



“I Am the Good Shepherd”

Show Notes & Transcripts

Podcast General Description:

Follow Him: A *Come, Follow Me* Podcast with Hank Smith & John Bytheway

Do you ever feel that preparing for your weekly *Come, Follow Me* lesson falls short? Join hosts Hank Smith and John Bytheway as they interview experts to make your study for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ *Come, Follow Me* course not only enjoyable but original and educational. If you are looking for resources to make your study fresh, faithful, and fun--no matter your age--then join us every Friday and Saturday.

Podcast Episode Descriptions:

Part 1:

How do we receive hard sayings? Dr. Jenet Erickson explores the doctrine that Jesus teaches at the Feast of Tabernacles and shows mercy to the woman taken in adultery.

Part 2:

Dr. Jenet Erickson continues to explore themes of mercy, redemption, and the symbolic names that Jesus calls himself in the Gospel of John.

Timecodes:

Part 1

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- 04:46 Framing these chapters
- 07:35 Who God is
- 09:39 Jesus and the Feast of Tabernacles
- 14:46 The importance of remembering what God has done
- 18:05 People questions Jesus’s authority
- 20:15 Revelation comes when people are acting
- 23:01 Jesus shares his Father’s message
- 25:48 Healing on the Sabbath
- 27:40 Judge not
- 31:09 Our relationship with God is essential
- 33:01 Jesus foreshadows his death
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- 41:20 Why covenants?
- 42:24 The people won’t arrest Jesus
- 44:24 Jesus and the woman taken in adultery
- 47:40 Jesus reveals hypocrisy
- 50:08 Judgment and law
- 52:20 Jesus doesn’t correct or condemn her publicly
- 56:55 Jesus is the light
- 1:02:20 Jesus gains additional followers and is the Truth and the Way
- 1:06:37 Jesus as liberator of all
- 1:13:14 Jesus speaks boldly and the people look to stone him
- 1:18:10 End of Part 1–Dr. Jenet Erickson

Part 2

- 00:00 Part II– Dr. Jenet Erickson
- 00:07 The man born blind
- 04:05 Jesus has the power over trauma and inherited difficulties
- 05:11 Why the Pool of Siloam
- 09:21 Spiritual questions and uncertainty
- 13:54 Jesus questions who is blind to spiritual things
- 16:21 Jesus teaches about the Good Shepherd
- 18:42 He knows and loves each of his sheep
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- 24:45 The difference between leading and herding
- 25:11 Sheep go astray and the “Summer of the Lambs”

- 27:22 President Nelson and the Covenant Path
- 28:27 Hirelings abandon the sheep
- 31:54 Jesus and the sanctification of the temple
- 33:34 The Gospel of John is a gospel about discipleship
- 35:26 John asks who will receive Jesus
- 38:22 Dr Jenet Erickson shares her takeaways
- 45:02 End of Part II–Dr. Jenet Erickson

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Biographical Information:



Jenet Erickson, an associate professor in the Department of Church History and Doctrine in BYU Religious Education, teaches The Eternal Family (REL 200) course as well as Introduction to Family Process (SFL 160) for the School of Family Life. Her research has focused on maternal and child well-being in the context of work and family life, as well as the distinct contributions of mothers and fathers in children's development. She is a research fellow of both the Wheatley Institution and the Institute for Family Studies and has been a columnist on family issues for the Deseret News since 2013.

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Hank Smith:	00:00:01	Welcome to FollowHIM, a weekly podcast dedicated to helping individuals and families with their Come Follow Me study. I'm Hank Smith.
John Bytheway:	00:00:09	And I'm John Bytheway.
Hank Smith:	00:00:11	We love to learn.
John Bytheway:	00:00:11	We love to laugh.
Hank Smith:	00:00:13	We want to learn and laugh with you.
John Bytheway:	00:00:15	As together we follow him.
Hank Smith:	00:00:20	Hello my friends. Welcome to another episode of FollowHIM. My name is Hank Smith and I am your host. And I am here with my good shepherd co-host, John Bytheway. John, I was just reading today's lesson and I thought, good shepherd, Jesus and John. You're a good shepherd. It's supposed to be a compliment.
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	00:00:41	It is.
Hank Smith:	00:00:41	Is it working? Yeah.
John Bytheway:	00:00:43	Thank you.
Hank Smith:	00:00:44	Yeah. You're a good shepherd. I've seen you watch over a lot of flocks in your life. John, we are going to spend our day in the Gospel of John here and we needed an expert to help us out. Who is with us?
John Bytheway:	00:00:57	I'm so excited that Jenet Erickson is back with us again. We had such a wonderful time with her before. Jenet grew up in Orem, Utah, as the fifth of 11 children. She received a bachelor's degree in nursing, a Master's degree in linguistics from Brigham Young University, after which she earned a PhD in family social science from the University of Minnesota. That's Go Gophers, right?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:01:23 That's right.

John Bytheway: 00:01:25 That's right. Her research is focused on maternal and child wellbeing in the context of work and family life, along with contributions that mothers and fathers make in their children's development. Jenet's research has been featured in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, US News and World Report, Slate Magazine and the Today Show. She's also completed research analyses on non-maternal care for policy makers as a social science research fellow for the Heritage Foundation.

00:01:53 She's right now an associate professor in the department of church history and doctrine at BYU, as well as a research fellow of the Wheatley Institution and the Institute for Family Studies. She's a regular columnist for the Deseret News where she writes about family issues. She sits on the board of trustees for the American Heritage School. She enjoys spending time with her husband, Michael, her son, Peter, and her daughter, LaDawn. But what I want to say is I think, Hank, it was after we recorded with Jenet, she did a talk for Brigham Young University.

00:02:28 You can find this at speeches.byu.edu and it was called Designed for Covenant Relationships, and it was fabulous. So go to speeches.byu.edu and find Jenet's talk and watch that. And you'll know more than I just shared in this bio about her spirit and her passion and her testimony. So, it was just awesome. So, thank you for being with us.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:02:54 Oh, thank you. Such a privilege. I'm so grateful for the work that you are doing and grateful to be on this podcast. I'm humbled to be here and to talk about these sections.

Hank Smith: 00:03:05 We love having you.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:03:06 Such a privilege. These chapters, it's interesting, are very meaningful in my little family, because my husband grew up without faith. He had very devoted parents to him, but did not grow up with any faith. And when he was struggling to find any kind of truth as a student at the University of Texas at Austin, he went through a whole course of different quests to find truth. And at one time, Gideon Organization was handing out their little green Bibles, little green New Testaments, Psalms and Proverbs, and he just looked at them and he said, "I've tried everything else, maybe I'll try Christianity."

00:03:41 But his experience with Christianity had been evangelists on TV and it had not been appealing to him. And when he read the gospels, he could not believe this being and his remarkable wisdom and insight and in particular John seven through 10 were just very powerful instructions for him. He just marveled at this being. He didn't know that he was the Son of God yet, but that's what paved the way for his decision to be baptized into some faith. And then, as you would know, missionaries would knock on his door soon after that and introduce him to the gospel of Jesus Christ. So, these are wonderful chapters for our family. They were important in his conversion to Christ.

Hank Smith: 00:04:27 Beautiful. Well, I'm glad that you are here to join us for these chapters.

John Bytheway: 00:04:32 It's about the best intro ever.

Hank Smith: 00:04:34 Yeah. So, where do you want to start with this, Jenet? The Come Follow Me manual just has us in the Gospel of John today for four chapters, but they're a big four chapters.

John Bytheway: 00:04:46 Wow.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:04:46 They're a big four chapters. Maybe we can start, Hank, by just doing a little framing and I am drawing on other people's incredible scholarship today a lot. Richard Holzapfel and Kerry Muhlestein and others who have done work on these chapters. And I'm so grateful. I really love how Eric Huntsman when he was talking about John 1 here on the podcast, but in all of his scholarship work, he distinguishes this Christology, he calls it, that John is trying desperately to help us understand that Jesus is the Christ, his divinity, the divine word made flesh.

00:05:22 And then the other part of it is how we respond to that reality, how we as human beings respond to that truth and becoming disciples. So, here you've got, it starts with this Logos, Jesus is the word. And of course Logos meaning that is where one person communicates with another. Jesus is the way whereby God interacts with the world, with us and communicates with us. And so in these sections, we're going to see him revealed as the living God, as the Christ, over and over again in very powerful ways. And at the same time, we're going to see how people are responding to that. And we can find ourselves in our own conversion probably in many of the different voices represented there in John 7 through 10.

Hank Smith: 00:06:11 Yeah, there's going to be a lot of different people who say a lot of different things about Jesus through-

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:06:15 A lot of different things. Yes. So, the other little piece of that, I think, is I appreciate that the word miracle, we're going to see miracles. John only includes seven miracles in his book. They go from changing water into wine, healing the nobleman's son, healing the lame man at the Pool of Bethesda, feeding the 5,000, walking on water, healing the man born blind. We will do that one today. And then finally end with raising Lazarus from the dead. And he selects those miracles because there are deeper meanings reflected in the signs.

00:06:53 So, the word miracles in John actually is better translated, Eric Huntsman says, as signs, not as a miraculous event, but as a witness, as an evidence of who this being is. So, I think in them we find deeper symbols of the divine God becoming the man, Jesus, starting with water turned into wine, which of course beautifully symbolizes this living God, the divine being made flesh in blood, the mortality of wine, and we're going to see that powerful dialectic all the way through these chapters as well.

John Bytheway: 00:07:34 Fantastic.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:07:35 We'll start in John chapter seven, and I think I'd like to do it where we see who God is, who Christ is across these chapters, and then we'll come back to talk through how did people respond? How do we respond? John, I just have come to appreciate so much this remarkable literary capacity. I think some wonder if his second language was Greek. It's not as sophisticated structurally. I think the Greek of the book of John, it's plain and in some ways simple. And yet as we're reading it today, you just marvel at his use of metaphor and maybe it's just Jesus Christ, right? His use of metaphor and symbol and powerful drama even as he structures this, and each section leading into each other section in a way that elucidates who this Christ is. So, just grateful for this precious book.

John Bytheway: 00:08:33 The other day I was teaching the Gospel of Luke and I just said to my class, "Luke is hitting home run after home run after home run." And then one of the students raised their hand and said, "Isn't it Jesus?" I was like, "Well, yes, yes, it's Jesus who gave them all this great content." They didn't come up with the content.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:08:53 I think that is so true. So, as we start, he is going in these sections. We hear throughout the book of John this beautiful name, I am, and we will have heard from John chapter six, "I am

the living bread which came down from heaven." We'll hear in these chapters, "I am the light of the world." We will hear, "I am that I am." That beautiful Old Testament title for God. "I am the door." "I am the good shepherd." In later chapters, we'll hear him say, "I am the resurrection and the life." "I am the vine." "I am the way, the truth and the life."

00:09:39 So, John, it's so beautiful to have these teachings from the Lord himself about who He is and who He yearns to be in our lives. So, here's chapter seven, we'll come back to their responses to him. He tells his disciples, and it sounds like it's his brethren, maybe family members who say, "This is your chance. Go up to the Feast of Tabernacles." It's an important feast. We'll talk about what that means, "And show people who you are."

John Bytheway: 00:10:08 If you're really who you claim to be, go show it openly.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:10:12 Quit being in secret. Like no great person who's going to do what you've got to do is going to do this in secret. And he of course recognizes they do not know who I am, and this will be a theme throughout these sections. They don't know who I am. So, he goes up, he tells them he's not going yet, and he comes later to the Feast of Tabernacles. This a really important feast in Jewish tradition and scripture. I was in study abroad, we celebrated Sukkot. I remember going into a home, a Jewish home, where they had built a little tent off their house and they ate in the house in that little tent.

