

A Crisis of Identity - John 7:40-53

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[0:00] Hey guys, thanks for listening to our Calvary Chapel Charlotte podcast. I will walk by faith and not by sight.

Good morning, everybody. So much red, white, and blue out there. Happy 250th. 250 years of God's grace on our nation.

Amen. And may the Lord continue to pour out his grace and continue to change hearts. But all right, let's turn to John chapter 7. Man, we got some scripture to go through this morning.

You know, Kit and I, before we came out, we were praying and just the word came to mind to continue steadfastly. Steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine, fellowship, breaking bread, and a prayer. I was thinking of that, the continue steadfastly. Steadfastly. We are just those, we are one or many in a long line of people who have continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine.

[1:35] And where do they get it from? They got it from the Lord. It's not for us to change it. It's not for us to modify it. It's not for us to say, well, I don't like that part. You know, I don't like that. That convicts me.

I'm not going to talk about that. Ooh, that's a hot topic. We won't talk about that. And that's the benefit and the blessing of just going through the word. All right, we're going to teach through John. As we get to different areas, man, the Holy Spirit's going to bring things out.

I love that when I study the word, I'm not alone. It's not like Sue sitting there next to me, you know, or someone else or like, you know, I'm calling up someone. No, I've got the Holy Spirit. And I'm not alone. I can study through the word with the Lord and I can read through it and know that I don't have to just make it up or figure it out.

And there's some times where, you know, you study through and it's like, all right, whew, that was, that was a lot. And I think we're ready to go. And then there's some times where it feels like the Lord is just like, sit still for a minute.

Here, let me download this. Boom. This is what we're going to do. Okay. All right, Lord. And that's this week and next week. It was like, the Lord is just like, here's what we're going to do. So before we get to what we were going to do last week, we saw as we recapping, as we ended up in verse 39, Jesus in verse 38 and 37 says those, that wonderful phrase, the last day, that great day of the feast, at the feast of tabernacles, Jesus stood and cried saying, if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.

[2:55] The end of the feast of tabernacles, commemorating God's provision through the wilderness of the nation of Israel. And then that last day, there'd be no water to pour out because it would show that, hey, God's miraculous provision in the wilderness has ended.

Now we're in promise. And Jesus on the eighth day, the number of renewal of beginning stands up and says, I'm going to take you into a promise. I've got a greater promise for you. He that believes on me, as the scripture said, out of his belly shall gush forth torrents of living water.

And those who believe can partake of that life of promise. And then John gives us his little, his little parenthetical phrase there that this spake he concerning the spirit. The spirit had not yet been given because Jesus was not yet glorified.

So we looked at what it was for Jesus to be glorified and the Holy Spirit to be given. But we are to live in the overflow. We're to be people of overflow, overflowing, living in overflow. Right? And if we do that, what happens?

Man, then we have, we have something to give to other people. Right? Because the idea is I can't contain it. It's just coming out all over. It's spilling out all over. It's like, oh, I'm sorry. I got a little bit on you. You know, I hope you drink of that.

[4:01] Those who identify the source of fulfillment, they can then be used by God to help others identify that source is the idea.

Once you and I identify the source of life, the source of overflow, the source of fulfillment, what happens? Well, I can then be used by God to help other people identify that. You know what you need in your life?

Man, you need satisfaction. And you know where you're going to find it? You're going to find it in this overflowing and abundant life. But we live in a world that's in crisis. It's hard for them to identify that because we live in a world that's told they don't have an identity.

We live in a world with a crisis of identity. That's what we're going to look at this week and next week. We're going to look at identity. You know, that's what I love, again, about God's words.

I'm like, well, this is a hot topic today. We'll talk about it. No, it's more like this is where we're at in scripture. And the Lord's like, we're going to talk about this. Like, okay. All right. We'll just settle in and study because we're going to be in a lot of scripture today.

[5:01] So get your fingers licked and ready. Identity. What is identity? It's interesting. It's not what I thought it was when I looked it up in Webster's Dictionary. It's to prove to be the same. But that makes sense as that which already is.

You know, to identify something. Like if I identify that it's a dog, I know it because it's the same as what? Other dogs. I identify a man or a woman because they're the same as other men and women.

I can't just change the label, can I? Because it's still not going to then be the same. Identity is lost when we remove knowledge regarding things that are the same.

Right? A lack of knowledge will lead to confusion. So I can, a child obviously sees that's a dog and that's a cat. And I say, well, no, no, no, that's not.

That's a chair and that's a couch. Is it? Because their world's filled with chairs and couches. No, but this one is not. This dog is a chair and a couch. Well, now all of a sudden I have something that's not the same but has the same label and it breeds what?

[6:05] Confusion. Confusion. Oh, no. Honey, that's not a man. And that's not a woman. Wait, but they're the same. So I'm confused. In 1 Corinthians 14:33 says, God is not the author of confusion but of peace.

What is confusion? A state of instability or disorder. When we remove identity, there is nothing left but confusion. We remove that.

We have no basis to understand what we're looking at. Knowledge of things that are the same. It brings order. It brings identity. Right from the beginning, God put that in this world.

Jesus, when he's responding to the Pharisees or questioning about divorce, look what he says to them in Mark 10. From the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. There's gender.

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife. There's marriage. And they too shall be one flesh. There's sexuality. And there are no more two but one.

