

Dr. Dave Turner, John, Session 10, Tense Times in Jerusalem 2: Jesus Continues to Teach in the Temple – John 8:12-59 Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Turner, John, Session 10, John 8:12-59, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. David Turner's session on John chapter 8 analyzes Jesus' teachings and the ensuing conflicts in Jerusalem. The session addresses the textual uncertainty surrounding the Pericope Adulteress before examining Jesus' claim as the "light of the world" and the debates with the Pharisees about his identity and authority. **Turner highlights the varied responses to Jesus**, ranging from belief to accusations of being demon-possessed, and explores the complex nature of faith presented in John's Gospel. The lecture further **investigates Jesus' profound "I am" statements**, connecting them to Old Testament declarations of God's divinity and explaining the Jews' blasphemy charge. Ultimately, **the session dissects the escalating tension** leading to an attempt to stone Jesus and underscores the challenging and divisive nature of his ministry as portrayed in this chapter.

**2. 17 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Turner, John, Session 10 – Double click icon to play in
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL]
Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament →
Gospels → John).**



**Turner_John_Session
n10.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Turner, John, Session 10, John 8:12-59

Briefing Document: John 8 - Tense Times in Jerusalem

Overview: This session by Dr. David Turner focuses on John chapter 8, titled "Tense Times in Jerusalem," where Jesus continues to teach in the temple (John 8:12-59) amidst increasing opposition from the Jewish authorities and varied responses from the people. The session begins by addressing the major textual variant of the Pericope Adulteress (John 7:53-8:11) and then moves to analyze the narrative flow and key theological themes within the undisputed portion of chapter 8.

Main Themes and Important Ideas/Facts:

1. The Textual Variant: The Pericope Adulteress (John 7:53-8:11):

- This passage is a significant textual variant, absent from the more ancient manuscripts but present in many later ones.
- Its placement varies in the later manuscripts, sometimes appearing in different locations in Luke and even as an appendix to John 21.
- The language used in the passage is not typical of John's writing style.
- It disrupts the narrative flow between John 7:52 and 8:12, as the abrupt shift in location and the reappearance of the Pharisees is confusing.
- Dr. Turner notes, "7:53 itself seems quite odd. They all went home, but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Jesus, of course, wasn't even in the picture at this point. They all went home. Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. 8:12, Jesus spoke to the people. And then all of a sudden, the Pharisees are there challenging him in 8, 13. We thought they all went home. So, it's hard to understand exactly how the flow works if we read this passage."
- Despite its dubious authority as part of the original Gospel of John, the passage resonates with many and likely represents an authentic tradition about Jesus that circulated in the early church.
- Dr. Turner states, "...more and more people have come to the conclusion that although this passage is likely not to be considered part of the original Gospel of John, it very likely is an authentic tradition about Jesus that sort of floated around in the church after the New Testament was written."

- The passage illustrates God's intolerance of sin alongside his willingness to forgive repentant sinners.
- "So, a beautiful passage that shows us that God in Jesus does not tolerate sin, yet God will come down and forgive sinners who will follow him."
- Dr. Turner draws a parallel to the saying of Jesus found in Acts 20:35 ("It is more blessed to give than to receive"), which is not recorded in the Gospels but is considered an authentic tradition.

2. Jesus as the Light of the World (John 8:12-20):

- Jesus declares, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). This echoes the light imagery prominent in the Gospel of John's prologue.
- The Pharisees challenge his self-testimony, which Jesus counters by asserting the truthfulness of his words, grounded in the Father's commission.
- "Jesus then explains his testimony in verses 14 through 18 by saying that even though I'm testifying on my own behalf, what I'm saying is true. What I'm saying is what the Father gave me to say."
- He points to the Jewish law requiring two witnesses, stating that he and the Father are his witnesses.
- This leads to a discussion about their lack of knowledge of the Father.
- "This brings then a big discussion about who your father is, and Jesus says you don't know him. If you knew who he was, you would know who I was."
- Jesus teaches in the temple courts near the place where offerings were put, likely in the court of Israelite men.
- Despite the dispute, no one seized Jesus because "his hour had not yet come" (John 8:20).

