

The Gospel of John

Christ vs. The Pharisees – Part I

John 8:12-32

The religious leaders were looking to discredit and disqualify Christ. They would do so by setting traps for Him, such as we saw with the woman taken in adultery. They would question His teachings. The exchanges here give us insight into their thinking and motives but also show the superiority of Christ's teachings and abilities.

The Setting

- It takes place just after the events of the previous lesson.
- There are ten exchanges with the Pharisees that appear to come as interruptions to Christ's teaching in the Temple
- We will split this passage into two lessons for time's sake

The First Exchange

- Christ says the He is the light of the world (Isaiah 49:1-6) – vs. 12
 - This may allude to one of the traditions at the Feast of Tabernacles, where two large candelabras were placed in the Temple courtyard.
- The Pharisees claim His witness is inadequate and false – vs. 13
- Christ answers that it is His witness and the Father's – vs. 14-18

The Second Exchange

- The Pharisees ask where the Father is – vs.19
- Christ responds that they did not know the Father – vs. 19
- This teaching was done in public with no recourse by His enemies – vs. 20

The Third Exchange

- Christ foretells His death and their fate – vs. 21
- The Pharisees think He is suicidal – vs. 22
 - “They now understood that he spoke concerning his death; but before, John 7:35, they thought he spoke of going to some of the Grecian provinces, to preach to the dispersed Jews.” - Clarke
- Christ response – vs. 23-24
 - People need salvation
 - Christ came to give salvation to men

The Fourth Exchange

- The Pharisees dismissively ask Who He is – vs. 25
- Christ responds that He is sent from the Father to men – vs. 25-26
- They do not understand it – vs. 27
- Christ expounds further on His mission of salvation – vs. 28-29
- Many believe on Him – vs. 30
- We become disciples of Christ once we are saved – vs. 31-32
 - Compare this statement with John 17:17 to see the role of the Word in our sanctification and Christian growth.