[7:09] Right in the beginning. Right there. This is the identity. This is what it is. How do I identify it? Well, it's the same. It's the same as that. How do I identify marriage? It looks like that.

It's not between two men or two women. That's just a different label on a debauched lifestyle.

Right? It's not why I really love this person. No, this is what it is.

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife. It also gives us the order of how to relate to adult children there. Hey, you're your own man now. You're your own woman.

You're your own entity. Praise God. Wonderful. All those things are right there at the beginning. It gives identity. So God's created order and God's word, what does it do? It establishes identity before it affirms it.

Right? God's word and God's created order establishes identity. And then all through the scripture, it affirms that identity. The world today is challenging two areas among many, but two areas of identity that God's word gives very clear knowledge regarding.

[8:12] We're going to look at those this week. The first is gender and sexuality. We're not going to look at that this week. That's the first one they challenge. That is next week in chapter eight with the woman caught in adultery.

And then the other one is the question of Israel, the Jews, the identity of Israel. Two areas where God's word gives very clear knowledge regarding gender and regarding Israel.

And these are the things that the Lord has put before me and said, hey, I want you to talk about these things. Okay. And then it was just one of those things where it's like here, here, here, here. Lord, there's a lot of scripture. We'll be going to a lot of scripture. We need to pare some of that down, Lord.

Man, what does Paul say? I don't want your faith to stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. And where is the power of God found? In his word. According to data published in premier Christianity, it's a UK magazine, the holding of two specific theological beliefs leads to a over 300% rise in antisemitism in Christianity, among Christians.

And if you hold these two, either of these two specific beliefs, it jointly increases the likelihood of antisemitism among Christians by over 300%. The first is the notions the Jews crucified Jesus.

[9 : 26] Now they did. But the idea being that it was a terrible event. It was wicked of them to do that. And you know what? It's their fault. Christ died. If they didn't do that, he'd be alive. I was like, no, wait. Like it was tragic.

But man, my sin put in there because Jesus said what? No man takes my life, but I lay it down. I have power to lay it down. I have power to take it again. He willingly did that. And the second is that God's covenant with the Jewish people has ended, that he's done with them, that they're no longer relevant, that his covenants aren't relevant.

Either of those beliefs will increase the likelihood of antisemitism among Christians by 300%, despite them going to church and despite them being in the word. In the years since the October 7th Hamas terror attacks, the deadliest day for Jews since the Holocaust, the tide of anti-Jewish hate has only risen.

Hate crimes data from the FBI paints a disturbing picture of widespread anti-Jewish hate in America among all religiously motivated hate crimes. It shows that 69% target Jews, target those of Israel.

You see, when we remove identity, there's nothing left but confusion. The word establishes identity. Let's jump into verse 40 here. As Jesus will address this question regarding his identity.

[10 : 47] So many of the people, therefore, when they heard this saying, the saying where Jesus said, if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, for out of his innermost being will flow forth rivers of living water. They're like, this is great.

He's going to give us bread and he's going to give us water. The bread king and the water king. And they said when they heard this of a truth, this is the prophet. Yep, this is that prophet. Jesus declared his identity as what?

As the source of life, the satisfaction in life, and the promise of life. That's what he's declared. We're going to see as we end this chapter, his identity is questioned as that.

Is he really this? We're going to see the confusion that they have. In chapter 8, verses 1 through 11, we're going to look at next week, which is the woman caught in adultery. We're going to see that Jesus verifies and says, yes, I am that source of living water as he's going to deal with that situation.

But the people at this time, what are they identifying? They're identifying in Jesus sameness. The sameness he shared with God's word. This guy, this guy and God's word, they're really matching up.

[11 : 52] This is the prophet. Remember in John 6, after the feeding of the 5,000, that those men, it says, that saw the miracle that Jesus did, said, this is a truth, that prophet, that should come into the world.

And they're like, yes, we really think this is him now. They're lining it up with what they know of scripture. Where does it say in scripture that there will come a prophet? Well, Deuteronomy 18, 15.

A prophet like unto Moses, it says, the Lord your God will raise up unto you a prophet from the midst of you, of your brethren, like unto me. Unto him you shall hearken. Say, okay.

What's like unto Moses? Also in Isaiah 44, it says this, Yet now hear, O Jacob, my servant, and Israel whom I have chosen. Thus saith the Lord that made you and formed you from the womb, which will help you.

Fear not, O Jacob, my servant. And thou, Jeshurun. Jeshurun means upright one. It's a term of endearment. It's like a gentle term of endearment that's used for Israel.

[12 : 56] Jeshurun whom I have chosen. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground. I'll pour my spirit upon your seed and my blessing upon your offspring.

So they're like, hey, we see that Jesus, maybe he is that prophet. Like Isaiah said, the spirit will be poured out. The water will be poured out. And like Moses said, he'll come forth another prophet. Him you shall hearken unto. Hearken means to listen, to obey, right? You got little children, hearken to me. Don't just listen to me. Obey me. How is Jesus different than Moses?

Well, Moses established law and he pointed to promise. Jesus fulfills law and establishes promise. He is a prophet like unto Moses, but greater than Moses.

As he's standing there on that last day of the feast saying, hey, Moses established law and he pointed to promise, but he couldn't take you into it. I'm going to fulfill law and I will establish promise.

[13:56] And others said, those who said, well, he's a prophet. And others said, this is the Messiah. This is the anointed one. This is the Christ. You see, they all heard the same words, didn't they?