3. Jesus Speaks of His Departure and Their Unbelief (John 8:21-30):

- Jesus tells them, "I am going away, and you will look for me, and you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come" (John 8:21).
- This prompts various speculations, including the idea that he might kill himself.

- Jesus emphasizes his divine origin ("I am from above... I am not of this world") and the consequence of their unbelief ("If you do not believe that I am he, you will die in your sins").
- The phrase "I am he" (ego eimi) here anticipates his later explicit claim to pre-existence.
- Despite the opposition, "as he spoke these words, many believed in him" (John 8:30).

4. The Nature of True Discipleship and Freedom (John 8:31-47):

- Jesus tells the Jews who believed in him, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31-32).
- Their response, claiming they have never been slaves, reveals a misunderstanding of the freedom Jesus offers, which is freedom from sin.
- "They say we are Abraham's descendants. We have never been the slaves of anyone. What do you mean we will be set free?"
- This highlights the distinction between outward profession of belief and genuine, life-transforming faith characterized by adherence to Jesus' teaching.
- Jesus asserts that "everyone who sins is a slave to sin" (John 8:34) and that true freedom comes through the Son.
- The discussion escalates as Jesus contrasts their actions with Abraham's and ultimately reveals their spiritual parentage: "You belong to your father, the devil" (John 8:44).
- "So, he comes right out and says it finally in verse 44, you belong to your father who is the devil."
- He accuses them of rejecting the truth and belonging to the father of lies because they do not belong to God.

5. Jesus' Claim to Pre-existence and the Reaction (John 8:48-59):

- The Jews retaliate by calling Jesus a Samaritan and demon-possessed.
- Jesus defends his honor and that of his Father, emphasizing that he does not seek his own glory.

- The conflict intensifies as Jesus claims that Abraham rejoiced to see his day.
- When the Jews question his age, Jesus makes the profound statement, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58).
- "Before Abraham was, some translations continue to say, for Abraham was born, adding that word to it. Before Abraham became, I am."
- This declaration, echoing the divine "I AM" in the Old Testament, is perceived as blasphemy, leading them to attempt to stone him.
- "At this, they picked up stones to stone him..."
- Jesus miraculously escapes, slipping away from the temple grounds.

6. Narrative Structure and Exegetical Issues:

- Dr. Turner outlines the cyclical structure of John 8, where Jesus' teachings provoke various responses, leading to disputes and different outcomes (belief, attempts to arrest or kill).
- Exegetical issues include the significance of the "light of the world" imagery, connected to Old Testament prophecies (Isaiah 9, 42, 49, Zechariah 14) and potentially the torchlight ceremony during Sukkot. This imagery represents an ethical dualism between God and Satan.
- The special relationship between Jesus and the Father, where Jesus acts as the Father's agent speaking with his authority, is a recurring theme.
- The most perplexing issue is the conflict with Jews who initially believed in him. Dr. Turner emphasizes that true belief is characterized by holding to Jesus' teaching and demonstrating it through one's lifestyle (connecting to Ephesians 2:10 and James 2). This aligns with the Johannine theme of the perseverance of the saints (or the idea that those who truly believe will persevere).
- The significance of Jesus' "I am" statements (ego eimi) is crucial. Dr. Turner connects this to the Hebrew "ani hu" in Deuteronomy and Isaiah, where God declares his unique deity.
- "So apparently when Jesus uttered those words here at the end of John chapter 8, I am he, he was alluding to this string of texts in the Old Testament that speak of God as the only God, the true God..."

- By using this language, Jesus is implicitly claiming divinity, aligning with his portrayal in the prologue of John as the pre-existent God. This culminates in Thomas's declaration in John 20:28, "My Lord and my God."
- Dr. Turner concludes by highlighting that Jesus, like the prophet Isaiah, speaks as God's mouthpiece, echoing Isaiah 48:12 ("I am he; I am the first, and I am the last").

