

# No One Spoke as This Man

**MEMORY VERSE:** “The officers answered, Never man spake like this man” (John 7:46).

“The perception and appreciation of truth, He said, depends less upon the mind than upon the heart. Truth must be received into the soul; it claims the homage of the will.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 455.

**Suggested Reading:** *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 506–512. (At the bottom of this page)

## 1. THE INTEREST OF THE PEOPLE IN JESUS

Sun, Apr 20

**a. Upon hearing and seeing Jesus preach openly, what did some Jews ask? John 7:25, 26.**

### John 7:25, 26

Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? **26** But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?

“Many among Christ’s hearers who were dwellers at Jerusalem, and who were not ignorant of the plots of the rulers against Him, felt themselves drawn to Him by an irresistible power. The conviction pressed upon them that He was the Son of God.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 457.

**b. How did Satan act upon the rulers to trigger doubt? John 7:27.**

### John 7:27

Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.

“Satan was ready to suggest doubt; and for this the way was prepared by their own erroneous ideas of the Messiah and His coming. It was generally believed that Christ would be born at Bethlehem, but that after a time He would disappear, and at His second appearance none would know whence He came. There were not a few who held that the Messiah would have no natural relationship to humanity. And because the popular conception of the glory of the Messiah was not met by Jesus of Nazareth, many gave heed to the suggestion, ‘Howbeit we know this Man whence He is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence He is.’”—*Ibid*.

**a. Upon reading the thoughts of His doubting listeners, what did Jesus say to them? John 7:28.**

**John 7:28**

Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.

“While they were thus wavering between doubt and faith, Jesus took up their thoughts and answered them: ‘Ye both know Me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of Myself, but He that sent Me is true, whom ye know not.’ They claimed a knowledge of what the origin of Christ should be, but they were in utter ignorance of it. If they had lived in accordance with the will of God, they would have known His Son when He was manifested to them.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 457.

**b. Lacking arguments to rebut Jesus, by what means did the Jewish leaders try to silence Him? John 7:30 (first part). In reality, why could they not arrest Him? John 7:30 (last part).**

**John 7:30**

Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

“The hearers could not but understand Christ’s words. Clearly they were a repetition of the claim He had made in the presence of the Sanhedrin many months before, when He declared Himself the Son of God. As the rulers then tried to compass His death, so now they sought to take Him; but they were prevented by an unseen power, which put a limit to their rage, saying to them, Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.”—*Ibid.*

**c. How did many express their faith in Jesus—and what did the rulers plan to do once they realized the people’s sympathy for Him? John 7:31, 32.**

**John 7:31, 32**

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? **32** The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

“The leaders of the Pharisees, who were anxiously watching the course of events, caught the expressions of sympathy among the throng. Hurrying away to the chief priests, they laid their plans to arrest Him. They arranged, however, to take Him when He was alone; for they dared not seize Him in the presence of the people.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 457, 458.

**a. On the last day of the feast, what beautiful illustration did Jesus use to offer comfort to souls weary of sin? John 7:37, 38.**

**John 7:37, 38**

In 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. **38** He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

“The heart that receives the word of God is not as a pool that evaporates, not like a broken cistern that loses its treasure. It is like the mountain stream, fed by unfailing springs, whose cool, sparkling waters leap from rock to rock, refreshing the weary, the thirsty, the heavy-laden. It is like a river constantly flowing and, as it advances, becoming deeper and wider, until its life-giving waters are spread over all the earth. The stream that goes singing on its way leaves behind its gift of verdure and fruitfulness. The grass on its banks is a fresher green, the trees have a richer verdure, the flowers are more abundant. When the earth lies bare and brown under the summer’s scorching heat, a line of verdure marks the river’s course.

“So it is with the true child of God. The religion of Christ reveals itself as a vitalizing, pervading principle, a living, working, spiritual energy. When the heart is opened to the heavenly influence of truth and love, these principles will flow forth again like streams in the desert, causing fruitfulness to appear where now are barrenness and dearth. ‘If any man thirst’ for restful hope, for deliverance from sinful propensities, Christ says, ‘let him come unto Me, and drink.’ (John 7:37).”—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 233, 234.