That Jesus spoke. But their response would determine how they viewed Jesus. We all hear the same words. If we're reading the Bible, if we're listening to that voice. But our response determines how we view Jesus.

It doesn't change who Jesus is. Hebrews 3.15 says, today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. As in the provocation, King James, for when Israel provoked God in the wilderness, because their hearts were hard because of unbelief.

Don't harden your hearts. Hear his voice. How do you want to respond to his voice? How do you identify that voice? But some said, so some said he's the prophet and some said he's Christ. And some said, well, shall Christ come out of Galilee? Has not the scripture said that Christ comes of the seed of David out of the town of Bethlehem where David was?

[15:06] In other words, who is Jesus? Who is Jesus? Who is he? I hear so many things about him. But the scripture says one thing, and he's doing this. He seems to line up with some sameness in scripture.

Man, he really seems like he could be at least a prophet. Maybe a great man. There seems to be some apparent contradictions, doesn't there? There's apparently this contradiction that, well, wait a minute.

Christ does not come out of Galilee. He must come from Bethlehem, doesn't there? Seem to be.

Apparent contradictions in the scripture are simply invitations to dig deeper.

You see, God's word will answer all of our contradictions because God's word has no contradictions. You know who has the contradiction? We do. God's word answers all of our contradictions.

So when I see an apparent contradiction in the word, God, these two things can't fit. They're not the same. It doesn't, I can't identify this as your word because it looks different. Well, I'm going to go be a Mormon.

[16:11] No, I'm going to dig deeper. I'm going to say, you know what? Man, I must, I must be missing something here. Second Timothy 2.15 tells us to dig deeper and tells us how to study, to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

It doesn't mean I'm proving to God that I did it, God. No, it's saying I'm showing myself as one that God says, that's one that I approve of in the way they're dividing the word. That's one who's not ashamed because they've divided it correctly.

You see, God's word's not confused over its identity. He's not. Jesus wasn't confused over his identity. Oh, they think I'm from Galilee, but I'm from Bethlehem. Where am I from? God's word's not confused.

In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. There's no confusion there. It knows exactly what it is. God's word's not confused. It's not meant to confuse. Where did Jesus find his identity? In the word. He was the word. He's the word. That's where he found his identity. That's where we find ours as well. So did Jesus come from the town of Bethlehem, as the scripture said?

[17:20] Yes, he did. And he was of the house of David, as the scripture said, wasn't he? Micah 5.2 tells us, But thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, thou shalt be little among the thousands of Judah.

Yet out of you shall come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth have been from old, from everlasting. He did come from Bethlehem, as the scripture said.

Matthew 1.1, the book of the generations of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Jesus did come from the town of Bethlehem. He was of the house of David, as the scripture said. And he also came out of Galilee, just as the scripture said. Isaiah 9 says, As the former time made light the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, so the latter has honored the way of the sea. Beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations, the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light. They that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.
[18:23] Yes, they were right. Those who said, well, wait, Jesus must come from Bethlehem. They were right. You know what they were wrong in? Well, he can't come out of Galilee. Actually, he could.

And they both fit. Where did these apparent contradictions come from? Two things. A lack of understanding Jesus. And a lack of understanding the scripture. They didn't understand Jesus. They didn't know Jesus well enough. Well, he's not from Bethlehem. Yes, he was. All you had to do was go ask him. Jesus, you came from Galilee, right? Well, no. I mean, I was born in Bethlehem. Oh, wow. It's like living in Charlotte, right? It's like, where are you from? Well, I'm from here. Kind of.

But my family's from. And I moved when I was two. And, you know, if someone said, where am I from? And I said, well, I'm from Charlotte. Oh, were you born there? Well, no. I haven't lived there very long in comparison to the rest of my life.

[19:22] Apparent contradictions that come from two things. A lack of understanding Jesus. Well, Jesus is a prophet. Jesus is a good man. Jesus is a moral teacher. You know, and you hear people attribute all kinds of things to Jesus, don't they?

It's like, you don't understand Jesus at all. You know, I know Jesus loves me, and he'll affirm me in my sin. You don't understand Jesus. And you don't understand the scripture. Jesus was 100% the same as who the scripture identified the Messiah to be.

100% the same. How would they identify the Messiah? The one who looked the same. Jesus was 100% the same as what the scripture identified Messiah to be.

The issue was not Jesus fulfilling that, but their lack of understanding of Jesus and the word. Psalm 89, verses 34 and 37.

My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that has gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me.

[20:25] It shall be established forever as the moon and as a faithful witness in heaven. And Jesus was of the seed of David, just as the scripture said. Remember when Gabriel came to Mary and said that Jesus shall be great, shall be called the son of the highest, and the Lord shall give unto him the throne of his father David.

And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end. He was of the seed of David, as the scripture said. And he is still of the seed of David, as the scripture says in Revelation 22, 16.

Jesus says, I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

So as the scripture said, he was of the seed of David, and he is still of the seed of David. You see, our risen and glorified Savior, as we know from Philippians 2, he chose to identify himself as a man, didn't he?

A man, a son, a child, who became a man. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

[21:38] He identified himself as a man, and he is still identified as a man. He didn't throw that off and say, I don't need to be a man anymore. No, 1 Timothy 2, 5, there is one God, one mediator between God and man, the man, Christ.

Jesus. He still identifies with us, guys. He's still a man. But he's not just any man, is he? He is a Jewish man.