Conclusion: John chapter 8 portrays a period of intense conflict and theological debate surrounding Jesus' identity and teachings in Jerusalem. The chapter explores the nature of true faith, the authority of Jesus as the divine Son of God, and the stark division between those who accept and reject his claims. The use of the divine "I AM" ultimately leads to a violent confrontation, foreshadowing the ultimate rejection Jesus will face.

4. Study Guide: Turner, John, Session 10, John 8:12-59

Study Guide: John 8 - Tense Times in Jerusalem

Key Themes:

- The Textual Uncertainty of the Pericope Adulteress (John 7:53-8:11)
- Jesus as the Light of the World and the Implications of Following Him
- The Validity of Jesus' Testimony and His Relationship with the Father
- The Misunderstanding and Disbelief of the Jewish Leaders and Some Who Initially Believed
- The Nature of True Discipleship and the Necessity of Perseverance
- The Identity of Jesus and His Claim to Preexistence ("I Am")
- The Conflict Between Jesus and Those Who Reject Him, Culminating in an Attempted Stoning
- The Use of Light and Darkness Imagery in John's Gospel
- Old Testament Allusions and Their Significance in Understanding Jesus' Claims

Quiz:

1. What is the Pericope Adulteress, and what are some of the key textual issues surrounding it as discussed by Dr. Turner?
2. According to Dr. Turner, why do many scholars believe the Pericope Adulteress, while likely not original to the Gospel of John, may still represent an authentic tradition about Jesus?
3. When Jesus declares, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12), how do the Pharisees immediately respond, and what is Jesus' counter-argument?
4. What does Jesus mean when he tells the Jews that they will look for him and die in their sin, and what is their misunderstanding of this statement?
5. Dr. Turner highlights a seemingly contradictory situation in John 8:30-33. Explain this situation and how Jesus' subsequent words clarify the nature of true belief.
6. According to Jesus in John 8, what is the characteristic of someone who sins, and how does this relate to the concept of being a true descendant of Abraham?

7. What shocking claim does Jesus make about the true "father" of those who are seeking to kill him, and what is the basis for this assertion?
8. How does Dr. Turner explain the significance of Jesus' repeated use of the phrase "I am he" in John 8, and to what Old Testament passages does he connect this phrase?
9. What was the immediate reaction of the Jewish leaders when Jesus declared, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58), and why did they react this way?
10. According to Dr. Turner, what is the central dispute that seems to tie together the events and teachings of Jesus in both John 7 and John 8?

Answer Key:

1. The Pericope Adulteress is the story of Jesus and a woman accused of adultery found in some manuscripts between John 7:52 and 8:12. Textual issues include its absence in older manuscripts, its varied placement in later manuscripts (including Luke and as an appendix to John), and its linguistic differences from the rest of John.
2. Despite the external evidence against its originality, many scholars find the Pericope Adulteress to "sound like Jesus" and resonate with his character and teachings. They believe it likely represents an authentic tradition about Jesus that circulated in the early church and was later included in some manuscripts.
3. The Pharisees challenge Jesus' claim, stating that his testimony is invalid because he is appearing as his own witness. Jesus counters by explaining that his testimony is true because he knows where he came from and where he is going, and his other witness is the Father who sent him, fulfilling the requirement of two witnesses in their own law.
4. Jesus means that they will die unforgiven in their sins because they do not believe in him and where he is going (to the Father) they cannot follow in their present state. The Jews misunderstand this and ask if he intends to kill himself.
5. John 8:30 states that many believed in Jesus, but immediately following in verse 33, these "believers" challenge Jesus' statement about being set free, claiming they have never been slaves. This highlights that their initial belief was likely superficial and did not lead to true understanding or acceptance of Jesus' teachings.