**b. How is this invitation to be further understood? John 7:39.**

**John 7:39**

(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

“Christ presented the principles of truth in the gospel. In His teaching we may drink of the pure streams that flow from the throne of God.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 309.

“What we need is a living religion. A single individual of enlarged conceptions of duty, whose soul is in communion with God and who is full of zeal for Christ, will exert a powerful influence for good. He drinks at no low, turbid, polluted stream, but from the pure, high waters at the fountainhead; and he can communicate a new spirit and power to the church. As the pressure from without increases, God would have His church vitalized by the sacred, solemn truths they believe. The Holy Spirit from heaven, working with the sons and daughters of God, will surmount obstacles and hold the vantage ground against the enemy. God has great victories in reserve for His truth-loving, commandment-keeping people.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 581.

**a. As a result of Christ's reference to the water of life, what did many conclude—and why? John 7:40; (compare Deuteronomy 18:15).**

**John 7:40**

Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.

**Deuteronomy 18:15**

The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

**b. While some were inspired with hope by such a prospect, how did others react? John 7:41–44.**

**John 7:41–44**

Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? **42** Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? **43** So there was a division among the people because of him. **44** And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

**c. What order had the officers received from their rulers? John 7:45. Why could they not bring themselves to arrest Jesus? John 7:46.**

**John 7:45**

Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

**John 7:46**

The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

“On the last day of the feast, the officers sent out by the priests and rulers to arrest Jesus, returned without Him. They were angrily questioned, ‘Why have ye not brought Him?’ With solemn countenance they answered, ‘Never man spake like this Man.’

“Hardened as were their hearts, they were melted by His words. While He was speaking in the temple court, they had lingered near, to catch something that might be turned against Him. But as they listened, the purpose for which they had been sent was forgotten. They stood as men entranced. Christ revealed Himself to their souls. They saw that which priests and rulers would not see—humanity flooded with the glory of divinity.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 459.

“[Christ] used the things of nature with which they were familiar, to illustrate divine truth. The soil of the heart was thus prepared to receive the good seed. He made His hearers feel that His interests were identified with theirs, that His heart beat in sympathy with them in their joys and griefs. At the same time they saw in Him the manifestation of power and excellence far above that possessed by their most-honored rabbis. The teachings of Christ

were marked with a simplicity, dignity, and power heretofore unknown to them, and their involuntary exclamation was: ‘Never man spake like this Man.’ The people listened to Him gladly; but the priests and rulers—themselves false to their trust as guardians of the truth—hated Christ for the very grace revealed, which had drawn the multitudes away from them to follow the Light of life. Through their influence the Jewish nation, failing to discern His divine character, rejected the Redeemer.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 747.

## 5. A SINCERE SEEKER MATURING

Thu, Apr 24

**a. How did the chief priests and Pharisees rebuke the officers? John 7:47–49.**

### John 7:47–49

Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? 48 Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? 49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

**b. Relate the conversation that followed with Nicodemus—revealing his growth since his nighttime interview with Christ in John chapter 3. John 7:50–52.**

### John 7:50–52

Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) 51 Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? 52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

“[Nicodemus] hid the truth in his heart, and for three years there was little apparent fruit. But while Nicodemus had not publicly acknowledged Christ, he had in the Sanhedrin council repeatedly thwarted the schemes of the priests to destroy Him.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 104.

“The lesson that Christ had given to Nicodemus [on his nighttime visit in John chapter 3] had not been in vain. Conviction had fastened upon his mind, and in his heart he had accepted Jesus. Since his interview with the Saviour, he had earnestly searched the Old Testament Scriptures, and he had seen truth placed in the true setting of the gospel.

“The question asked by him was wise, and would have commended itself to those presiding at the council had they not been deceived by the enemy. But they were so filled with prejudice that no argument in favor of Jesus of Nazareth, however convincing, had any weight with them. The answer that Nicodemus received, was, ‘Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.’

“The priests and rulers had been deceived, as Satan meant them to be, into believing that Christ came out of Galilee. Some who knew that he was born in Bethlehem, kept silent, that the falsehood might not be robbed of its power.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 5, p. 1136.

1. Why did Jesus attract the attention and the respect of the people?
2. How did the Jewish rulers persist in trying to stop Jesus?
3. What public appeal did Jesus make on the last day of the feast?
4. Explain the great controversy that ensued as a result.
5. Thinking of people I know, what should I recall about Nicodemus?

