're born again, you won't see the Kingdom of God. I wonder what he thought. Of course, he started to think of all the impossible things.

I'm a, I'm a, can I go back into my mother's womb? Big boom, what are you talking about? That's what brains say. Hallelujah. Now I want to say this.

Talk according to the Spirit that's in you. Not some imagined way that you should speak. Be yourself.

Oh, it's the past tense. I want to be like Jesus. I want to talk like Jesus.

Well, that's what I'm talking about. Be yourself. The new self, or the old self.

Jesus did not quote texts. What he said was original. They became text.

These things. Isn't that wonderful? Isn't it wonderful? And some men talk as I have already said. One Marie Mache.

Men return again and again. To the man that preaches so hanging from the nails of the cross. This is the thing, you see.

Strangely enough, Jesus only hung from the cross. For a few hours really. He died before he needed done.

The other two thieves did. The other two, sorry. The other two thieves, they did.

They hung on to life as long as they ever could. Jesus didn't need just to accomplish the will of the Father and died. That's it.

You see, here is the thing for us to grasp, beloved. Let it sink into your being. Paul's wonderful statement.

Why am I out of John at the moment? I'll die. Here it is. I was crucified with Christ.

You'll never live until you've been crucified with Christ. Until you associate yourself in the dawnings of understanding with Christ. Say, I was the sinner that hung there, Lord.

Begin to start and then the Lord will develop it in you. And you'll come into what's called in our language, our human thought. You'll come to be identified with him.

Start there. Unless you start there. If you get on this track, I want to go to heaven when I die.

I said this before, let me keep saying it, Lord, till I die. It's not good enough for you. God's going to make a new heaven.

Don't you understand? It says so in the Bible. Heaven is not good enough for you. Do you understand? He's going to make a new heaven.

And a newer. Keep that very clear. You are going to become preachers.

Or even if witnessing for the Lord and witnessing of truth. So, leaving them in this fury of understanding and fighting. What is he talking about? What is he saying? Is our chief teacher, that's Nicodemus, he was the great teacher in Israel.

Is he swung over there? What's happening here? Do the rulers know indeed that he is the Christ? If Nicodemus didn't at that moment know, it wouldn't have been long before he came to that conclusion. Perhaps you're coming to conclusions in your life. Keep on.

You'll not miss them. You'll not miss the truth. You'll not miss the real end of God's purposes in your life.

If you go on. It's not like that man who said one small step for mankind. Now what is it? One small step for a man.

One giant step for mankind when he stepped onto the moon. Whoever wants to step on that. But here you are, he's going to do away with the moon.

He'll leave the scientists toying with the idea. Or trying to disprove that God is the great creator of course. Or a lot of it.

They're searching for excuses to keep on sinning because there are no absolutes. Therefore you cannot say this man's a sinner or that man's a sinner. Or this is a saint and she's a saint.

That's what it's about. It's all the big, big lie. They cover it up with a lot of talk.

Now. God wants us to move into this. What would you have done at this time? Well, Jesus goes to the Mount of Olives alone.

And early in the morning. He came again into the temple. Now, I think I'll finish just four minutes early.

What is it? We'll come together, I trust, on Friday morning. And we'll see what happens in the temple. God bless you.

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