00:10:52 They did everything over that seven-day period in that tent. So, this has been going on for hundreds and hundreds of years, but essentially the Feast of Tabernacles is a commemoration of the 40 years spent in the wilderness living in tents and specifically awaiting for Moses to descend from Mount Sinai with the law. So, they're waiting there. And what's beautiful is we know that Joseph, when he received the plates from Moroni, it was right around this period of time, of Feast of Tabernacles, this receiving of the truths of God. So, the Savior goes here to the temple, he's going to talk about Moses and he's going to talk about the law and he's going to talk about what it means to judge.

00:11:36 And he's right in that context where here the people are celebrating or remembering, commemorating, this receiving of the law and this period of time in booths, in tents there in the wilderness for 40 years. Now I love that when John says, "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us," the translation, according to Richard Holzapfel could be, "He pitched his tent with us." So, it's interesting to think of the tabernacle

symbolizing the presence of God with them. And of course all the symbols of the tabernacle were symbolic of Christ's presence with them. But here he has come in mortality and pitched his tent, so to speak, with us, living among us in a tabernacle of flesh. There's just beautiful, powerful symbols in this Feast of the Tabernacles that he is going to.

- Hank Smith: 00:12:33 Yeah, the Feast of Tabernacles, I've read a little bit about it. Apparently the most joyful of all, celebrating the harvest, celebrating water, celebrating light. It's just after Yom Kippur where everyone's been forgiven of their sins. So, it's got to be a good week to enjoy your family and friends and have everybody around and everybody's forgiven of their sins. That's a good day.
- John Bytheway: 00:12:54 When I was a kid, the Tabernacle was where the Tabernacle Choir sang.
- Hank Smith: 00:13:04 Okay, yeah.
- John Bytheway: 00:13:04 And there's a baptistry there, and that's where I was baptized within the Tabernacle.
- Hank Smith: 00:13:07 Oh, wow.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:13:07 In the basement there, John.
- John Bytheway: 00:13:09 Yeah. So, when I first heard Feast of Tabernacles as a kid, I didn't know what that meant. So, I'm glad, Jenet, you're explaining that they made booths, they made little things to dwell in while they were waiting for Moses. And I think for John in verse two there to just say, "Now the Jews Feast of Tabernacles was at hand." And then just to go on, it's kind of like if one of us wrote a book and had people reading it a couple of thousand years later and said, "It was the Christmas season," but we didn't explain what that means. There is food, there is music, there are all sorts of traditions. There's like you said, Hank, joy. There was an old saying that if you had not seen the joy of the pouring out of water ceremony, you did not know joy in your life.
- Hank Smith: 00:13:55 You did not know joy.
- John Bytheway: 00:13:57 And John kind of writes like, we all know what that is. I think it's important to talk about what is this feast and what are they remembering so that we get the backdrop, because some of the things Jesus is going to say are, "Oh."

Hank Smith: 00:14:12 Now they set the context.

John Bytheway: 00:14:15 This is the middle of the feast. So, it wasn't the Tabernacle Choir Feast, it wasn't the Feast of Tabernacles like downtown Salt Lake City. They were little booths that they dwelt in after they're leaving Egyptian bondage.

Hank Smith: 00:14:27 Wow. I think if my kids wanted to live in a tent outside for a week, I'd be like, "Yeah, I'm going to do it." And then the moment they were asleep, I'd be, "Okay, I'm sneaking back in."

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:14:38 Back into bed.

Hank Smith: 00:14:39 Yeah, back in my bed.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:14:39 Totally.

John Bytheway: 00:14:40 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:14:41 Sounds fun though. I bet kids enjoyed it. I bet children enjoyed the Feast of Tabernacles.

John Bytheway: 00:14:46 I just love that the Lord wanted them to remember. Just remember that I delivered you from bondage, and remember those events and I feel like as we studied Old Testament last year, boy, the one thing it just kept going back to was the Exodus. That was something that was a theme that came up so often about God as a deliverer and Moses as a type of Christ and a deliverer, and he's going to deliver us.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:15:13 Yes, so powerful. It's so helpful to have all those wonderful insights. Hank, you used those words, light, water. Apparently they would go and they'd go down to the Pool of Siloam and they'd gather water, the priest would, and bring it back and people would go with him and follow. And then there was this most, as John, you referenced, joyful pouring out of the water into a bowl on the altar. And then lights, they had these huge, it sounds like, huge light candelabras that would be lit up, basins that would hold the wax and the wick and beautiful light radiating all over the city from that top point where the temple was.

Hank Smith: 00:15:53 You could see it from miles away.

John Bytheway: 00:15:55 Yeah, it lit up the whole city, they said.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:15:57 Just really special. So, of course here He is and he's going to come into this place and give powerful teachings. So, the very first thing I think that we're exposed to in these chapters in terms of his teachings, is he is going to talk about his father and his closeness with his father and they didn't understand it. This God of the Old Testament, Jehovah, there just had been lost that understanding of the Son of God. And so they're just confused, but he's going to over and over again say, as he says in 16 and 17, "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me," and he's going to reference His oneness with the Father over and over again. It's pretty remarkable. I think Kerry Muhlestein was just mentioning that we are careful as Latter-day Saints to just not fold the Godhead into one being.

00:16:53 We are sensitive about that and maybe sometimes we overstate how distinct they are, that this remarkable work of salvation involves these three. And the son submitting perfectly to the will of the Father, and that this being of perfect obedience in that process would have complete power. It teaches us a lot about where power comes from, that it comes in submission to the divine will. He wants us to know over and over and over again, "I do nothing save what my father has told me to do," and that's what gives him power over everything. It's what enables him to be the great redeemer, is his submission to the Lord.

Hank Smith: 00:17:45 So, he's saying everything I am teaching I got from the Father.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:17:49 Yes.

Hank Smith: 00:17:49 My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:17:51 And of course they're angry at him, they're like accusing over and over again and he keeps saying, "You forget. This is your father and my father." These are the truths of our divinity.

Hank Smith: 00:18:05 And they're complaining in verse 15, "How knoweth this man letters or scriptures having never learned?" You've never gone to school. Where's your degree from?

John Bytheway: 00:18:13 Who is your rabbi? Who did you study under? We know who we studied under, where did you come from? I think that's very interesting, Hank, that they want to know what's your credentials here?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:18:23 And we saw it way back earlier in sections of the New Testament. They're just like, "Who are you?" And he's saying, "I was taught by God himself, my father."

Hank Smith: 00:18:35 Back when you used to have to memorize scripture in seminary, 17 was a big one. I can still quote it and even do the song my seminary teacher taught me. I won't do it for you guys, but he says, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself." Try me out, try the doctrine, give it a try. See if it works for you. That's a perfect way to test tithing is to pay your tithing and see how it works, or to fast or to do anything like that.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:19:04 It's so interesting, isn't it, that when we do something, it actually changes us in a way, when we choose to do, and then we can see differently than we could see before choosing to do. Just so many times in my life I've thought prophets of God teaching something. I remember being single, John, you and I were single a long time and giving the instruction to go to Institute, just keep going to Institute. And I kept getting diploma after diploma. And yet I knew a prophet of God had asked me to do that.

00:19:36 I had been in that fireside where at the time Elder Eyring told us all to do that. And I look back on that incredible gift in my life and it's one of so many times where just following that little invitation and all of a sudden you just marvel at how you can see why. You can see the gifts that it brought into your life, but it takes doing it. It's interesting, it takes doing it to see. Almost like in the process of doing it, our sight is changed and we're open to the miracles of God, seeing them in our lives.

Hank Smith: 00:20:10 John, I remember you writing a book about testimonies. Didn't this verse come up?

John Bytheway: 00:20:15 Yes, because my son, Andrew, said to me one day, he's like 15, "Dad, how do I know if I felt the spirit?" And I kind of panicked and closed the door and wrote a book. And it was such a good question and I called it How Do I Know If I Know? I started just general conference talks on testimony and I don't know if I hit every one of them, but I'm pretty confident that everyone that I found at least referenced John 7:17. A lot of us think I need to feel in order to know. It's a feeling. But here's Jesus is saying, and this is an application of this verse, you have to do his will in order to know.

00:20:57 And remember something that Elder Oaks said, this was at a Mission President's seminar in June of 2001 and it got

republished in the Ensign. But he said, "In my study of the scriptures I have noted most revelation to the children of God comes when they are on the move, not when they are sitting back in their habitations waiting for the Lord to tell them the first step to take." That's a very first Nephi 4:6 thing. "I was led by the Spirit not knowing beforehand." But Nephi didn't wait and say, "Okay, tell me exactly how I'm going to get the plates of brass." He just moved.

00:21:32 And Brigham Young said a similar thing that more testimonies are found when people are on their feet than when they're on their knees, which it's a great statement. So, there's different ways to know the truth and a testimony of experience is doing his will and then knowing of the doctrine. And the idea of, well, just send me a testimony right now, send me a feeling, whisper to me or something, and the Lord says, "I'm going to answer your prayer, but it won't be in words or feelings. It will be in an experience. It'll take a couple of years." And we don't want that kind of answer.

00:22:12 But a testimony of experience in a lot of ways, I think, is stronger. And Hank, you mentioned tithing. I need to give a shout-out to my dad who passed away 19 years ago yesterday, at the time of this recording anyway, and as an investigator he was told these promises about the law of tithing for Malachi and was like, "Wow, what a return on investment that is." And so he tried it before he was a member of the church, he started paying tithing to see if it would work and he wrote this to me in the letter when I was on my mission in the Philippines and it was such a testimony, this idea, "Do His will and then you will know." I love that verse a lot. Thanks for bringing that up, Hank.

Hank Smith: 00:22:54 Yeah, absolutely. God can't steer a parked car.

John Bytheway: 00:22:58 Right.

Hank Smith: 00:22:58 Let's get moving. Where do you want to go next, Jenet?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:23:01 Let's keep moving through this. It's interesting to think of the next part where he says in verse 18, "He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory, but that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true and no unrighteousness is in him." And you just think about his witness. I can hear President Nelson telling us, "I can't change what God's law is. I am a messenger to communicate what that is and that we find the truth as we live it right in the faith of following what has come from a being whose heart is absolutely pure." There's nothing in it for him. This is purely for us that we can know the truth.

Hank Smith:	00:23:45	What a great connection, Jenet. We've heard President Nelson say that. Prophets are rarely popular, but it's not our job to change the doctrine. I love that. We teach what we've been given.
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	00:23:57	He will reference this again later in these sections, so we'll come back to this theme, but this is not about seeking his own glory. This is out of a pure love to help them know the truth. So, then he says, "Did not Moses give you the law?" And it's so interesting that here he's the one that gave Moses the law, and he's standing there as they're commemorating this time, Moses bringing the law, and they are rejecting him. They're seeking to kill him. And of course he's telling them over again, "I am of the father. He that sent me is true." And in a sense as he sent Moses, as this living Christ sent Moses with the law, the father has sent Christ to be the fulfillment of that law and he's trying to help them understand and it's difficult for them. We'll come back to their response to that.
Hank Smith:	00:24:50	I love that connection. "Did not Moses give you the law? Yet none of you keepeth the law. Here you are celebrating the day that the law was given and you're not keeping it. You're actually trying to break it. You want to kill me?" That's one of the big 10 of the law, right?
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	00:25:04	Yes.
John Bytheway:	00:25:04	I always marvel at that in so many New Testament stories, they're so upset that a man who had been waiting by the Pool of Bethesda after 38 years is healed.
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	00:25:16	On the Sabbath.
John Bytheway:	00:25:17	But they're so upset about the Sabbath, they're not going, "I am so happy for that man. How long have you been there?" And so I don't want to go break this part of the law of Moses, but let's plot to kill Jesus. It's kind of amazing.
Hank Smith:	00:25:31	Right.
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	00:25:31	Amazing. And not only thou shalt not kill, but here he is the one who gave it to Moses. It's so remarkable. But it does help you shed light on just the ironies in our own lives, how we might not see.
John Bytheway:	00:25:45	Strain at a gnat and swallow a camel, right?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:25:48 Yes. So, John, to your comment there, here's 23 and he's going to reference that healing on the Sabbath that just had happened in the previous chapters and he's just saying, "You're angry at me for healing a man on the Sabbath." And I love this part, so he says, "If a man on the Sabbath day received circumcision that the law of Moses should not be broken, yet you are angry at me because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day." We can sense here a reference to creation.