John 4, 22, Jesus was speaking to the woman at the well, and he said, You worship, you know not what we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.

Jesus. As the scripture said, Jesus has fulfilled everything that matches up, that is same as the Messiah, as the promised one.

In 2 Timothy 2, as Paul is writing his farewell message to Timothy, to his son in the faith. In verse 8, he says, Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, wherein I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even unto bonds.

[22 : 47] And then this famous, wonderful phrase, but the word of God is not bound. Man, how wonderful is that? Therefore, Paul says to Timothy, The elect there are Jews.

It's Israel, God's chosen people. He's not talking about people who are saved, because it says that they may also obtain salvation. He says, Paul was never ashamed to identify himself as a Jew, neither to identify the Jews as God's chosen elect people.

Turn with me to Romans chapter 9. And you can put your finger in Acts 13. Then we'll go from there. Romans chapter 9.

Begin in verse 1 there. Paul was never ashamed to identify who he was, or to identify who God's chosen and elect people were. In Romans 1, we'll read the first five verses there.

He says, As I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

[24 : 10] For I could wish that myself were a curse from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh. I don't know how someone gets there at that point in their walk with the Lord.

And they receive from the Lord such a love, a sacrificial love for people, that they would say, I would go to hell that that person can go to heaven. I'm not there, guys.

I love you, and I'm glad you're going to heaven with me. That's kind of where I'm at. Hey, come with me. You know what? You go. I'll go there and take your place. Paul's love for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom pertains the adoption and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the law and the service of God and the promises, whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God-blessed forever. Paul's well into his ministry here, writing to the Romans, the Roman church. He says they are Israelites. They are God's people still. Turn over to Romans 11. We're going to do the first five verses there.

Paul says, I say then, has God cast away his people? The people who Paul says, and I would take their place. I would take their place so they could go to heaven.

[25 : 36] God forbid. For I also am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not cast away his people, which he foreknew.

And then he gives us this example. He says, do you not know what the scripture says concerning Elijah, how he made intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they killed your prophets, dig down your altars, and I am left alone, and they seek my life.

God, be done with them. Be through with Israel. Cast them out. Look what they've done. He's praying against them. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself 7,000 men who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.

Even so, then, at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

According to that election of grace. Paul says, hey, there are those that have believed within Israel. Isn't that the first, how many thousands and how many years the early church was just all Jews? Was it 8 to 10 years? I might be getting my numbers wrong.

[26 : 45] After the ascension that the Gentiles came, when Peter goes and preaches to the Gentiles, it's years afterwards. It's not like the next thing. There's a remnant according to the election of grace.

Are there those that don't believe? Is blindness in part happened to Israel? Yes, but not holy.

Because there are many who believe. Go all the way to the bottom of Romans 11.

Romans 9, 10, and 11 are beautiful passages. Read through them. And see God's heart there. And his plan for his people. Even today, there's a remnant. Today, there are those in Israel who believe. There are Jewish brothers who believe. God's not cast them off. If they're cast off, he'd be like, no, I'm done with them. They wouldn't even exist today. And they're not going to believe. And that remnant, one day, will be what's left.

The believing remnant. When Jesus returns and they say, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. All Israel at that time will be saved. But look at Romans 11, 28. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes.

[27 : 50] From your perspective, yes, they are enemies because they are against the gospel. Because they will not believe. Because nationally, Israel had rejected their Messiah. And now

they're in a place of what?

Confusion and unbelief. They're blinded in part. Concerning the gospel, they're enemies for your sakes. Well, get rid of them then. But it's touching the election. The choosing.

That God has chosen them for his plans and his purposes. And as his people, they are beloved for the Father's sake. Not their own. I'm not loved for my sake. God doesn't love me for my sake.

And I hate to break it to you. He doesn't love you for your sake. He loves you for Jesus' sake. Israel is not a nation and is not God's people for their own sake. Because of God's sake.

Because of the Father's sake. Because of the promises he made. And then verse 29 of Romans 11. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. Beautiful verse. We can apply that generally.

[28:47] That that is God's heart. That's his nature and that's his character. All of God's gifts and calling are without repentance. But where that scripture comes into play is speaking of Israel. The promises and covenants that were given to God's people.

Let's jump to Acts 13 here. One more. One more thing with Paul. This is Paul's first missionary journey. This would have been before he wrote the book of Romans.

In Acts 13, Paul's on his first missionary journey. I think he's in Antioch of Pisidia. Not the Antioch north of Jerusalem. A different Antioch over towards Greece. And he goes into the synagogue. And in verse 16 of Acts 13. It says, Paul stands up and he beckons with his hand. Very flamboyant here.

Men of Israel. And you that fear God. Give audience. The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers. Remember? The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

[29:49] Their beloved for the father's sake. The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers. And exalted the people. When they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt. With a high arm he brought them out of it.

And he's going to rehearse the history there. Of that. Jump down to verse 26. After he gives the history here. Of how God delivered Israelites to Egypt. As we looked as we went through Exodus together.

Men and brethren. Children of the stock of Abraham. And whoso among you fears God. To you. To you is this word.

Is the word of this salvation sent. It's sent to you. Oh Israel. It's sent to you. Jews. Those on this side of resurrection. On this side of ascension.

Paul says, hey. I'm your brethren. God has a plan and a purpose for you. God wants you to be saved. God wants you to be saved. Verse 32.