**Suggested Reading:** *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 506–512.

### **Pray for the Latter Rain**

“Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain.” Zechariah 10:1. “He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain.” Joel 2:23. In the East the former rain falls at the sowing time. It is necessary in order that the seed may germinate. Under the influence of the fertilizing showers, the tender shoot springs up. The latter rain, falling near the close of the season, ripens the grain and prepares it for the sickle. The Lord employs these operations of nature to represent the work of the Holy Spirit. As the dew and the rain are given first to cause the seed to germinate, and then to ripen the harvest, so the Holy Spirit is given to carry forward, from one stage to another, the process of spiritual growth. The ripening of the grain represents the completion of the work of God’s grace in the soul. By the power of the Holy Spirit the moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ. **(TM 506.1)**

The latter rain, ripening earth’s harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man. But unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life; the green blade will not spring up. Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection. **(TM 506.2)**

There is to be “first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.” Mark 4:28. There must be a constant development of Christian virtue, a constant advancement in Christian experience. This we should seek with intensity of desire, that we may adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour. **(TM 506.3)**

Many have in a great measure failed to receive the former rain. They have not obtained all the benefits that God has thus provided for them. They expect that the lack will be supplied by the latter rain. When the richest abundance of grace shall be bestowed, they intend to open their hearts to receive it. They are making a terrible mistake. The work that God has begun in the human heart in giving His light and knowledge must be continually going forward. Every individual must realize his own necessity. The heart must be emptied of every defilement and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit. It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now. Then the human agent had only to ask for the blessing, and wait for the Lord to perfect the work concerning him. It is God who began the work, and He will



finish His work, making man complete in Jesus Christ. But there must be no neglect of the grace represented by the former rain. Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it. **(TM 507.1)**

At no point in our experience can we dispense with the assistance of that which enables us to make the first start. The blessings received under the former rain are needful to us to the end. Yet these alone will not suffice. While we cherish the blessing of the early rain, we must not, on the other hand, lose sight of the fact that without the latter rain, to fill out the ears and ripen the grain, the harvest will not be ready for the sickle, and the labor of the sower will have been in vain. Divine grace is needed at the beginning, divine grace at every step of advance, and divine grace alone can complete the work. There is no place for us to rest in a careless attitude. We must never forget the warnings of Christ, "Watch unto prayer," (1 Peter 4:7) "Watch, ... and pray always." Luke 21:36. A connection with the divine agency every moment is essential to our progress. We may have had a measure of the Spirit of God, but by prayer and faith we are continually to seek more of the Spirit. It will never do to cease our efforts. If we do not progress, if we do not place ourselves in an attitude to receive both the former and the latter rain, we shall lose our souls, and the responsibility will lie at our own door. **(TM 507.2)**

"Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain." Zechariah 10:1. Do not rest satisfied that in the ordinary course of the season, rain will fall. Ask for it. The growth and perfection of the seed rests not with the husbandman. God alone can ripen the harvest. But man's co-operation is required. God's work for us demands the action of our mind, the exercise of our faith. We must seek His favors with the whole heart if the showers of grace are to come to us. We should improve every opportunity of placing ourselves in the channel of blessing. Christ has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst." Matthew 18:20. The convocations of the church, as in camp meetings, the assemblies of the home church, and all occasions where there is personal labor for souls, are God's appointed opportunities for giving the early and the latter rain. **(TM 508.1)**

But let none think that in attending these gatherings, their duty is done. A mere attendance upon all the meetings that are held will not in itself bring a blessing to the soul. It is not an immutable law that all who attend general gatherings or local meetings shall receive large supplies from heaven. The circumstances may seem to be favorable for a rich outpouring of the showers of grace. But God Himself must command the rain to fall. Therefore we should not be remiss in supplication. We are not to trust to the ordinary working of providence. We must pray that God will unseal the fountain of the water of life. And we must ourselves receive of the living water. Let us, with contrite hearts, pray most earnestly that now, in the time of the latter rain, the showers of grace may fall upon us. At every meeting we attend our prayers should ascend, that at this very time God will impart warmth and moisture to our souls. As we seek God for the Holy Spirit, it will work in us meekness, humbleness of mind, a conscious dependence upon God for the perfecting latter rain. If we pray for the blessing in faith, we shall receive it as God has promised. **(TM 508.2)**