00:26:22 Here is the great creator who came and dwelt among his creations and in John's words, in John one, "He came unto his own, but his own received him not. He came unto his creations, but they received him not." And he is talking about the fulfillment of all of it, is this Sabbath day, the day of rest when things are completed and he has offered healing on the Sabbath day symbolic of that wholeness, that completion. So, here is the great creator speaking to his creations and of what he will make whole in all of us as we are going through the process of creation ourselves individually, to be made whole in him. And the celebration of the Sabbath, that wholeness in him.

Hank Smith: 00:27:11 I've always laughed at verse 23. If you're willing to circumcise someone on the Sabbath, which is pretty painful. I'm healing people on the Sabbath and you're upset with me over that? I'm healing and helping people. How do you reconcile that?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:27:24 Yeah, what a paradox. So, interesting. I love that. Pain and healing and he's saying, "You're angry at me for healing?"

Hank Smith: 00:27:31 Yeah, you're angry at me for healing. You do people pain on the Sabbath, but I'm healing people on the Sabbath and you are upset?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:27:40 We see in verse 24 this judge not, and this is going to be a theme all throughout these chapters, judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. And I think it's powerful to think of that meaning of judgment at least in translation from the Savior's words, he makes right. So, to judge righteously is to turn that which was skewed and make it right, make it straight, bring balance to those who had less to give them and to bring that equality and rightness to things. Obviously they're all judging. We judge with such skewed vision through a glass darkly and he's inviting us into his way, which is to judge righteously, to make things right, to respond with goodness. Then he cried in the temple. "Ye both know me," this is 28, "And you know whence I am. And again I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true. But I know him."

- 00:28:42 He says, "You don't know him, but I know him, for I am from him and he has sent me." We think about his apostles, who I think they're on this spectrum of trying to understand who he is at this time. They've already borne witness that he is the son of God. What does that mean? They've moved from a great teacher to a prophet to a great prophet even like unto Elijah and Moses and now Peter's already borne witness thou art the son of God, but what does that mean? Here's Peter's testimony that I love so much later after he's teaching, after the Savior's crucifixion.
- 00:29:15 He says, "For Christ also has suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. And it's like he understands the whole work of Christ is to bring us to our heavenly home, to bring us into knowing God, the eternal father, to knowing our heavenly parents in intimacy by having become as they are. So he just keeps saying, he has sent me to bring you to him.
- Hank Smith: 00:29:50 I know Him, and he says, "You don't know him whom ye know not, but I know him. I know him."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:29:54 Yes. We can trust him when he says, "I know who the father is", that when we see Christ, we know who our father is, what he's like, what our heavenly parents are like.
- John Bytheway: 00:30:06 It always amazes me that there were people there that knew their scriptures, but he was right there and they didn't know him. They didn't know who it was. It reminds me of just something I learned this year studying the Christmas story, was the wise men go and Herod is like, "Where will the Messiah be born?" And they know their scriptures. Oh yeah, that's in Micah, but he was right there in their midst and they didn't even know it. We need to know that it's not just about book learning or knowing your scriptures. There's got to be some revelation there, I guess, is what I'm trying to say.
- 00:30:45 In verse 31, I love that many of the people said when Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done? Yeah, I put in my margin more than a moral teacher. He's not just a bunch of wise sayings, but is he going to do more miracles than this, because he's done some pretty impressive miracles.
- Hank Smith: 00:31:05 He's done some pretty impressive stuff. I mean were you looking for more?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:31:09 He's done more than Elijah and what do we do now? How else can we understand this being who's done so much? I was just reading some interviews of people who struggled leaving the church, who took a path out of the church and then came back. They're really powerful accounts. One thing that's interesting is as they're leaving the church in the narratives, they'll reference, "The church this, the church doesn't do this," and a lot of reference to the church itself. And in coming back you don't even see hardly any reference to church. You see relationship with God. They've experienced Him. Here they're replacing religion for God himself, these people here at the time, and not seeing the being who is their God before them. And so there is something about coming to experience God, knowing him, feeling him, that is essential.

John Bytheway: 00:32:07 There's a verse in 3 Nephi that Elder D. Todd Christofferson used. He gave a great talk in 2015 called Why the Church? And he said, "We're not striving for conversion to the church. We're striving to be converted to the Lord." And then he quotes this 3 Nephi 28, I think it's like 23 that says, "And they were converted unto the Lord." Book of Mormon never says converts to the church. It's very consistent, "Converted unto the Lord and united with the church."

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:32:37 Yes, but it's the channel to connection with Christ.

John Bytheway: 00:32:41 Yeah. But if your conversion is to the wrong thing and you notice problems in the church or faults with people, well you're converted to the wrong thing. Our conversion is to the Lord and then we unite with the church, which is a big club of imperfect people that are trying to further their conversion to the Lord. So, I'm glad you said it that way.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:33:01 Well, he's going to do some foreshadowing again in these sections. Verse 33 here again is remarkable literary, but he's going to foreshadow his own being taken from the earth. So, he says, "Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me. Ye shall seek me and ye shall not find me. And where I am thither you cannot come." And again in 35, "Ye shall seek me and ye shall not find me. And where I am thither ye cannot come." Now what is so beautiful about that is in his crucifixion and resurrection as we see the veil rent, he makes it possible for us to come through. And here he says, "Ye cannot come," but then he rents the veil and makes it possible for us to enter into that sacred. Our eternal purpose for coming was to return again changed into beings who are like him.

John Bytheway: 00:33:53 And Jesus is the veil, isn't it, in Hebrews like 10?

Dr. Jenet Erickson:	00:33:57	He is the veil.
John Bytheway:	00:33:58	Yeah, he's the veil.
Hank Smith:	00:33:58	Hebrews 10:20, yeah.
John Bytheway:	00:34:00	And he was rent and through the veil we're brought back to the father. It's pretty cool.
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	00:34:06	Yeah, it's so beautiful. I think President Nelson even compares the garment of the holy priesthood to the veil and that symbolically that is Christ himself through which we enter. So, I love that he says, "Ye cannot find me, thither you cannot come," and then he rents the veil. That's his purpose and overcomes it all that we can come there. So, here's 37. Here's the place, Hank, here's the water place, and John, the water place. So, here it's the last day of the feast. They don't go get the water on the last day of the feast, I think it's all the previous days, and he stands up and it says, he cried saying, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.'" I love this reference to Psalms 78.
	00:34:56	"He clave the rocks in the wilderness and gave them drink as out of the great depths." That language, out of the depth of his soul, his atonement for us, his going beneath it all and you think of deep water in the deep well and that this will flow forth. He will bring streams of healing water out of himself. And of course when you read in John when the soldier pierced his body, that blood and water came out literally from his belly. I love those beautiful references to Revelation 12. So, John's words, again, Revelation 22 verses 1 and 17, "A river of water of life precedes from the throne of the Lamb and waters the tree of life and all are invited to come."
	00:35:48	So, here's John just elucidating the power of what he said here. It is from me, from this atoning sacrifice that living water will proceed from the throne of the Lamb and water the tree of life and give us access to life.
Hank Smith:	00:36:02	It's so fascinating to me that in John 7 Jesus seems to be up here teaching eternal amazing things and the people seem to be way down here discussing details. Where did you get your degree? And why did you do that on the Sabbath day? And aren't you supposed to be from Bethlehem? And he's up here, I mean you're showing us all these wonderful things he's teaching, and

that they're down here having these divisive discussions about him.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:36:27 Like us human beings though, right? I mean I'm thinking he's inviting us, come and partake of the waters of life freely, and we just struggle to be moved. He's trying to move them to a different place and we struggle to be moved to where he's inviting us and he keeps inviting. He keeps saying, "Come." He keeps saying, "Come, take another step." Yeah, you're right, there's a big gap.

Hank Smith: 00:36:51 It goes back and forth. It goes Jesus says something amazing and then the people are talking about something totally different. I'm looking at verse 40. Here he taught all these wonderful things on living water and they're saying, "I think he's a prophet." Others are like, "I think this is the Christ." And others are like, "No, Christ can't come out of Galilee." Is anybody talking about what he just taught?

John Bytheway: 00:37:09 Yeah. Part of the Feast of Tabernacles was gratitude for water. The season had come to an end, and in verse 37, the last day, the great day of the feast, as you said, Jenet, this was the prayer for water for the future and here's Jesus who says, "You want water, you come to me." And he just upstaged the whole thing on the great day of the feast and I always love to slow down there. Jesus stood, teachers normally sat like Sermon on the Mount, and cried. And he let them know, "You want water, come to me," and out of his belly will flow rivers of living water. I learned that living water is water that does not stagnate. So, a water in a cistern is not living water and if you wanted water to do certain things, you needed living water. The Pool of Siloam, as you both know, comes out of Hezekiah's Tunnel, which is from a spring.

00:38:06 It's spring water, it's living water. And that was the water they went to go, as we discussed, they went down to the Pool of Siloam to fetch that water in pitchers and to bring it up, singing verses from Isaiah and everything, and then pouring it on the altar. And Jesus is saying, he used the phrase living water, this is where you come to me for the living water. That's why they had to go to Siloam, that's my understanding. There's a great article our listeners could just Google, Feast of Tabernacles and Bruce Satterfield, he's up at BYU Idaho, there's a long article about the backdrop of John seven, eight and nine with the Feast of Tabernacles, and it's really helpful to me and my students to kind of go, "Wow. I see why Siloam and living water," but I love that Jesus just upstaged the whole thing and said, "If you really want water, come to me."

Hank Smith: 00:39:02 I can give you water.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:39:03 It's amazing to think of how desperately they needed water, John, as you're saying, right? This was this prayer at the end of the harvest season and we depend on it being given in the season. It's not like there's some reservoir stored up for them to access water. It has to be from the living source, the natural springs and water of rain coming that allows them to access that water and thrive. But I keep thinking as you asked, "What does living water mean?" I'm touched to think about covenants and he's going to be talking about covenants when we get to the Good Shepherd. The Lord is referencing covenant language there, but what covenants, and I'll have my students often say this, it's so insightful. I'll ask them, "Why covenants? Why not just a list of teachings about being a good person? Why not just the Beatitudes?"

00:39:51 I mean my experience is when we live those truths, we have joy in our lives, it brings healing. And why covenant relationship? And they will often reference covenant enables growth. I was thinking in these verses he has to be referencing Ezekiel, the water flowing out of the temple that heals everything in its path. What comes from the temple is deeper and deeper covenant connection with the Lord Jesus Christ. We're learning that ever more clearly in the changes in the endowment, but that covenant connection never is stagnant. It takes us where we are. The Lord binds himself to us where we are, however small we are.

00:40:32 Yokes himself with us and walks with us in that journey of becoming, and it is all about growth and development. And so I think he is the living water because his power to help us grow and heal and become never ends. There's no end to it. It's never stagnant. And it happens through relationship with him, through ever deeper relationship where we are revealed to ourselves and who he is through the spirit, which is what John references here, "This he spake of the spirit," his presence in our lives through the Holy Ghost enables that growth and becoming like he is, and it's never ending. It's a living spring of water.

John Bytheway: 00:41:17 Oh, I love that.