[30:46] Through 34 of Acts 13. And we declare unto you good tidings. Or glad tidings. How the promise which was made unto the fathers. God has fulfilled the same unto us.

Their children. And that he has raised up Jesus again. As it is also written the second psalm. You are my son. This day have I begotten you. And as concerning.

And as concerning. That he raised him up from the dead. Now no more to return to corruption. He said on this wise. I will give you the. Sure mercies of.

David. David. Ties all the way back around. There we are again. With David. The son of David. What are those sure mercies of David? What are the sure mercies of David.

Promised to Israel. And to all those who fear God. Through Christ. What are they? Isaiah 55. Three. Incline your ear. And come unto me. Here. And your soul shall live.

[31:44] And I will make an everlasting covenant with you. Even the sure. Mercies of David. That's really wild about that scripture. The scriptures that are around it. Scriptures we quote.

All the time. Isaiah 55. One. Ho everyone that thirsts. Come you to the waters. He that has no money. Come you buy and eat.

Yea come buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread? And your labor for that which satisfies not. Hearken diligently unto me.

And eat you that which is good. Let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear and come unto me. And hear and your soul shall live. And I will make an everlasting covenant with you.

Even the sure. Mercies of David. Behold I have given him. The son of David. David. To the people. A leader and commander.

[32:39] Or for a witness to the people. A leader and commander to the people. Jesus as the seed of David. Has fulfilled this spiritual aspect. Of the sure mercies of David. Anyone can come. Any can

come.

To the water. And he will just as assuredly fulfill the physical portion. Of those sure mercies of David. For he shall be great. He shall be called the son of the highest. And the Lord shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever. Of his kingdom there shall be no end. Where is Jesus currently? Is he reigning on David's throne currently?

He's not. Jesus is currently on his father's throne. Revelation 3.21. As John is writing to the churches. The letter that Jesus is giving to the churches.

Jesus says to him that overcomes. Will I grant to sit with me in my throne. Even as I also overcame. And sat down with my father in his throne. He's in his father's throne. Hebrews 12.2.

[33 : 37] Tells us that Jesus. Despising the shame. Is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Jesus is currently on his father's throne. Psalm 110 verse 1. And promises us that the Lord said to my Lord.

Sit on my right hand. Until I make your enemies your footstool. Then it will be time for you to take up David's throne. Yes, Jesus, the seat of David.

Will one day sit upon the throne of David. Where he will physically rule from Jerusalem. As the scripture has said. The scripture has emphatically said.

That Jesus as the seat of David. Would fulfill the spiritual aspect. Of the sure mercies of David. We live in that today. Because of Israel. And he will just as assuredly fulfill.

The physical aspects. I'm not going to read both of these two. You can write them down and look at them if you want. Jeremiah 30. Verses 9 and 11. But they shall serve the Lord their God.

[34 : 41] And David their king. Whom I will raise up unto them. Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob. Saith the Lord. Neither be dismayed, O Israel. For lo, I will save you from afar.

And your seed from the land of their captivity. And Jacob shall return. And shall be in rest. And be quiet. And none shall make him afraid. That's not happened yet. God has brought his people back to the land.

And Ezekiel promises a two-part return to the land. With the dry bones. One, a return in unbelief. And two, when they will receive the spirit of life. And they will believe. Right now they're in the land in unbelief.

As the scripture has said. And I will save them. And Jacob shall return and be in rest. That is still future. And be quiet. And none shall make him afraid. For I am with you, saith the Lord.

To save you. Though I make a full end of all nations. Where I've scattered you. It's hard for us to imagine this nation being no more.

[35 : 40] That's the only one I've known. But in the grand scheme of things. 250 years isn't that long. For the dynasties of Egypt. And places like that.

China. But should this nation and every other be brought to an end. The Lord says. Yet I will not make a full end of your nation Israel.

But I will correct you in measure. And I will not leave you altogether unpunished. You know the mistake that Babylon made. You know the mistake that the series made.

That those who came against Israel in God's judgment. And God will call them out on this. And this is why he will judge those nations. He said. I used you. To chasten my people Israel. But you took it too far.

And you thought that gave you liberty to wipe them out. What is God doing today? He's chastening Israel. He's correcting them. Bringing them to a place where they will be able to say. Yes. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

[36 : 35] Do we then reject them? Because God is dealing with them? God doesn't reject me.

Thankfully. When he deals with me. My wife doesn't reject me. When she knows God's dealing with me. So there is now a division.

Verse 43. In John 7. Among the people because of him. Jesus divides all people. Along the lines of their identity. And their identity is based in how they choose to identify with Jesus.

Jesus divides all people. Based on how they choose to identify with him. Jesus said in Matthew 10.34. Think not that I've come to send peace on the earth.

A lot of people today. Because of apparent contradictions. Or a lack of digging deep. Not rightly dividing. They think. Jesus came to bring peace to the earth.

No. He came to bring peace, goodwill to men. On the earth. Not to the earth. I've not come to bring peace on the earth. But a sword. A man's foes shall be they of his own household.

[37 : 37] Jesus identified entirely with the word of God. And with the people of God. And he identified entirely with what the word of God declared.

Regarding God's people. Identified with the word. He identified with God's people. And he also identified with what the word declared. Regarding God's people. You see we should not be a house divided.