The continued communication of the Holy Spirit to the church is represented by the prophet Zechariah under another figure, which contains a wonderful lesson of encouragement for us. The prophet says: "The angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, and said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord? ... Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.... And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? ... Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." Zechariah 4:1-4, 6, 11-14. **(TM 509.1)**

From the two olive trees, the golden oil was emptied through golden pipes into the bowl of the candlestick and thence into the golden lamps that gave light to the sanctuary. So from the holy ones that stand in God's presence, His Spirit is imparted to human instrumentalities that are consecrated to His service. The mission of the two anointed ones is to communicate light and power to God's people. It is to receive blessing for us that they stand in God's presence. As the olive trees empty themselves into the golden pipes, so the heavenly messengers seek to communicate all that they receive from God. The whole heavenly treasure awaits our demand and reception; and as we receive the blessing, we in our turn are to impart it. Thus it is that the holy lamps are fed, and the church becomes a light bearer in the world. **(TM 510.1)**

This is the work that the Lord would have every soul prepared to do at this time, when the four angels are holding the four winds, that they shall not blow until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. There is no time now for self-pleasing. The lamps of the soul must be trimmed. They must be supplied with the oil of grace. Every precaution must be taken to prevent spiritual declension, lest the great day of the Lord overtake us as a thief in the night. Every witness for God is now to work intelligently in the lines which God has appointed. We should daily obtain a deep and living experience in the work of perfecting Christian character. We should daily receive the holy oil, that we may impart to others. All may be light bearers to the world if they will. We are to sink self out of sight in Jesus. We are to receive the word of the Lord in counsel and instruction, and gladly communicate it. There is now need of much prayer. Christ commands, "Pray without ceasing;" (1 Timothy 5:17) that is, keep the mind uplifted to God, the source of all power and efficiency. **(TM 510.2)**

We may have long followed the narrow path, but it is not safe to take this as proof that we shall follow it to the end. If we have walked with God in fellowship of the Spirit, it is because we have sought Him daily by faith. From the two olive trees the golden oil flowing through the golden pipes has been communicated to us. But those who do not cultivate the spirit and habit of prayer cannot expect to receive the golden oil of goodness, patience, long-suffering, gentleness, love. **(TM 511.1)**

Everyone is to keep himself separate from the world, which is full of iniquity. We are not to walk with God for a time, and then part from His company and walk in the sparks of our own kindling. There must be a firm continuance, a perseverance in acts of faith. We are to praise



God; to show forth His glory in a righteous character. No one of us will gain the victory without persevering, untiring effort, proportionate to the value of the object which we seek, even eternal life. **(TM 511.2)**

The dispensation in which we are now living is to be, to those that ask, the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. Ask for His blessing. It is time we were more intense in our devotion. To us is committed the arduous, but happy, glorious work of revealing Christ to those who are in darkness. We are called to proclaim the special truths for this time. For all this the outpouring of the Spirit is essential. We should pray for it. The Lord expects us to ask Him. We have not been wholehearted in this work. **(TM 511.3)**

What can I say to my brethren in the name of the Lord? What proportion of our efforts has been made in accordance with the light the Lord has been pleased to give? We cannot depend upon form or external machinery. What we need is the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit of God. “Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” Zechariah 4:6. Pray without ceasing, and watch by working in accordance with your prayers. As you pray, believe, trust in God. It is the time of the latter rain, when the Lord will give largely of His Spirit. Be fervent in prayer, and watch in the Spirit. **(TM 512.1)**

How shall we follow Him to learn of Him who is our Teacher? We can search His word, and become acquainted with His life and works. His words we are to receive as bread for our souls. In every sphere where man shall be placed, the Lord Jesus has left us His footprints. We do well to follow Him. The Spirit by which He spake, we must cherish; we are to present the truth as it is in Jesus. We are to follow Him especially in heart purity, in love. Self must be hid with Christ in God; then when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we also shall appear with Him in glory.—Special Testimonies to Ministers and Workers, Series A 9:58 (1897). **(TM 512.2)**