Hank Smith: 00:41:18 Fantastic.

John Bytheway: 00:41:20 That is a great question to ask. Why covenants? Why not just a list of teachings? I just wrote that down, because covenants will connect us to Christ. And I think that was one of the things that

was so concerning during Covid was, yeah, you can go home and talk about things, but we need the sacrament. And so bishops were scrambling to make sure people could have the sacrament in their homes so that they could still have that covenant connection to Christ and renew that. Thank you for that, Jenet. And I'm going to ask my classes that, why not just a nice list of teachings?

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:41:56 To obey.
- John Bytheway: 00:41:58 Let's give a shout-out to Nicodemus too in verse 50.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:42:01 And let's do a shout-out for Nicodemus, isn't that so beautiful? How he stands up and witnesses.
- John Bytheway: 00:42:05 My favorite actor in The Chosen is Nicodemus. He's so good.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:42:10 He is a good actor. That's true.
- John Bytheway: 00:42:11 He's my favorite.
- Hank Smith: 00:42:12 And he's the one that stands up. "Maybe we should hear him out. How about that? Maybe we should hear him out." That's like, "Oh, man."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:42:18 Yes. "Do we judge any man before we hear him and know what he doeth?"
- Hank Smith: 00:42:22 Yeah.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:42:22 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 00:42:24 One of my favorite parts of chapter seven is when it sounds like the leadership of the Jews sends people to arrest him and they won't do it. They come back to the chief priest and the Pharisees, it's verse 45, and they ask him, "Why have you not brought him?" And they said in verse 46, "Never man spake like this man."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:42:42 Yeah, this is not an ordinary guy. I can't go arrest him.
- Hank Smith: 00:42:47 I can't go grab him. I mean everybody loves him and I kind of like him and he's saying really good things.
- John Bytheway: 00:42:53 And they're upset. Have we believed on him? Have the Pharisees believed on him, as if that's the standard?

Hank Smith: 00:43:00 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 00:43:00 If the Pharisees believe, then we can all jump in. Then Nicodemus is like, "Well, I kind of do."

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:43:07 Yeah, can't we just be fair a little bit?

Hank Smith: 00:43:11 Yeah. It's a great little moment. But, again, here's Jesus up here and here's them down here going through all these issues. It's fascinating to me. Chapter seven is a back and forth, I think, between Jesus up here and the people arguing with each other down below him.

John Bytheway: 00:43:26 And I think the whole fact that the beginning of John, that they were like, "Hey, we're going up to the feast," and Jesus says, "I'll join you later." And then he goes up in secret in verse 10 and let's talk about if there's a feast at hand, what has happened to the population of Jerusalem?

Hank Smith: 00:43:42 Yeah, yeah. It just swarms with people. Everybody is coming there. And it sounds like Jesus commandeers the temple grounds as his classroom.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:43:52 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 00:43:52 And it makes it tough for the Pharisees, because people are believing Jesus.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:43:55 Right. And the Sadducees is here directing the temple right there. Here's the political class, the ruling class, the Sadducees, and they are upset. I think, Hank, about this commandeering of the temple space. They're the ones over the temple. But this temple is absolutely central. I mean the temple, and we're going to get to where he is trying to tell them, "I am the fulfillment of the feast. I am actually the Feast of Tabernacles fulfilled here in the temple."

00:44:24 We're going to learn a few more powerful things. Chapter eight is one of the stories that was so striking to my husband in his very first reading of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. And of course here we have, "Early in the morning he came again into the temple and all the people came unto him and he sat down and taught them. And in the midst of that, the scribes and Pharisees bring a woman taken in adultery." I think it's interesting that John has these many powerful experiences with women that he highlights. You have John focusing on the

woman at the well and an actual dialogue and interchange with Jesus Christ with women.

00:45:00 Mary, his mother, of course, he starts John with that, Mary Magdalene, who will be the first witness of the resurrection, Mary and Martha. And he is teaching us great things about Jesus Christ and his relationship with women and these magnificent women. And here's a woman, again, not unlike all of us, who has sinned, so they're trying to trap him. "Master this woman was taken in adultery. Moses commanded in the law", remember the law that we're commemorating here, "that such should be stoned what sayest thou?"

00:45:31 And of course the question is, will he go against the law of Moses, or will he go against the Romans who have removed from them the power to use capital punishment, and this effort to trap him. And this remarkable Redeemer who stoops down and is writing on the ground as though he heard them not. And then he says to them, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." I just think of any of us in that place, if we're seeing someone accused or we ourselves are accused and even aware of our sins and the Savior saying, "Okay, whoever is without sin, you be the first to cast the stone. Go ahead."

00:46:18 And none of them can do it. I don't sense that this is an honest group of people, not one of them can be the first to cast that stone. And I don't know how long this process takes, but pretty soon they all walk away.

Hank Smith: 00:46:33 Being convicted by their own conscience.

John Bytheway: 00:46:35 Jenet, what you just said, that question's not honest. There's gotcha questions, there's Google questions, just information like, "Where's the nearest Five Guys?" my favorite Google question. And there's golden questions. They're not trying to learn truth here. They're trying to trap Jesus in a gotcha. They did this to Abinadi. What would Isaiah mean when he said, How beautiful upon the mountains Abinadi? Because you're kind of a gloomy Gus. They're gotcha questions. They're not about learning truth.

00:47:05 And I just loved how Jesus handled gotcha questions, because I feel like the whole parable of the Good Samaritan came as a result of a gotcha question. "Well, who's my neighbor?" Watch this. Because that was a big debate they had. They're not trying to learn the truth. Like you said, this story with your husband, what an incredible answer. "Let he who is without sin first cast a stone." And thankfully they had enough of a conscience that

one by one they left and said, "Look, I'm a sinner too." I mean I think that's why we all love the story.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:47:40 You said, John, that unveiling of the hypocrisy, he does that for us. He is so good to us. He will expose us in our dishonesty to ourselves and unveil our hypocrisy so that we can be healed. Now you hope they are healed. Isn't it beautiful that we know from the JST that she from ever after that was faithful and good and believed on his name and followed him. Just a beautiful...
- Hank Smith: 00:48:06 I love the way Jesus diffuses the situation. I'm sure it's pretty intense. Everybody's staring.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:48:12 Yes.
- Hank Smith: 00:48:13 Without answering. He walks away, kind of takes the attention off of the woman and onto him as he's kind of just on the ground writing.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:48:22 Yeah, yeah. Diffusing all of that so that there's space for him to ask this critical question.
- Hank Smith: 00:48:28 Instead of reacting. And I think it's a good life skill too, when you come into these situations that are pretty intense, learn to diffuse them, to calm things down, then call them all out for their hypocrisy. That's probably not what you do next. But I like the diffusing of the situation.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:48:44 It's so powerful. And there he is. They all leave and the woman is standing in the midst. This shamed, so shamed. I love what Jesus Christ does with us, because our ubiquitous experience with shame, where we enter into that deformed form of pride in a sense and feel ashamed and accused and how he says, "Where are those thine accusers?" And so often I'll think tender with me at my own weaknesses and feeling tempted to go into a place of shame and I can hear his voice say, "Where are your accusers? Hath no man condemned thee?"
- 00:49:21 And then he says, the only one who could have from a place of judgment condemned her because of his own purity, the only one who could have says, "Neither do I condemn thee. Go." And his just beautiful liberation. He is the great liberator, liberating us from shame, from the entrapment of sin, bearing it himself in a sense with us overcoming it and making us free. So, can't you hear him saying in John, "For God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God sent not his

son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved."

00:50:08 And he is just exhibiting it right here. That's who he is. I love Adam Miller's comments on this whole idea of judgment and law. It's so powerful for me to think about how natural it is for us to kind of divide the world into the law keepers, those who are worthy of what is good and those who are not. And he asked this really powerful question. The real question is, how do I relate to the law? Do I go around in my own efforts to keep away from my own shame or whatever saying, "Look, those are the people that don't keep the law. They're the losers. There are those that do keep the law and they're the winners and they're going to get the reward." And you can look around at church and see who's been the law keeper and who hasn't.

00:50:51 That's the way they are relating to the law. And Jesus Christ is transforming it. He's saying the law is to be used in the work of love. He is judging, but he's not judging who's worthier, who's not of his love. He's saying what is needed. That's how he's using the law, knowing that we will sin and reap consequences for our sins. And that he comes and answers it, not by accusing us, but saying what is needed to do what is needed? And what will help you to become good? So, he'll say, sin uses God's law to ask what is deserved. Grace uses God's law to ask what is needed. Here is Jesus Christ always returning good for evil.

00:51:40 That is how he fulfills the law, and the good that he returns is to help us become good. The law is used to judge what is needed, not to condemn, but we mortals, we can get into that behavioristic, perfectionistic, prove that we're somehow worthy or meriting something and use the law to judge ourselves or others or rank. And he is just turning that upside down. He's saying the law matters. The law matters, because it helps us know what is needed to help become good. It's used in the work of love, not in the work of ordering, condemning, ranking.

John Bytheway: 00:52:20 Do you know what else I love about this as a parenting application? Well, not just parenting, but just as a social skill. I just heard somebody say once there was some research that one of the things that was hard for teenagers was being reprimanded or corrected in front of their friends. And you noticed that Jesus didn't say, "Is this true?" While everybody was still standing there with the stone in their hand, he dismissed them first. So, I've underlined in verse nine, "Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst," and the saying that I heard was, we praise in public, but we correct in private. He dismissed the whole group before he talked to her

about that. And it's helped me as a parent to think if I need to say something to one of my kids, I don't do it in front of their friends. It's like, "Hi, can I talk to you for a minute in the laundry room?"

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:53:13 The laundry room's always a good room.
- John Bytheway: 00:53:15 Right, because like you said, "Oh, just imagine the shame of this woman and what was happening." And how he dismissed everybody first, I think taking her feelings into account is just beautiful.
- Hank Smith: 00:53:28 Yeah.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:53:28 Yes. So instructive.
- Hank Smith: 00:53:30 I brought a quote from Joseph Smith today and I've always loved it. He says this, "While one portion of the human race is judging and condemning the other without mercy, the great parent of the universe looks upon the whole family with fatherly care and paternal regard." Another quote from him related, "The nearer we get to our heavenly Father, the more we are disposed to look with compassion upon perishing souls. We feel we want to take them upon our shoulders and cast their sins behind our backs." And then just this statement is worth the price of admission here.
- 00:54:06 He says, "If you would have God have mercy on you, have mercy on one another." This wonderful merciful story is perfect for that. Out of the manual, it says, "When have you felt like the woman receiving mercy instead of condemnation from the Savior?" And then this other question, I'm glad that this is in the manual. "When have you been like the scribes and the Pharisees accusing, judging others, even when you yourself are not without sin?" Two powerful questions.
- John Bytheway: 00:54:36 Yeah, those are good ones.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:54:38 I loved that. All that we learned in this story. I was curious to hear Richard Holzapfel just mention that very near this place where the Savior's giving this most powerful teaching, Solomon had prayed before very close to this very spot. Here's 1 Kings 8:39, "Then hear thou in heaven, thy dwelling place and forgive and do and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest." So, just speaking of who God is, the great forgiver who gives what is needed to help us become good, who

liberates us from shame and the effects of sin in our hearts and enables us to live again and start again and be renewed.