We should not be divided with members of God's household. The Jew and the Christian are both parts of God's household. Our unbelieving brethren. The Jews. Need our support.

Not our separation. Paul says in Romans 1.16. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. What is he not ashamed of? It's the power of God. Unto salvation to everyone that believes.

To the Jew first. And also. To the Greek. To the Gentile. I think today. Many times. Unfortunately. In the hearts.

[38 : 36] And churches. Across America. It's. The gospel. It's the power of God. And salvation. To everyone that believes. To the Gentile first. And only.

God sent his gospel. To the Jews. And then the Gentiles. And some of them. Verse 44. It says of Jesus. Some of them. Would have taken him. But no man lay hands on him.

It's so ambiguous. How would they take him? Come be our king. Or we're going to kill you. How are they identifying? But. If we don't.

Accept Jesus. I'm sorry. If we do not accept Jesus's words. We're not going to accept Jesus.

Without God's word. What does Jesus lose? Identity.

Jesus has no identity. Without God's word. You know who else has no identity. Without God's word.

Me. We don't have identity. Without God's word. Israel doesn't have identity.

[39 : 35] Without God's word. We don't come to these things. Because. Well. I identify with this political party. Or I identify with this thought. Or I identify. No. We come. We say. God. What does your word say?

That we might identify. With the thing that is true. And the thing that brings life. Then came the officers. To the chief priests and Pharisees. Here they come. The servants. Who were originally told to go.

And take Jesus. Then came the officers. To the chief priests. And to the Pharisees. And they said

unto them. Why have you not brought him? Why didn't you just do this? One simple thing.

And the officers answered. The servants answered. Because never was a man. Who spoke like this man. Why? What does Jesus' words do?

Well Matthew 7. Jesus has finished speaking. In verses 28 and 29. And the people say. They were astonished. At his doctrine. Because he taught them. As one having authority.

[40 : 31] Not as the. Scribes and Pharisees. Essentially he's coming back. And saying. Well he spoke a lot different. Than you guys do. He spoke with authority. You guys don't have any authority.

You just give us theories. And ideas. And perhapses. And maybes. And this guy said. And this one said. But he spoke with authority. Jesus' words declare. He's more than just a man.

Never did a man speak. Like this man. You're right. Because Jesus is more. Than just a man. In Jesus' words. They allow us. To recognize his identity. They knew.

This guy. Was more. Than just a man. We've never heard. Someone speak like this. His word.

Allowed us to recognize. It wasn't what he looked like. That's not what. Is passed down to us. Well we could tell.

By the way. He always wore that blue sash. And his white. He was always white. Robe. And his long flowing hair. Now. Not at all. Who knows.

[41 : 25] Who knows what he looks like. All we know about him. Is the scripture said. That there is. No comeliness in him. That he should be desired. You didn't look at him. And go. That's the guy.

Oh. Not at all.

You'd look at him. And go. Is that the guy? And then he'd speak. And you'd go. Whoa. That's the guy. That's. I need to go find someone. Tell him. This is the guy. And then answered the Pharisees.

Are you also deceived? Have any of the rulers of the Pharisees. Believed on him? Did that age well? None of us have believed on him. Ouch.

Where does deception begin? Are you also deceived? They believed that. Only those who thought like them. Understood the truth.

Everybody else is in deception. You see. Deception begins. When truth is identified. As something that originates within man. They're saying. Well. We know the truth.

[42 : 22] And it originates where? In us. Are you also deceived? You're deceived. Because none of us have believed on him. And obviously. Everything we would do is of truth. Well. That's where deception begins.

It begins when truth is something we identify. As originating from within man. Whether me. Or my own self. My own truth. Or someone else's. Well. I don't really know what the truth is.

I'll go find this great person. I'll go read Plato. Or I'll go read this church father. Or I'll read. Look at. Not that we can't glean things from them. Wonderful.

But the truth didn't originate there. That's not how we identify it. What originates in man? Deceit. The heart is deceitful.

Above all things. And desperately wicked. Who can know it? 1 John 1.8 says. That if we say we don't have sin. We deceive ourselves. The truth is not in us.

[43 : 16] What have these Pharisees done? Jesus said. You won't come unto me. Because only the sick come to be healed. But you don't think you need to be healed. You don't think you have sin. So what happens?

You deceive yourself. And the truth isn't in you. And then they say this. So sad in verse 49. But there's people who know not the law. They're cursed. Well whose fault is it that they don't know? Who's supposed to be teaching them? Whose fault is it they don't know the word or the law? They're cursed. Those that they're supposed to minister to. Those that they're supposed to serve. Saying they're cursed.

Because they don't think like we do. See unbelief will reject anyone. Who does not identify with it. That's what unbelief does. There's a world out there. That rejects anyone who doesn't identify with it.

You need to identify with us. Well I don't really agree with you. You're cursed. That's hate speech. That's hate crime. That's. Brave Nicodemus.

[44 : 14] Brave timid Nicodemus. Who comes to Jesus by night. And is now doing his best to kind of try and speak up for Jesus here. He says Nicodemus said unto them. He that came to Jesus by night.

Being one of them. One of the Sanhedrin. Does our law judge any man? Before I hear him. And know what he does. Nicodemus what a guy.

Maybe we should bring Jesus in. Get to know him. Listen to what he's got to say. You know. What didn't he do? Guys you are. You are in sin. You are wrong. This is.

