The Gospel of John
**7.3—GOING TO HEAVEN? – JOHN 7:25-36**

**LET’S OPEN OUR BIBLES TO JOHN 7**

**INTRODUCTION**

For infants and small children, most decisions are made by parents. But as you get older, more and more decisions are left up to you. What you do, what you say, what you wear, where you go, what you want to be, how you want to act, what you want to look at and listen to, and even what you choose to believe. And of the millions of decisions that the average person will make in their lifetime, a small minority have eternal consequences. And among that minority, there is one particular decision, that is by far––and without question––the most consequential of them all. It’s the decision you’ll make about how you respond to Jesus.

In today’s passage we’ll see that most of the religious leaders in Jesus’ day had already decided not to believe that He was the promised Savior. These so called, “experts” should have known better than anyone that He was indeed the Messiah. Their problem believing in Him was not that He didn’t fit the prophesied descriptions in the Old Testament, but rather what they would have to give up if they admitted that He was God’s chosen One. Believing in Him would require that they followed Him, and seeing how He lived and served others, that could jeopardize the wealth and influence they had gained. Believing in Him would also mean they’d be viciously criticized by their peers and by many others who didn’t take Jesus seriously. And on top of that, they’d have to admit that they hadn’t been teaching the Scriptures accurately.

The general population of Jews in Israel were still deciding. John the Baptist had swayed many to believe in Jesus, but since his beheading, the religious elite had made much progress in turning the tide against the truth.

In today’s passage we’ll cover a number of statements to and about Jesus. But there’s one particular statement that Jesus makes that should hit every human heart like a ton bricks. It’s six words in the English Standard Version and seven words in the original Greek. And my prayer is that Jesus never says this to me… to anyone in my family… or to any of you. Before we get to that “most important” statement, let’s read the passage and allow John to explain some of the conversations and decisions that were happening.

**LET’S READ JOHN 7:25-36**

**John 7:25–36 (ESV)** Some of the people of Jerusalem therefore said, “Is not this the man whom they seek to kill? **26** 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? **27** But we know where this man comes from, and when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from.” **28** So Jesus proclaimed, 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. **29** I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me.” **30** So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come. **31** Yet many of the people believed in him. They said, “When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done?” **32** The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest him. **33** Jesus then said, “I will be with you a little longer, and then I am going to him who sent me. **34** You will seek me and you will not find me. Where I am you cannot come.” **35** 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? **36** What does he mean by saying, ‘You will seek me and you will not find me,’ and, ‘Where I am you cannot come’?”

V25-26 – “Some of the people of Jerusalem therefore said, “Is not this the man whom they seek to kill? 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?”

* Many people knew that the religious leaders wanted to kill Jesus, so they were surprised that no one was arresting Him.
* Some wrongly interpreted this as the rulers changing their minds.. believing He was the Messiah.

 V27.1 – “But we know where this man comes from”

* They “thought” they knew where He came from:

**John 7:40–42 (ESV)** When they heard these words, some of the people said, “This really is the Prophet.” **41** Others said, “This is the Christ.” But some said, “Is the Christ to come **from Galilee?** **42** Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the offspring of David, and comes **from Bethlehem**, the village where David was?”

* They didn’t realize that because of the census that took place the year Jesus was born, Joseph took Mary to Bethlehem to be registered.

V27.2 – “when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from.”

* For people who didn’t believe that Jesus was the Messiah, it would be easy to get the prophecies between His first and second comings mixed up.

For example:

**Zechariah 14:3–4 (ESV)** Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle. **4** On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward.

V28 – “**So** Jesus proclaimed, 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.”

* “So” indicates that Jesus was responding to the things the crowd was discussing.
* Jesus tells them five things in this verse:
1. “You know Me” = “You’ve been waiting for Me… the Messiah”
2. “You know where I come from” = “You know that Messiah comes from God”
3. “I have not come of My own accord” = “I didn’t just decide to come… I was sent here.”
4. “He who sent Me is true” = “I was sent by the God of truth”
5. “Him you do not know.” = “Though you think you do, you do not know Father God”

V29 – “I know Him, for I come from Him, and He sent me.”