- Hank Smith: 00:55:24 The manual also quotes Elder Renlund saying, "Surely the Savior did not condone adultery, but he also did not condemn the woman. He encouraged her to reform her life. She was motivated to change because of his compassion and mercy." We can learn so much from that in parenting, or in teaching, or in any sort of leadership. He didn't condone the action. He didn't condemn the person. He encouraged her to reform her life. And she, the person on the other end, was motivated because of compassion and mercy. Think of that as a parent or think of that as a leader in any organization.
- John Bytheway: 00:56:02 Or as a spouse. One of the things I love about my wife is she forgives quickly. She forgives and forgets. And what a great thing as a spouse to be forgiving.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:56:12 Yeah. His love is relentless in that sense, and it penetrates our shame and fear, the power of his love. And it is the power to change. The relentlessness of his love makes our lives relentlessly beautiful. It's just what he does and the power of that love.
- John Bytheway: 00:56:29 You rarely see someone criticized into righteousness.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:56:32 Yes. Yes. Yes.
- Hank Smith: 00:56:35 If I just criticize him enough, they'll turn their life around. That's not motivating.
- John Bytheway: 00:56:39 That's when you disappear. That's when you don't want to be around, is criticism. So, you hide, you go somewhere else. And he's so loving. Just I love the JST Edition, as you mentioned, Jenet, that believed on his name from that time forth because of his love.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:56:55 Yeah. Beautiful. Well, teaches me a lot how to be a better parent. I can say my natural instinct to criticize, to point out, to accuse, that word for Satan, right? The great accuser, another of his names, and how the Lord is never in that space. It's the opposite of that space. So, here he is in verse 12, "I am the light of the world." And of course basking in a sense, in the great lights that have been raised at the Feast of Tabernacles, those basins of light on the top of the big candlesticks. "And he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." These events are so beautifully juxtaposed. So, he's

given her the light of life, even as he's given them light to see their own sinfulness in accusing, and that he is the light that leads to greater life, taking us out of darkness.

- John Bytheway: 00:57:50 So, Feast of Tabernacles during the day. At night these huge celebrations with a huge amount of light for their time with these huge candelabras and then Jesus saying, "Just like the water, I am the light of the world. Those are impressive, but I am the light of the world." And it is just another way that I think the Feast of Tabernacles becomes a backdrop for those two metaphors, water and light.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:58:15 Yes, John, I'm so glad you mentioned it, because of course symbolically it's the cloud by day, fire by night.
- John Bytheway: 00:58:21 Another Moses thing.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:58:23 Yes. Here's them in the wilderness and he is their light completely in the dark of that desert, and yet he is the light of the whole world. He's saying, "As great as that was, symbolized in the candelabras, I am the light of the world." We can say lots about that, but there again in verse 15, he's going to say, "Ye judge after the flesh, I judge no man." We could think of John 12:47, "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." And then he says, "And yet if I judge, my judgment is true." His judgment is right in line with his beautiful mission.
- 00:59:06 "The spirit of the Lord is upon me to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance." His work is to set things right, to advocate for those who can't take care of themselves, to defeat death and hell. That is the work he is doing, and his work will not stop until all things have been made right. Then he's going to tell us, "My judgment is true." His way of doing right is true, "Because I do what the father tells me to do."
- John Bytheway: 00:59:37 I love the two witnesses thing here in 17 and 18, that there are two witnesses. My father, I am the one that bear witness of myself, the father that sent me beareth witness of me.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:59:51 Yeah. There's the two witnesses, right John? The Father and the Son.
- Hank Smith: 00:59:55 I'd love to remember verse 15, "Your judgment is of the flesh. It is flawed."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:00:02 Yes, yes.

Hank Smith: 01:00:03 Your judgment is so flawed. You've got to remember that. Anytime you've got to make a judgment call about the situations or about people, that happens all the time in life. If we can remember our judgment is flawed. He says, "My judgment is not flawed. It is true." Your judgment is-

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:00:19 "Ye see through a glass darkly," right? That's how we all are. It's why we depend so much on the spirit to see.

John Bytheway: 01:00:27 Yeah. And with that we can make a righteous judgment if we apply Moses seven and righteous judgment, what are we going to need? You just said it, Jenet, we're going to need the spirit because we don't have all the facts.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:00:40 Yes. Cannot see. So, here he is going to bear witness of the father again. So, 18 and 19, as you referenced already, John, these witnesses and then 23, "I am not of this world," and he's just continually 27, 28, "I do nothing of myself, but as the father hath taught me, I speak these things." So, this beautiful witness. In the midst of that I love in 21 and 24, how he says, "Ye shall seek me and shall die in your sins. Whither I go you cannot come." So, he's foreshadowing again his own death, and again that reference, "You will die in your sins." You'll seek me, and what you need is my redemption. Don't die without my redemption. Don't die in that sense in your sins. Then in verse 24 he says, "For if you believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."

01:01:40 And he's just done this incredible act in taking this woman and showing that he can forgive sins. He alone in a sense can forgive sins and he's pleading with them, "Do not die in your sins." If you believe not that I am he, who I just showed you who I am, then you're left in that place of damnation in a sense, not able to grow, not able to be liberated as she had been by what he offered in freeing her by the power of his atoning love and inviting her not to sin again. So, just beautiful to think what he's teaching us about his power to forgive sins.

Hank Smith: 01:02:20 Jenet, it sounds like he's getting some traction here. Look at verse 30. "Many believed on him." So, there's some people who are going, "I'm in."

John Bytheway: 01:02:26 "This is good."

Hank Smith: 01:02:26 "This is the right way." Yeah.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:02:32 Which is powerful, because he is bearing witness of the Father and they wouldn't have understood that in their traditional understandings of who the Messiah is, this understanding of the Son of God, and yet they can feel the power of it, the truth of it, I am sure. So, then we get to that most 31, 32, I'll just read 32, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." This is my husband's probably all time favorite verse in the New Testament, but he was UT Austin campus and they have the Texas Tower in the middle of that quad there at that huge campus. Around the middle area of it is inscribed these words, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." And he said the first time he saw it, he's walking by and he thought, "That's what science does for us, right?"

01:03:20 He's trying to understand what this means, not knowing it's scripture but thinking, "Oh yeah, the more we understand the laws of nature, so to speak, then we can act on them and they liberate us into disease free and all of that." And then he read them here for the first time knowing where they come from, the words of Jesus Christ, and is able to see He is the great liberator. Every one of us desperately needs to be free from guilt, free from selfishness, free from the bondage of bad habits. We spend so much of our time trapped in victimhood or whatever it is, and he is the one who liberates us by the truth. So, he is the liberator. We know from section 93, he is the spirit of truth. He is truth, and the truth he enables us to see becomes the foundation of our liberation.

01:04:17 It's just the truth about our relationships from a family lens. When we can be honest with ourselves, when we can see our part in the difficulties in our relationships, then it liberates us to have the relationships we so desire. It takes the courage to face the truth and to be honest, but it is the path of liberation and there is no other way. There's just no other way but the path of truth in order to be free to become and experience all that we need to, all that we yearn to have, and he frees us in every way. He frees us by enabling truth. He frees us by taking us from shame. He frees us by opening the gate to heaven all the ways that Christ is the great liberator and he is the spirit of truth.

Hank Smith: 01:05:09 I wrote John 14:6 where this says, "You shall know the truth." And later on in John 14, he says, "I am the truth."

John Bytheway: 01:05:16 I am the truth.

Hank Smith: 01:05:16 "I am the way and the truth. You shall know me and I will make you free." Kind of changes the verse a little bit.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:05:23 Hank, that's so powerful. It's so powerful because he's talking about the truth here and then he says, "I am the truth." And that's where we all end up. We all end up in this broken place where Christ alone can reconcile the irreconcilable. As much as we might try to live the truth or do it, which is what he's inviting us to do, we all end up in a place where we need what he alone in his being, who brings together justice and mercy, who brings together all of it, all the contraries are brought together in Christ himself. He is the great reconciler of all things. So, I love that you added that. This is really powerful.

John Bytheway: 01:06:04 Yeah, and I love that it comes from a question. They ask him, "How will we know the way?" And he says, "I am the way, the truth and the life." And I put in my margin there. He didn't say, "Find your own truth." He said, "I am the way. I am the truth." The response is so not where he was.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:06:25 Again.

John Bytheway: 01:06:27 We're Abraham's seed. Oh my goodness.

Hank Smith: 01:06:29 We were never in. How are you going to make us free?

John Bytheway: 01:06:32 Look around. See that Roman dude over there? What do you mean we were never in bondage?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:06:37 Isn't that so interesting, the paradox? And I should just mention here that Frederick Douglass once gave a remarkable speech about what the 4th of July meant to the slave. And just to think of us celebrating the 4th of July, all men created equal at a time when that was not the case. And he actually references these verses and says, "You talk about being the sons of Washington, but slaves are building the monument to Washington." And he's actually turning back to these biblical verses. How real it is that all of us are in need of the liberator, all of us are in need of what he alone can do, all of us are in bondage. And I love how he says, "The servant abideth not in the house forever, but the son abideth, he is the one who will make us free. If the son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. With Christ all of us."

01:07:35 It's so beautiful to have Terry Warner's powerful insights in Bonds That Make Us Free about what happens when we sin against others. When we see them in a way that is not truthful, then we are in bondage to our own perceptions. You know how you just get in a trap in the box, he'll use that reference of how we see others by the way we are treating them, and we're

trapped, unable to truly see them as they are. And how Christ and his truth is always the liberator who removes us. We feel trapped like, "There is no way. I can't see this any different. This person's so aggravating and so frustrating and so difficult," not realizing that we ourselves are creating the vision that we have of them and it's trapping us in this place where we think we can't get to freedom and peace in our relationships.

- John Bytheway: 01:08:25 Are these two verses together just another evidence that they were looking for more of a political Messiah, for someone to free them from their sins? Because he says, "The truth shall make you free." And Jenet, you just said from sin, from bondage of sin, and they're saying their answer is political. "We're Abraham's seed, never in bondage to any man." I mean is that what they mean by that?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:08:47 It is confusing a little bit, because you're like, "Oh no, there were lots of times where you were in bondage to different people," right? Carried off.
- John Bytheway: 01:08:54 So, maybe they are meaning more of a spiritual way, but it sounds like they're answering in a political way and not, no, the freedom I'm offering you is more than just the Romans or whoever our current-
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:09:07 They keep referencing, Abraham is our father, and it's natural for us as human beings to resist the need for redemption. Our pride is just so part of us. By saying, "But I descend from this group." Even if we don't describe it that way, we'll think, "But I'm this quality of person," or, "I'm meant for this kind of life," or, "This is because of the amazing people that I come from. This is who I am." And so it's almost like even if they were in bondage to different political entities, they were still the seed of Abraham, which made them chosen. And it's like they're suggesting, "Why would we need redemption? We're the children of Abraham." And he's saying, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. I was the seed promised to him who would be the redeemer. And yet you cannot see me in your resistance to needing a redeemer."
- John Bytheway: 01:09:59 And I like that verse 39 of, it's not about your pedigree chart, it's about are you acting like the children of Abraham? Are you doing the works of Abraham, is the question. And it's kind of like I think John and his epistles uses the phrase, "You become the sons of God." And as a kid, I used to think, "Wait, I thought we were all children of God. We just sang that in primary." But it's like, "Well, now you try to act that way and you're not acting

like Abraham's children. If you were, you'd do the works of Abraham."