This is. Debauchery. You shouldn't be doing this. No he said you know what. I think the solution is you need to understand Jesus. That's what you need. But at the root.

Look what he says here though. Does our law. Judge. Any man. And that's the root of all sin. Sin is identifying. With the law of self.

[45 : 12] Over the law of God. That's what sin is. At its root. It's identifying with the law of self. Over the law of God. And when I seek to identify myself. Or when I identify self.

Or with the law of self. What happens? I'm not going to hear Jesus. And I'm not going to know Jesus. But when I seek to identify myself with the law of God. Those two very wise things happen. Don't they? We hear Jesus. And we know Jesus. So wait a minute. Are you saying we need to live by the law? No. But if I choose to seek to identify with God's law.

If I realize I need to identify with God's law. I realize there is a God. I'm accountable to him. I need to identify with that. I'm going to begin to seek him. Guess what happens? What does the law do for me? It brings me to Christ.

The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. And what happens when I got to Christ? I was justified by faith. The law allows me to come where I can hear Jesus.

[46 : 11] Where I can know Jesus. But what do I got to do? I got to give up that law of deception. That law of self. Unfortunately here for the Pharisees, they're not at that place.

But a beautiful thing in Acts. When you get into Acts, it will tell us many of the Pharisees believed on him. It took a while. Nicodemus was working on him. And the Holy Spirit.

Verse 52. And they answered and they said unto him to Nicodemus. Remember who Nicodemus was? Jesus says, are you the teacher? Nicodemus, you're the guy.

You're like, you're scheduled for a year out at speaking events. Everybody wants you in their church. Everybody wants you at their event. Nicodemus is going to be here. Ooh, okay, okay. Right? It's like you do a men's conference.

Hey, we're in a men's conference. Who's speaking? Just local people. No. Who's speaking? Someone who's nationally known. You know how everybody comes in. It's Nicodemus.

[47:07] And what do they say to him? Are you also from Galilee? Are you also a hick? Are you also a redneck? Are you also from the south?

Search and look for out of Gastonia. Galilee arises no prophet. What? Who do you think you are? Man, they demean him.

Because he won't go along with them. They refuse to see what God is doing in his life. Because they won't go along with him. He won't go along with them. The wording here, search and look. In the Greek, it's examine and behold. Examine and behold. Remember in John chapter 1, when we're given the account of John the Baptist, is there at the Jordan.

He's baptizing. Right? And all the people are coming out. It says all Jerusalem is being emptied out and coming to him. And they began to ask him. They said, are you Elijah? He said, no, I'm not. Are you that prophet?

[48:02] He said, no. What do you say? I'm just a voice. Just a voice. And it tells us that they which were sent to ask those questions were of the Pharisees. And then it says, the next day, John sees Jesus coming to him and he says, behold.

Behold. Search and look. Examine and behold. Behold. Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. And guess where those people that were sent by the Pharisees went back to? They said, we've examined.

We've beheld. This is what John told us. And here these people are coming now, these servants, and they're giving a witness and they're giving a word. But what happened? The Pharisees chose to identify with their pride and it kept them from identifying with the word and the witness that God had given them.

Examine and behold. I'm sure they heard that word already. When those guys came back from John and said, he said to behold the Lamb of God. For you and I, the more we examine the scripture, the more we will behold the Lamb.

The greater our opportunity to behold the Lamb. But it's through our examining of the scripture. Hebrews 10, 7 says, I come to do thy will, O God.

[49:16] And then in parentheses it says, in the volume of the book, it's written of me. In the volume of this book, as we examine and behold, we see what? That as Abraham said to Isaac, God will provide himself the Lamb for the sacrifice.

This beautiful picture woven through history, in our history, right now. God is still at work. Still at work through his plan for Israel as a nation, for his plan of the Gentiles being grafted in, in the church.

And God will continue his plan into the future, just as he has promised in his word. Verse 53, for our ending point for today. Well, our ending point in John, but I got a couple other scriptures.

And every man went to his own house. They returned to their place of origin and identity. What house do you identify with?

What establishes your identity? Where do you originate? Where are we looking to establish for ourselves our origin and our identity?

[50:22] Where do we return to over and over again? Where do we go back to? You see, Israel's identity did not originate with themselves. They didn't decide, hey, we're going to be this cool nation.

We're going to be God's chosen people in this world. The church is God's chosen people out of this world. Deuteronomy 7, 7 and 8, the Lord did not set his love upon you, Israel, nor choose you because you are many in number, more in number than any other people.

For you are actually the fewest of people. But because the Lord loved you, he chose you. And because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto the fathers for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

You see, their origin did not originate in themselves and neither does ours. Turn to Ephesians 2, and I promise we will end here. Our last large chunk of scripture.

Our origin does not originate with ourselves. Our identity does not originate with ourselves either. We do not have the freedom to take upon ourselves an identity or an origin that we say, God, you

have to recognize this.

[51 : 35] You have to own me. It doesn't. It has to originate somewhere else. Something else must identify us as same. The same as.

In Ephesians 2, we're going to go all the way down to verse 11. Paul is encouraging the Ephesians church here, the church in Ephesus, the believers there.

He says, remember. He's writing to the Gentiles. That you being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands. The Jews look at you and say, you're not part of this covenant that God made with Abraham because of circumcision. That at that time, you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.

Sorry, I'm using the King James. You were not citizens of Israel. Strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. What is he saying?