6. According to Jesus, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. While they claim to be free-born descendants of Abraham, their actions and rejection of Jesus' word demonstrate that they are enslaved to sin and therefore not truly children of Abraham in the spiritual sense.
7. Jesus states that their father is the devil, because they desire to carry out the devil's desires, such as murder and rejecting the truth. He contrasts this with his own relationship with God the Father, from whom he came and whose truth he speaks.
8. Dr. Turner explains that the phrase "I am he" (and particularly "I am" in John 8:58) is a significant claim to Jesus' divine identity, alluding to Old Testament passages like Deuteronomy 32:39 and Isaiah 41:4, 43:10 where God uses similar language ("ani hu" in Hebrew, translated as "ego eimi" in Greek) to assert his unique godhood.
9. The Jewish leaders reacted by picking up stones to stone him because they considered his claim, "Before Abraham was, I am," to be blasphemy. By using the divine "I am," Jesus was identifying himself with God and claiming preexistence before Abraham.
10. The central dispute revolves around the identity of Jesus and the varied responses to his teaching. From the initial questions about his authority in John 7 to the outright rejection and attempted stoning in John 8, the core conflict lies in whether people recognize and accept Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God.

Essay Format Questions:

1. Analyze the textual and theological significance of the Pericope Adulteress (John 7:53-8:11) in the context of John's Gospel and the broader Christian tradition.
2. Discuss the use of light and darkness imagery in John 8, exploring how it contributes to the understanding of Jesus' identity and the choices presented to his audience.
3. Examine the progression of belief and disbelief in John 8, paying particular attention to the interaction between Jesus and those who initially claimed to believe in him. What does this reveal about the nature of true faith according to John's Gospel?

4. Explore the ways in which Jesus' claims about his relationship with the Father in John 8 contribute to the overall Christology of the Gospel of John.
5. Evaluate the significance of Jesus' "I am" statements in John 8 in light of their Old Testament background and their impact on his Jewish audience.

Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Textual Variant:** A difference in wording or the presence/absence of a passage between different ancient manuscripts of a text, such as the Bible.
- **Pericope Adulteress:** The passage found in some manuscripts of the Gospel of John (John 7:53-8:11) describing Jesus' encounter with a woman accused of adultery. Its authenticity and placement are debated.
- **External Evidence (Textual Criticism):** Evidence based on the age, geographical distribution, and character of the manuscripts that contain or omit a particular reading or passage.
- **Narrative Continuity:** The smooth and logical flow of events and ideas within a story or text.
- **Obelisk (in Manuscripts):** A marginal mark used in ancient manuscripts to indicate a passage of doubtful authenticity or one that is considered spurious.
- **Oral Tradition:** Stories, teachings, and cultural practices passed down through generations by word of mouth rather than written text.
- **Feast of Booths (Sukkot or Tabernacles):** A major Jewish festival celebrated in the autumn, involving the construction of temporary shelters and commemorating the Israelites' wanderings in the wilderness.
- **Testimony (in John):** The witness or evidence presented to support a claim, often referring to Jesus' claims about himself and his relationship with the Father.
- **Christology:** The branch of Christian theology concerned with the person, nature, and role of Jesus Christ.
- **Exegesis:** The critical interpretation and explanation of a text, especially of scripture.
- **Ethical Dualism:** A belief in the stark opposition between good and evil, often associated with light and darkness.

- **Agent of the Father:** The concept that Jesus acts on behalf of and with the authority of God the Father.
- **Recalcitrant:** Having an obstinately uncooperative attitude toward authority or discipline.
- **Authentic Vine (Imagery):** In John 15, Jesus uses the metaphor of himself as the true vine, contrasting with what he implies is the unfaithful vine of Israel.
- **Perseverance of the Saints:** A theological doctrine that those who are truly saved by God will ultimately remain in faith until the end.
- **Blasphemy:** The act or offense of speaking sacrilegiously about God or sacred things.
- **Preexistence (of Christ):** The doctrine that Jesus Christ existed in divine form before his incarnation as a human being.
- **Incarnation:** The Christian doctrine that God became flesh in the person of Jesus Christ.

5. FAQs on Turner, John, Session 10, John 8:12-59, Biblelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions: John Chapter 8

1. What is the significance of the textual variant involving the "Pericope Adulteress" (John 7:53-8:11)?

This passage, detailing Jesus' encounter with a woman caught in adultery, is a major textual variant not found in the oldest and most reliable manuscripts of John's Gospel. While it appears in many later manuscripts, its placement varies (even appearing in Luke or as an appendix to John 21 in some). The language and narrative flow also differ from typical Johannine style, suggesting it was likely not part of the original Gospel. However, many scholars believe it represents an authentic tradition about Jesus that circulated in the early church and was eventually incorporated into some manuscripts. It illustrates God's grace and forgiveness towards sinners while not condoning sin.