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:10:32 Yes. Like it's abiding in that covenant and they are not keeping the covenant. How could they not know the fulfiller of the covenant, the being with whom they covenanted in front of them? It's abiding in the covenant. It's guarding that relationship with God. That's what it means to be Abraham's seed, is a covenant keeper, abiding in the covenant, and they have rejected him.
- Hank Smith: 01:11:03 They say they're not in bondage at all. And Jesus says, "Do you sin at all?" And they go, "Yeah." "Well, you're a servant of sin." And he even says in verse 40, "You're seeking to kill me. You need a liberator. This is not the works of Abraham."
- John Bytheway: 01:11:17 And then to go to the children of God thing, verse 42, "If God were your father, you would love me." And maybe if you're following God.
- Hank Smith: 01:11:25 And then the name-calling starts, they're so angry.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:11:28 Yes. Isn't that amazing that they first in 44, he's juxtaposing this idea of truth and he's saying, "The devil is the liar from the beginning." And maybe the greatest lie is that rejection of need for redemption. I think Satan is so the ultimate narcissist in refusing to need a redeemer. That was his whole plan, not to need redemption. And here he is, "He speaketh of his own, he is a liar and the father of it." So, he's juxtaposing that with, "He is the truth and the truth will set you free."
- 01:12:06 And the adversary is the opposition of truth. And that has to do with our willingness to see our need for redemption. The great lie that we tell ourselves is, as we were talking about in relating to the law, is I can somehow save myself by being all of these things. The great lie is how I relate to the law. Do I see in it Christ is the fulfillment? The deadness of the law to me without Christ as my redeemer.
- Hank Smith: 01:12:36 "We don't need redemption, and you're crazy." That's verse 48. "You're a Samaritan and have a devil."
- John Bytheway: 01:12:41 Samaritan.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:12:45 Which, John, isn't that amazing, because you already referenced the parable. It's so beautiful to have those early Christian interpretations of the Good Samaritan where there's a

recognition that he was referencing himself. He is the one who heals. And so it's so ironic, and I love that John has this here, they call him the Samaritan, and in fact, he will call himself the Good Samaritan.

- Hank Smith: 01:13:09 In Luke 10. But that's supposed to be an insult in verse 48.
- John Bytheway: 01:13:11 Yeah.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:13:12 Yes.
- John Bytheway: 01:13:14 And I love that, "Ye are of your father the devil." There is a footnote in the Book of Mormon that takes you here and it's when Moroni is writing a letter to Ammoron and he's bargaining about doing a prisoner exchange possibly. And he says, "But it supposeth me, I write concerning these things in vain. It supposeth me that thou are the child of hell." And I always look at my class and say, "Would Jesus talk that way?" Look at the footnote, and it takes you to John 8:44, "Ye are of your father, the devil." So, he was calling it like it is, and I think it's you're following the devil. I mean you're literally, we are all spirit children of God, but you're following the devil right now, what you're trying to do.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:13:59 Yeah. In his falsehood.
- Hank Smith: 01:14:01 It seems like the end of this chapter is they're spiraling down, getting more upset, more angry with him, and he's holding his ground until the end of the chapter.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:14:11 Yeah. It's so beautiful how he says, "Art thou greater than our father Abraham?" Because he talks about, "If any man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death." There's the beautiful foreshadowing of his resurrection, but, "Art thou greater than our father Abraham?" And then how he says, "Abraham," in 56, "rejoiced to see my day." And it's just so tender, I think, to think of his relationship with Abraham and Sarah. Like this man with whom he covenanted, "I will come through you, through your seed, and in that all the nations of the earth will be blessed." And all those, the covenant children of God, will be called your posterity and how he loves Abraham. And then he says, "Before Abraham was, I am." Wow. And that's just more than they can take. And they're going to say later, "Just tell us who you are." And here he said it over and over and over again.
- John Bytheway: 01:15:04 And over and over again, and they didn't hear Him. Yeah.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:15:07 And they hate it. They refuse to receive him as who he is.

Hank Smith: 01:15:13 And they took up stones to cast at him.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:15:15 Yes. So, amazing to end this section. I love how Richard Holzapfel will talk about He is the fulfillment of the Festival of Tabernacles. And it's just so beautiful to think of Zacharia, the book of Zacharia, which is foretelling the Messiah's coming. He's the one that will foretell him coming into Jerusalem on a donkey. When he comes, so it's Passover time, they enact the symbols of the Feast of Tabernacles with the palm fronds that they're waving and all of those things.

01:15:43 That's hearkening back to the Feast of Tabernacles. But in Zacharia 9 through 14, it connects all of these things. His coming then to the coming that will happen in the latter-day, our day. It talks about the life giving waters that would accompany the Messiah. "Living waters will go out to Jerusalem. The Lord will be king over all the earth and all." And that's where we hear the holiness to the Lord written on everything, and the entire society will become sacred. So, it's beautiful that these elements, the gathering at the temple, light, water, the kingship of the Lord, holiness, coalesce in the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles, which looks back to the wandering in the wilderness at the dedication of Solomon's temple, and looks forward to the second coming of the millennium when Jesus used, as he's using all these symbols, to teach that he is the fulfillment of all of this.

01:16:43 So, I love thinking about we will, as he comes again, and the fulfillment of all of this, the Feast of Tabernacles pointing us to that great day of his millennial reign. And he stood up there to say, "I am He. I am the fulfillment."

John Bytheway: 01:16:59 They took up stones to cast at him when he said, "Before Abraham was, I am." And it's kind of an interesting point, because sometimes my students have asked me, "Wait a minute, I thought you couldn't kill... I thought that's why they had to deliver Jesus to the Romans, because they couldn't do their own capital punishment?" And I asked Kelly Ogden that question, and he said that, "Well, this is more like mob behavior to stone somebody."

Hank Smith: 01:17:26 This isn't the legal system.

John Bytheway: 01:17:27 Right. And that helped me kind of clarify, okay, because in a stoning you might not be able to see who was the one who

delivered the fatal blow or whatever, as horrible as it is to even talk about it. But that was mob behavior. When they delivered Jesus to be crucified, they needed official capital punishment, and the Romans are the only ones who could do that. So, I thought that was an interesting way to think of those two.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:17:53 Yeah, taking matters into their own hands.
- Hank Smith: 01:17:56 Yeah. He always finds a way out of these situations, "Going through the midst of them and passed by."
- John Bytheway: 01:18:01 Right.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:18:01 Yes.
- Hank Smith: 01:18:02 So, he just finds a way out. Man, we just keep getting great chapters after great chapters here.
- John Bytheway: 01:18:10 Please join us for part two of this podcast.



- John Bytheway: 00:01 Welcome to part two with Dr. Jenet Erickson. John 7 through 10.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:07 Here's this chapter nine where we start out with this, Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth, and his disciples asked him saying, "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents?" And you just read in those questions, here is that world belief that suffering is punishment and that suffering would not exist at all if someone, you, me, the blind man, the blind man's parents, Adam and Eve, whoever, hadn't deserved to suffer in the first place. So, they're clearly from that frame of mind that suffering is a just punishment, that suffering is an accusation from God. And here, the Savior just answers, "Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest." What a story. It just cuts through like a two-edged sword into the truth.
- John Bytheway: 01:02 Following up with what we just talked about, these themes of light and water, what's going to happen with this man who lives in the dark because he's blind? What's going to happen? Light and water, here they come.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:18 At the Pool of Siloam, no less, right?
- John Bytheway: 01:18 It all ties in. Mm-hmm.
- Hank Smith: 01:20 Jenet, I think it's applicable for our listeners too who when something bad happens, we often think, "What did I do wrong? What did I do wrong to deserve this?" And Jesus would say, "Nothing. This is part of the plan."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:34 Yeah, it's so interesting that loss and difficulty are woven in to the fabric of our mortal experience. He doesn't cause them as Elder Holland so clearly taught. He doesn't cause these things. He answers them. So, here's Jesus Christ, who rather than seeing the blind's man suffering as a punishment, sees it as an occasion for him to enter in and bring healing. He doesn't accuse. He just judges what is needed and offers that to him. He doesn't cause suffering. He responds to it, and it feels like he's

always inviting us into that work of love, his work of love to respond to the reality of suffering.

02:14 So, here we covenant at the Waters of Mormon to bear with those that suffer to mourn with those that mourn and comfort those that are sad and needing comfort. It's like he's calling us into his work to offer grace and healing and redemption in the face of the reality of suffering. I love these words, it can in God's hands, this is Adam Miller, be repurposed for growth and progress. It can teach and strengthen and empower. All the difficulties in our lives can be repurposed in his hands for growth and progress, for strength and empowerment. That is just to know who he is, is such a miracle.

Hank Smith: 02:54 Your trials can be repurposed. What is it John, 2 Nephi 2?

John Bytheway: 02:59 Consecrate thine affliction for thy gain.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 03:00 For thy gain. Oh.

John Bytheway: 03:02 Again, Lehi talking to Jacob, yeah, that he'll repurpose all this. You've grown up seeing the rudeness of your brothers trying to kill your other brother, trying to kill me.

Hank Smith: 03:12 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 03:13 They call it I think the law of retribution, that there's the law of the harvest, there's the doctrine of retribution that this was so much in their minds that, well, somebody must have sinned for this guy to be blind. I think that we see Jesus, not just here but in other places, he talks about the Tower at Siloam that fell on people. Do you think they were all sinners? Trying to help them disconnect trials from a certain behavior or something is something that we see Jesus doing again and again, and this is just another place for that. Sometimes bad things happen that aren't a result of you doing something. They're just a result of welcome-to-a-fallen-world type of a thing. But as you mentioned, God can repurpose that. I feel like all of us could bear testimony that we've learned the most from our hardest times.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 04:05 It's really important to realize this miracle is pretty significant because they're later going to say not anyone, not Elijah, not Elisha, no one has healed a man who was born blind, that from birth was blind, which I think is so beautiful because it's teaching us that Jesus Christ has power even over the things that we inherit, so to speak, like that we bring into this life, the

traumas and difficulties that we bring in, he has power to transform us and to heal us. But what's going to happen is this miracle and the miracle of Lazarus being raised from the dead are going to be the two that just solidify for the Sanhedrin they must kill him. He just can't be. This being who can do this level of miracle, we just can't have because it's going to upset the power dynamics that they live in, in their Roman power. So, this is a really significant miracle. Jesus puts mud on his eyes, says, "Go wash in the Pool of Siloam." It's so beautiful. And he goes, he washes, and it says, "And he came seeing."

- John Bytheway: 05:11 He washes the world out of his eyes with living water, with Siloam is living water. It's, oh, what, the pool of Siloam, it means sent. Jesus was sent. Maybe that's how we look at it. Living water, he is the living water, and I'm looking at, in the Old Testament, they called it Shiloah is Siloam. You'll see Isaiah saying, "Because you refuse the waters of Shiloah that goes softly, I'm going to send an Assyrian tsunami." Right? What happens when we refuse the living water? Here come the Assyrians. That's Isaiah 8:6 in the footnote there. But I love how this all ties up together.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 05:54 Yes. I love how you describe he washes away the world, and then he's actually prepared to see the living water, who the living water is. So, now we see him come to accept Jesus for who he is. And so, Jesus has brought light, physical and spiritual light, the miracle of the Feast of Tabernacles allowing him to see.
- John Bytheway: 06:15 After testifying that he was the light of the world, he just gives this man real light. I was listening to Dr. Kent Brown. He said that there is a word that they could have used that Jesus smeared his eyes with clay, but he used anointed because they were in the shadow of the temple there, and this guy was washed in the shadow of the temple there, then received sight. I thought, "Oh, that's pretty good. He could have used another word, but he anointed his eyes with clay." I thank Dr. Brown for that one.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 06:47 Well, that's covenant language again. In covenants, we grow. In covenants, we experience conversion. In covenant power, we're changed to be able to see and receive evermore of the Redeemer's light and power and influence in our lives. I love that anointing word.
- John Bytheway: 07:02 Yeah. One of the places, if you've ever gone to the Holy Land, is just so inspiring to stand at the south steps because it sounds like if he set him to the Pool of Siloam, this is exactly where you

would go. So, maybe when Jesus left the temple, it was right there and then sent this man down Siloam and there's stairs so he could have gone there and washed there. It was just a recent story about how they're working on restoring that pool of Siloam to, what was it, Hank, a couple of Olympic pool sizes? It was pretty big where the Hezekiah's Tunnel comes out. But I love how 9 fits with 7 and 8, water and light.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 07:41 Oh yes, in this beautiful miracle and what he will do for us. Hank, you have to love what happens in this dialogue with the family and everybody else, right? It's so embarrassing.
- Hank Smith: 07:49 Oh man, when he starts coming back. I was going to say these conversations when he comes back seeing, oh, I love them. Every time I read them, I just, I kind of laugh.
- John Bytheway: 07:59 Well, he's of age... Yeah.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 08:01 Isn't John plain that way? I mean, you just see these plain statements throughout John. This is full of them.
- Hank Smith: 08:07 He's walking around, he can see, and they're like, "Hey, that looks like the guy who's blind," and others are like, "That is him." He's like, "It's me."
- John Bytheway: 08:14 Nah, it just looks like him.
- Hank Smith: 08:16 Yeah. How were your eyes opened? This is my favorite part. He said, "A man named Jesus made clay, anointed mine eyes. I went to the Pool of Siloam, I washed." And they said, "Where is he?" And he said, "I don't know. I've never seen him."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 08:27 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 08:29 Just a great little dialogue. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 is really fun because he's so happy.
- John Bytheway: 08:36 To be put out of the synagogue, what does that mean in verse 22?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 08:40 I think there was this strong ostracism, ostracization, right? You will be ostracized from this community that's bound up in synagogue or the neighborhood, yeah. Hard.
- Hank Smith: 08:51 I imagine that this is a pretty big miracle that everyone's talking about it because it gets the Pharisees involved because of course it was the Sabbath Day when Jesus healed him. They

can't get Jesus, but they go find the blind guy, the formerly blind man, and they bring him in.