[52 : 36] You had no identity. You have none. Israel had identity. God gave them identity. He gave them covenants. He gave them a nation. He gave them promises.

He gave them hope. We didn't have that. Listen, we live in a great nation. And we're celebrating that, right, this weekend. It is a great nation. But my standing as an American citizen, it's not a nation that God has said, I've chosen you out of all nations to be my nation.

Has God used this nation? Yes, he's used it mightily to spread forth the gospel. And he will use anyone who's willing. But I don't have any standing. I don't have any identity.

But now, Ephesians 2.13, But now, in Christ Jesus, you, who sometimes were far off, you're brought near by the blood of Christ. You have identity.

For he is our peace, which is made both one, uncircumcision and circumcision. Gentile and Jew, made them one, and broken down the middle wall of partition between us.

[53 : 42] Verse 15, Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments, contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of two, one new man, so making peace, that he might reconcile both unto God in one body, not one nation, by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.

And he came and preached peace to you, which were far off, you Gentiles, and to them that were near, God's chosen people. For through him, we both have access by one spirit unto the Father. Now, therefore, you no more, strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens, the saints, and of the household of God.

You see, Israel had identity. The Gentiles, none. Israel, who had identity, now gains a greater identity in Christ. You see, it didn't matter if they stood there and said, we are of Abraham's seed. We are of Israel, of Jacob's seed. We are God's chosen nation in this world, and God will use us in this world. He will, but did not give them spiritual standing before God. They needed a new identity.

[54 : 57] The Gentiles, who had no identity, no home, and no origin, now gain identity, citizenship, and a family. We had none, guys. We had none. Look what we have now.

And that God would take both and bring them together in one spiritual body. That by one spirit, we have a Father. Father, Jesus does not remove identity.

He establishes it. Galatians 3, 27 and 28 says, For as many of you have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.

There's neither Jew nor Greek. There's neither bond nor free. There's neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ. When you became a Christian, ladies, are you no longer a female?

I've said so. There's neither male nor female. Does it remove identity? No. In Christ, you become what? You become more what God created you to be than you ever could have been.

[55 : 57] You understand what it is to be a woman, and you know what a woman is. If someone says, What's a woman? Ah, you can answer it. Men. Look what the world calls men.

Look what they call a man. You became more of a man. You became more of a man in Christ. A man is not one who just is cruel and eats a lot.

Man is a man like Jesus. Did Israel lose their identity in Christ? Well, Israel's no more. That nation's no more. All the promises now belong to the church. They did not.

God established them even more. A Jew becomes a Christian, becomes a believer. Man, they are complete a Jew. They are the Israel of God. As Gentiles, did we lose our identity?

Man, it gave us identity. I actually have identity. Well, I'm an American citizen. So am I. But I have a greater citizenship that allows me to live in this world, but not of it.

[57:01] I don't have to put all my hope in America. I don't have to put all my hope in a nation. It doesn't matter which flag you identify with. Whether Israel or the United States, they are bound to this world.

You need a greater identity. And we have that in Christ. But it doesn't erase who we are. It makes us who we are. It fulfills who we are. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. And we live in a world that is seeking to remove the identity from God's people. We are in a world where the church will seek to remove God's identity, or the identity from God's people. The problem when you do that is what are you doing? You're now creating a situation where you're going to look at God's word. There's going to be contradictions. You're not going to be able to examine and behold.

Because Israel is woven on almost every page of the scripture. And through that, what do we have? The sure mercies of who? David, those aren't mine.

[58:04] I can't lay hold of those. I can't say, well, God, you promised me. To my fathers, you promised you'd give me these mercies. I can't. I come as an orphan. I come to the cross.

And I come and I say, Lord, I don't have anything. He's like, well, I've got everything you need. Come and enter in and be part of this family. So this morning as we wrap this up and where is your origin?

Where is your identity? What is it in? Man, don't put it in this world. Love this country. Be thankful for what it is. But it's not who we are, guys.

It's not who we are. Don't let the unbelief in this world strip God's people from their identity. Don't let it strip you from identity.

Don't let the confusion that this world wants to bring into our lives remove your identity. Well, you can't speak because a Christian is identified as someone who's really mamby-pamby and never talks back to anybody. No, we have authority.

[59:05] We speak like no other men and women ever did. We have the words of life. Father, thank you so much, Lord. Thank you for these words, Lord, that you've given us this morning, Lord.

Thank you that we can examine and behold in the scripture, not what Jared says, but what the word of God says. We can stand upon it because the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. Lord, if Israel were to fail from being a nation, from being a people before you in this earth, it tells us that the sun and the moon and the waves would cease as well.

Lord, I do not have to fear that your gifts and calling will ever be repented of in my life because of my failure, because of my sin, because I'm being chastened, because of my unbelief or my deception.

Because, Lord, you have given us a record, a record you've written, a book, the record of a people that has survived miraculously, and, Lord, a record you've written on our heart that we now have an identity in you.

Establish us in that truth. We love you, and in Jesus' name, amen. You alone are my strength and shield. You know, the scripture says that God is a shield about Israel.

[60:23] And in Christ, we get to come and we get to step behind that shield. We get to live behind that shield. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things are passed away and all things have become new.

He who the sun sets free is free indeed. Happy Independence Day. May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you. And may the Lord be gracious unto you. May the Lord, the Lord, the God of Israel, the Lord, the God of us, put his favor upon us. May the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you peace. God bless you.