2. What is the context of Jesus' teaching in John 8, and who are his primary audiences?

Jesus is teaching in Jerusalem, specifically in and around the temple courts, during a time of great tension. The chief priests and Pharisees are actively seeking to arrest him. His audiences are diverse, ranging from the general populace with varied opinions about him (demon-possessed, Messiah, etc.) to the Jewish religious leaders who are increasingly hostile. Even some who initially believe in him become the subject of intense debate.

3. What does Jesus mean when he declares, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12)?

This is a crucial statement employing significant light imagery prevalent in John's Gospel. It echoes Old Testament themes of light overcoming darkness (Genesis 1, Isaiah 9, 42, 49, Zechariah 14) and possibly connects with the torchlight ceremony of the Feast of Booths (Sukkot). This declaration portrays Jesus as the one who brings spiritual illumination and life, contrasting with the darkness of sin and ignorance. Following him leads to the "light of life."

4. How does Jesus respond to the Pharisees' challenge that his self-testimony is invalid (John 8:13-18)?

Jesus defends his testimony by appealing to the principle in their own law that the testimony of two witnesses is true. He asserts that he testifies on his own behalf, and his other witness is the Father who sent him. He implies that his words carry divine authority and truth, directly linked to the Father's will.

5. What is the significance of Jesus' repeated "I am" statements in John 8 (verses 24, 28, 58) and why do they provoke such a strong reaction? These "I am" statements are highly significant Christologically. They allude to the Old Testament Hebrew phrase "ani hu" (I am he), used by God in Deuteronomy and Isaiah to assert his unique divine identity and power (e.g., Deuteronomy 32:39, Isaiah 41:4, 43:10). By using this language, Jesus is implicitly claiming divinity and identifying himself with the God of the Old Testament. The reaction of the Jewish leaders, culminating in their attempt to stone him for blasphemy, indicates they understood the implications of his claim. The "Before Abraham was, I am" statement (John 8:58) particularly asserts his pre-existence and eternal nature.

6. How can we understand the apparent contradiction of Jesus speaking to "Jews who had believed him" (John 8:31) and then calling them children of the devil (John 8:44)?

The belief expressed in John 8:30 seems to be a superficial or incomplete faith. Jesus clarifies in verse 31 that true discipleship is characterized by "holding to my teaching." The subsequent hostile dialogue reveals that these individuals, despite their initial acknowledgment of him, reject his teachings, cling to their own understanding of their heritage (as descendants of Abraham), and ultimately seek to kill him. This demonstrates that genuine faith in John involves not just intellectual assent but also ongoing obedience and adherence to Jesus' words. This passage highlights the theme of discerning true faith from mere profession.

7. What does Jesus teach about freedom and slavery in John 8:31-36? Jesus states that true freedom comes through knowing the truth and being set free by the Son. He contrasts this with the slavery of sin, asserting that "everyone who sins is a slave to sin." While the Jews claim to be free as Abraham's descendants, Jesus argues that their actions reveal they are enslaved to sin and therefore not truly children of Abraham (in a spiritual sense) or God. Only the Son (Jesus) can provide genuine and lasting freedom from this bondage.

8. How does John chapter 8 contribute to the overall portrayal of Jesus in the Gospel?

John chapter 8 intensifies the conflict between Jesus and the Jewish authorities, revealing the deep divisions his claims create. It powerfully presents Jesus' divine identity through his "I am" statements, linking him directly to the Old Testament God. The chapter also explores the nature of true belief and discipleship, emphasizing the importance of abiding in Jesus' teaching. Furthermore, it highlights the themes of light versus darkness and truth versus falsehood, central to John's narrative, and foreshadows the ultimate rejection Jesus will face.