- John Bytheway: 09:08 Instead of saying, "We're so happy for you. This is wonderful."
- Hank Smith: 09:10 Yeah.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 09:12 Yeah, give God the praise. This man is a sinner. Right? They're insisting on that, and then I love how he just says so plainly, "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not."
- Hank Smith: 09:21 I know not. Yeah.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 09:21 One thing I know, whereas I was blind, now I see. Can't you hear the beautiful language in that hymn, Amazing Grace, right, as this enslaver, this man on ships that would take slaves and seeing his own conversion, I was blind, but now I see, and how many of us know the miracle of the fruits of Jesus Christ in our lives being blind, and then we can see.
- Hank Smith: 09:49 When we bear testimony too, Jenet, this is just so beautiful. There's things I don't know. It's okay to say that.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 09:55 Yes.
- Hank Smith: 09:56 There's things I don't know. Whether he's a sinner or not, I don't know. But here's what I know. Here's what I've experienced.
- John Bytheway: 10:02 That's very 1 Nephi 11:17. I don't know the meaning of all things, but I know, look, God loves his children.
- Hank Smith: 10:08 I know some things.
- John Bytheway: 10:10 And here's what I know. That's good.
- Hank Smith: 10:12 I've told my children and my students it's okay to not know answers. Right? If the qualification for having a testimony is you have to know everything, no one's going to have a testimony. But there are some things that you can know for sure because you were there. What did he say? "I know I was blind, now I see." What are they going to say? "Nuh-uh." If I remember being blind, I remember seeing now.
- John Bytheway: 10:32 That's a testimony of experience, that's of evidence. It's right there. How do I say, "Okay, forget it. I'm blind"? How do you deny that?

Hank Smith: 10:39 A person with an experience is never at the mercy of a person with an opinion. We know this man is a sinner. They don't know that. That's just their opinion of Jesus. He's like, "Well, I had an experience with him." To me, this is powerful.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 10:54 It is so powerful. I love how you're tying it together. It's interesting that they accuse him again in verse 34 and say, "Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?"

John Bytheway: 11:05 That's another judgment, isn't it, how do you know, and that's such pride.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 11:09 Yes. Even though he's saying, "Since the world began, it was not heard that any man opened the eyes of one more." I mean, he's just saying from scripture, "This has never happened before. If he were not of God, he couldn't do this." And then will you be teaching us, and Jesus hears that He's been cast out. It's just such a tender thing. He knows this man's been ostracized for simply bearing witness, Hank, as you said, of what had happened to him. And Jesus finds him and says, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" So, interesting, we don't know the answers to all things, but we know who. We know who we can go to who is the way and who is the life. We don't know how.

11:52 I think about wonderful friends who've experienced same-sex attraction or questions of gender dysphoria and that feeling of like, is this an accusation from God or parents, right? A child whose life they've envisioned a certain way and they wrestle with that, and what does this mean for this child's life, and to hear the Lord say, "Neither hath sinned, but that the works of God may be manifest." And we may not know the way, how all of this stuff can be reconciled or figured out, but what we can know is he says, "Lord, I believe in you." Here, he's meeting the Savior, and the Savior says, "Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee." And he says, "Lord, I believe thou art the way." Just such an answer to the issues in our lives. Ty Mansfield's beautiful testimony, just stay with me, I will show you the way, how the Lord does that for us and the things that seem irreconcilable.

Hank Smith: 12:52 What a day for this blind man. Can you imagine waking up that day thinking it's going to be just a normal every day?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 12:59 Oh, what a day.

Hank Smith: 12:59 He can see, and now he's debating the elite of the society. And I love how he takes them on.

John Bytheway:	13:06	He's good at it.
Hank Smith:	13:06	Yes, he is.
John Bytheway:	13:07	I'm thinking, "This guy, he can craft a sentence, this guy." Right?
Hank Smith:	13:14	They said, "Tell us again what happened." He said, "I told you already and you didn't hear. You want me to tell you again? Would you be his disciple?" "You're his disciple. We follow Moses." He calls them out. He says, "You guys are in a tough place, aren't you? You don't like him, yet he's doing miracles. That's a tough place for you guys to be in."
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	13:30	Yes, yes. Even greater than Moses did. Yeah, this powerful, my husband loves to quote that, "He is of age. Ask him."
Hank Smith:	13:38	Yeah.
John Bytheway:	13:39	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	13:39	We'll just say, "You're dragging us in here to ask us about our son being healed. Well, he's of age, ask him." But they did not want to see the truth. So, isn't it amazing that the Savior...
John Bytheway:	13:49	They wouldn't take the answer he wanted.
Hank Smith:	13:50	They wouldn't take the answer.
John Bytheway:	13:51	So, okay, fine. Ask him again. Yeah.
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	13:54	So, here's the Savior, the last verse is, "For judgment, to make things right, I am come into this world that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind." He's pulling out when we think we see, which is how our natural pride can be, how blind we truly are, and yet when we recognize our blindness, we create space for the redeemer of the world to help us see. That's what his work is, to liberate us into the truth that we might see. And they're angry. Right? Are we blind also? And he says, "If you recognize your blindness, you wouldn't be sinning, but because you say you see, you are in sin."
Hank Smith:	14:41	You are blind.
John Bytheway:	14:42	It reminds me of Isaiah's call in Isaiah 6 and in 2 Nephi 16 where Lord says, this is Paul Hoskinson, "Declare the heart of his people to be fat." It says make the heart. He says, "That could

be declared." Their eyes, they have closed lest they should see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their heart and be converted and I should heal them. And these, they won't see. Their eyes, they have closed. It's a perfect example of I'm standing right here and their eyes, they have closed. And if they could only see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their heart, they could be converted and I could heal them. And that call of Isaiah is repeated in every one of the gospels, and in the book of Acts, portions of it, the see, hear, understand, be converted and be healed. So, I love that.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 15:32 Yeah. Requires us seeing our blindness in order to be open to seeing which is so interesting.
- John Bytheway: 15:37 Because they think they see, but they're blind and that's what he's telling them.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 15:39 Yes.
- Hank Smith: 15:40 And there's some in verse 16 that are kind of trying to push, I imagine this is Nicodemus, how can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? So, there's some of them saying, "I am seeing something."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 15:52 Yes. I can't deny.
- Hank Smith: 15:53 Yeah. Joseph of Arimathea going, "Come on, guys, we're seeing some pretty wonderful things here."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 16:00 Which takes us to John's whole purpose, right, to show these signs. It's evidence all over the place that he is the Redeemer, but a shutting of the eye, a refusal to see it.
- Hank Smith: 16:11 And John, it's just a fantastic story. It really is. The healing of the blind man is so much to learn. Yeah, if you go slow and really get into it, it's powerful.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 16:21 I love the Bible video that puts all of it together into one video. It's just really powerful, this story. Well, we get to go to chapter 10, and we learn right at the beginning that this Savior is coming back. This is the Feast of Dedication. This is Hanukkah. This is the commemoration of the dedication of the temple, of things being sanctified, of the temple itself being sanctified. As part of that, there's some suggestion that they would've read Ezekiel 34, which is about shepherds as part of the Feast of Dedication, actually is part of what they were doing in their synagogue reading for the year. They would've been at Ezekiel 34 at this

time. So, it's interesting that the Savior comes in and says he's going to teach them about the good shepherd.

- 17:07 So, he says, "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheephold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep." And he's going to later say, "I am the door." It's interesting to think about clearly there's strong clarity that he is the only way, that redemption is only through Christ, that we must all enter through that narrow space of honesty in receiving the covenant power of Jesus Christ in our lives to be changed. But it's also interesting that he says there will be efforts to climb up another way. There will be efforts to deny our need for a redeemer, to deny that he is the only way, to try to do it ourselves or some other way, and he says, "The same is a thief and a robber."
- 18:03 And then he just speaks of the love of the shepherd for the sheep. They know his voice. He leadeth them. They follow him. Again, they know his voice, and you get this strong sense of the shepherding at that time and the shepherding in the east where a shepherd would know his sheep. Of course, these are the two great biblical occupations, shepherding and farming, and the sheep are so important to the economy because the vital products that are derived from sheep, but in the near east, right, the shepherd doesn't use dogs or whips or horses or trucks to drive the sheep. He calls.
- 18:42 There's a very intimate relationship where he knows them by name and this is covenant. We can't hear anything else but this hewed covenant relationship that President Nelson is teaching us where he knows us each by name. We are marked by him, right, as belonging to him, in covenant relationship with him, a bonded working relationship with him, the shepherd working with the sheep to get them to pastures that are safe, to keep them growing and protected, and that he is the good shepherd who will become a sheep, who will become the lamb. It's just so powerful that he will take on himself. These lambs that we hear in Isaiah, they're stubborn. All we like sheep have gone astray, right? They were so dependent, like lambs that are so dependent.
- 19:36 My dad was a sheep rancher, and so my early years were spent on sheep fields, and he'll describe this effort to keep lambs. That's what you just spent your whole time doing, trying to keep them safe because it's the one animal that has no defense. He remembers looking back up at the hill and as he's gathered them and he's trying to get them off the mountain, and there's

a mother and a baby, and there's a coyote like just four feet from that mother, and she's just stamping her feet. The only thing she can do is stamp her feet. She has no teeth to bite or has no way to defend.

- 20:10 And so, our utter dependence, even as we're stubborn and go our way and how much we need the Shepherd, and then He will become the lamb, the meek lamb who, in a sense, submits defenselessly, in a sense, to death and does not fight back. He is as a sheep before the shearers is dumb. He opened not his mouth and takes upon himself our experience and overcomes it. So, this shepherd, sheep, what could be a stronger allegory, metaphor for our relationship with Him?
- Hank Smith: 20:52 And John started that. In John chapter one, you have John the Baptist seeing Jesus.
- John Bytheway: 20:57 Behold, the Lamb of God.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 20:59 Isn't that amazing?
- Hank Smith: 21:00 Verse 11, he says, "I'm the good shepherd, and the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." That's unheard of. Shepherds are great and they love their sheep, but they're probably not going to give their life to save a sheep because it's a sheep. The equation makes no sense for him to give his life for this sheep, and in the same way he is way above us in experience and in knowledge, and yet he is the one who's going to lay down his life for ordinary people.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 21:25 For his sheep.
- Hank Smith: 21:25 Yeah, like us.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 21:26 Yeah, so powerful. I mean, the gap is that profound as sheep to shepherd, right?
- Hank Smith: 21:30 Shepherd, yeah.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 21:33 I think we can assume they were pretty upset when they heard him say I am the good shepherd because if they're hearing Ezekiel 34, which the religious leaders are supposed to be the shepherds of the people, and we hear in Ezekiel 34, "Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds, 'Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that to feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks?'" And then he just says, "The diseased ye have not strengthened." You haven't healed that which was sick. You

haven't bound up that which was broken. Here is the good shepherd being described, right, in Ezekiel 34, he will bind up, he will heal, he will seek that which is lost. And so, he's juxtaposing who the true shepherd is against what they are, these false shepherds.