* “I know Him” = “Before I became human, I was with Him for eternity past”
* “I come from Him” = “I was there with Father God until I was placed in the womb of My mother.”
* “He sent me” = “Father God sent Me here”

V30 – “So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come.”

* John tells us that God was protecting Jesus until it was time for Him to be arrested and crucified.

V31 – “Yet many of the people believed in him. They said, “When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done?”

* The more the crowds conversed about Jesus, the more they became convinced that He was the Messiah.

V32 – “The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest him.”

* When the Pharisees heard how the crowd was responding, they collaborated with the chief priests and sent Levitical temple guards to arrest Jesus.

V33-36 – “Jesus then said, “I will be with you a little longer, and then I am going to Him who sent Me. **34** You will seek Me and you will not find Me. Where I am you cannot come.” **35** 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? **36** What does He mean by saying, ‘You will seek Me and you will not find Me,’ and, ‘Where I am you cannot come’?”

* First, V35 – In response to Jesus saying, “I am going to Him who sent Me” and “Where I am you cannot come,” the religious leaders asked, “Does He intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks?” This does not necessarily mean to “Greece,” but rather:
	+ - 1. To Jews who were scattered abroad, many of which spoke Greek
			2. To the Greek-speaking Gentiles… non-Jews
* Let’s close with four statements of Jesus in verses 33 & 34:
1. “I will be with you a little longer”
* **Jesus was saying,** *“I’ll be with you for about six more months, and then another 40 days after My resurrection, and then I’m leaving.”*
* Jesus said then, ““I will be with you a little longer”
* Jesus is NOW saying, “a little while and you will see Me again.”
* There are many signs of the times, but I’ll tell you one major one that we may not be in:

**1 Timothy 4:1–2 (NIV)** The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. **2** Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.

1. “Then I am going to Him who sent Me”
* Notice: Jesus didn’t say, “I’m going back to a beautiful place, with golden streets, pearly gates, jewels embeded everywhere, and angels singing. He said, I’m going to “someone.” It’s that someone who makes it a great place.
* For those who have eternal life, it’s not the beauty of heaven that makes it so wonderful. It’s that Jesus will be there.
1. “You will seek Me and you will not find Me”
* In this way He was telling the people who wanted to kill Him that they would search for Him after He died. What did He mean by this? There are three possible answers, and I think He meant all three:
1. First, “You will look for My body after I’ve been resurrected, but you will not find it because I will physically ascend to heaven” (Mt 28:11-15).
2. Second, “You will long for the Messiah when terrible persecution arrives. False Messiahs will rise up after I’m gone, and they will promise to deliver you from bondage, but they will only lead you into destruction. And by then I, the real Messiah, will be gone” (Lk 17:22; 19:41-44; 23:26-31).
3. And third, “You will long for a Savior after you die and face your eternal destiny, but by then it will be too late” (Jn 8:21-24).
4. “Where I am you cannot come”
* This is the most consequential statement in the passage we’re studying.
* He was letting His opponents hear the sad verdict that will be given at the judgment to those who reject Him in this life. He was saying, “I will be with the Father, but because of your unbelief, you will be separated from Me, and therefore you will also be separated from the Father”.
* For Jesus, eternal life meant being with His Father. And for us, eternal life means being with Jesus… and then, because we are joined to Him, we too are able to be with the Father.
* There’s a very important revelation here. We can only be in heaven because we are there with Jesus. We cannot enter the Father’s presence or remain in the Father’s presence without Him. We will be there because Jesus is there. Jesus didn’t merely open the door to heaven and say, “Go on in,” He continues to clothe us with His righteousness, so we can stay there (Mt 22:11- 13).

**EX – Last week in the third service one of our congregants stood on this platform and told us that a few weeks ago he was in a very serious auto accident. Here’s a photo of his car. He told us that right after the accident, while he was still conscious, he saw a bright light and a hand reaching out to him. He knew he was dying, and though he couldn’t speak, he was crying out to God inside his mind. Knowing that he had a wife and two small children at home, and another one on the way, he called out to God, “God, don’t let me go. Please don’t let me go.” And he saw—and could feel—his spirit coming out of his body. You can watch the testimony on The Rock’s YouTube channel.**