22:19 Ezekiel 34 is just so powerful in drawing upon to help clarify this really profound distinction he's making, the good shepherd from those who have with force and with cruelty have you ruled them, Ezekiel 34. So, I think when they heard the good shepherd, they understood what he was saying there as distinguishing between who the leaders were and who they should be.

Hank Smith: 22:46 What kind of leaders they should be, yeah.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 22:49 I loved reading this, thinking about our prophets as good shepherds, and Sister Dew just gave a devotional address a few months ago in Hawaii at BYU-Hawaii, and it was so powerful about prophets. But she asked this really powerful question. She says, "Is there anyone you trust to give you more inspired advice, unaffected by personal agenda, than the first presidency and quorum of the 12 apostles?" Can you think of any journalist, talk show host, celebrity, athlete or politician you trust more? How about a YouTube celeb or star of stage screen? She says, "In each of these cases, they want something from us." Our vote, our money or support, they all have personal agendas. Prophets of God do not. Their agenda is the Lord's, and yet too often we listen to them last. So, just thinking of the shepherds called of God who have literally given themselves to the sheep in pattern of the great shepherd.

Hank Smith: 23:52 We watched President Monson go from wiggling his ears down to barely able to stand up for three minutes at the pulpit he gave his life.

John Bytheway: 24:03 Go find Sheri Dew's talk called Prophets Can See Around Corners. I want them to watch the whole thing and listen to that. So, thank you for bringing that up because yeah, what's the motive behind it? This good shepherd loves the sheep to the point he'll lay down his life for the sheep. I put in my margin when he says he goeth before them in verse four, and you have experience with this because of your father that I just put in my margin leading, not hurting, because like you said, I think in Western cultures we herd sheep with dogs in Ford F-150s. No offense, Hank. And in ancient cultures they lead the sheep.

Hank Smith: 24:45 It's my favorite car.

John Bytheway: 24:45 Yeah. And I thought, "What an interesting difference between leading and herding." But I like what you said because I hadn't considered that even in Western cultures, we have to protect them. I like what you said too, Hank, not I am *a* good shepherd. I am *the* good shepherd.

Hank Smith: 25:03 The, yes.

John Bytheway: 25:06 I'll give my life for the sheep. Whoa. So, thank you for the Ezekiel 34 tie-in too.

Hank Smith: 25:11 Yeah. Jenet, I love what you said that your dad probably got so tired of taking care of these lambs. Right? They wander. They're probably not thinking. He wants to protect them. Right? He wants to keep them safe, but they do just the opposite of what he's hoping they'll do.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 25:29 Yeah. I'm just thinking of Isaiah saying, "All we like sheep have gone astray."

John Bytheway: 25:32 Sheep have gone astray.

Hank Smith: 25:33 Gone astray, yeah. Did you ever have to watch that and go, "Dad, my goodness"?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 25:40 Yeah, all the time. Yeah, it was really remarkable to just think that thought, "Please just stay where you need to go. Don't go off. Stay in this safe place. There's a coyote three feet from you or whatever. Stay in this safe place."

Hank Smith: 25:52 Stay in the safe area.

John Bytheway: 25:54 There was a profound talk. I still remember it. We're talking 1989, Sister Jayne B. Malan gave this talk called the Summer of the Lambs. Oh my goodness. Go listen to that.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 26:06 Oh, yes, I remember this, John.

John Bytheway: 26:06 Do you remember it?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 26:06 Yes, yes.

John Bytheway: 26:10 She and her little brother, hey, the ewes had been killed in a storm. So, you take care of these little lambs and at the end of the summer you can sell them. And then she says, "After a little while, we forgot all about making money because our lambs were starving to death. They didn't know how to eat and we

had to feed them." In the end she says to her dad, "Isn't there someone who can help us feed our lambs?"

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 26:32 Trying with that mash, trying to get them to eat it. Yes, and get the milk in there. It's so odd. We would take care of bum lambs. They called them bum lambs when the mother had died, and I have all these memories of us, you'd bottle-feed them six times a day initially. Right? Wake up in the middle of the night and feed them milk. But what was amazing is after just a couple of days, they would just come running to you. They knew who was going to feed them. It's so beautiful to think of the Savior saying... Yeah, they get lost and wander off and stubborn that way, but they know the source of the food, and they would just come clamoring to us. Right? And he's saying, "They know my voice. They know who will protect them. They know who will guide them and enable them to live." That's the relationship we want to have with the Savior. When He comes, we want to run to him and follow where He leads.
- 27:22 I just think President Nelson's talk published in September of 2022 on covenant relationship just captures this idea of the door and that he is the door of the sheep. And so, he just says, "When you and I enter that path, we create a relationship with God that allows him to bless and change us." If we let God prevail in our lives, if we allow him to be our good shepherd, in my mind, that covenant will lead us closer and closer to him. All covenants are intended to be binding. They create a relationship with everlasting ties, a path of love, that incredible hesed, caring for and reaching out, and you think here he's saying, he's describing that hesed love in the allegory of a shepherd laying down his life for his sheep and being the door into the sheepfold of safety, away from all the predators that would take them that they have no defenses against without him leading them to safety. It's a really powerful metaphor the Lord is using here teaching us.
- Hank Smith: 28:28 I bet you can get a lot out of this having grown up that way. This is something they totally would understand because this is happening all over the place.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 28:37 Yes. Just a couple little last thoughts along this that he references the hirelings that would run away. He's saying the shepherd is not going to run away. For sure, a shepherd's not going to run away, and yet the hirelings, when they see something dangerous, the wolf comes and the hireling fleeth. And then he says, "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep." So, he ties us back to the Father and what he will do. John is really clear in

saying the Savior's life isn't taken from him. Over and over again, he's going to make it clear. This was his willingness to be born in a manger in that unique way and to leave this earth in that unique way, of his choice to lay down his life. So, he's going to make that really clear in these teachings about what he means.

29:31 Therefore, doth the Father love me because I lay, 17 and 18, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. So, he's referenced laying down his life before, and this is the first time we're going to hear that he's going to take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received in my father. This everlasting covenant of our heavenly parents with us, that they would send a redeemer who would take upon himself our experience in covenant connection and then he would overcome it all. He would live again. He would take his life again and break the barrier for us between who we are and who we yearn to be.

John Bytheway: 30:19 It's an important point. We can get into a why were they so mean or the Romans killed him or these leaders among the Jews killed him. Well, actually, he gave his life. He was a willing sacrifice, and some of his last words in the gospel accounts are different. He gave up the ghost, He even chose, I think, the moment of his death and he chose it. I think that from what I've read, some people would hang on crosses for days, but he chose the moment of that death. So, I think it's an important point because we needed him to die for us. He did it willingly.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 30:57 In 29, it's interesting, in light of what you just said, because that means if he willingly gives his life and it's totally under his submission to the Father, which is his power, then he says, I love this, and it's almost alluding to what he will say in John 17, in the intercessory prayer here of 29, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my father's hand. So, his total control over his giving his life means he also has total control over our redemption. Nothing's going to be outside of that. He has done all that is needed for every single one of us for full redemption, and there's nothing outside of that. Here he is. No man is able to pluck them out of the Father's hand because I will enable their redemption. I and my Father are one.

31:54 We can be assured with an immutable covenant. I think it's section 89, just that he is our redeemer. He will do his work. He has enabled that to all happen. I think they're upset because they hear. They're upset for a lot of reasons, right, rejecting this

redeemer. But they hear in 36, he says, "Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world." Now, that's really close language because they're celebrating the dedication, the sanctification of the temple, and he's alluding to that language of the sanctification of the temple, and he is saying about himself, "I am the one the Father has sanctified and sent into the world."

32:42 So, they're concerned about the sanctification of the temple, and he's trying to tell them that the temple celebration, the Feast of Dedication points to him. He was the one sanctified by the Father to enable our redemption that we might all be sanctified, and they can hear it. They can hear his reference. Oh my goodness. He's telling us he's greater than the temple. He is the sanctified being that the Father has sent to enable our sanctification, and they don't like it. But he's saying, "I was the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles. I am the fulfillment of the Feast of Dedication. I am the one whom the Father sanctified here for your redemption."

Hank Smith: 33:27 And here come the stones again. He's got to be getting used to this.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 33:33 Yeah, I think so.

Hank Smith: 33:34 They've got to get rid of him.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 33:34 So, this gospel of John is not only a gospel teaching us of the divinity of Jesus Christ, but as Eric Huntsman has said so powerfully, this is a gospel about discipleship. It's about how we respond to the reality of this divinity. So, if we go back to chapter seven, we're going to see these various responses. We've talked about them along the way here, but you hear, for example, if you look at verse 12, there was this murmuring among the people as they hear him. He's a good man. Others say, "Nay, he deceiveth the people," and no man spoke openly of him for fear of the Jews. I think interesting in our time to be afraid sometimes of testifying of Jesus Christ in a world that has left religious faith. Then in 20, you say, "Thou hast a devil." And then 26, "Do the rulers know that this is the very Christ?" And 31, "And many of the people believed on him and said, 'When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than this man hath done?'"

Hank Smith: 34:38 Right.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 34:39 It tells us that Christ himself evokes different responses from people based on where we are, based on the truth in our own hearts. Sometimes I think we think, "Well, if someone's great, everybody's going to recognize it. Everybody's going to know and he'll be popular or she'll be popular." But in fact, John is showing us how distinct our responses can be to the divinity of Jesus Christ, based on where we are in our way of being. So, 40 and 41, if you go down there, "This is the Christ," others said. And some said, "Shall Christ come out of Galilee."

Hank Smith: 35:17 They couldn't get passed that, yeah.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 35:17 John, not even, yeah, they can't. And they're like, "Wasn't he supposed to be born in Bethlehem?" not even realizing he was born in Bethlehem.

Hank Smith: 35:24 Yeah, just go ask him.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 35:26 And all the division that is among the people in encountering this remarkable being who is Jesus Christ. John is trying to teach us how we can all stand there and choose. He is the light, as he's testified. He is the door of the sheep. He is the good shepherd. He is all of those things. He is the one who frees us from shame. He is the one who forgives. Will we receive him? Will we believe on him as the blind man does, as we see that in chapter nine, "Who is he, Lord, that I may believe on him?" I want a redeemer. Who is he that I may believe on him? And Jesus says, "Thou has both seen him. It's he that talketh with ye." And I think for all of us, will we receive all that he has committed to offering to us as he testifies of in these sections.

Hank Smith: 36:25 That's fantastic. You have the woman in John 8, the woman taken in adultery with the JST edition that says she believed on him from that hour. And then you have others who are taking up stones. They're in a mob mentality, want to kill him. What a different response. Just two sides of the spectrum there.

John Bytheway: 36:42 It reminds me of Alma 5. The Book of Mormon kind of has a tone, a personality about it's this or it's this. Have you noticed that? And if the good shepherd is not your shepherd, then who's your shepherd. And he puts it really pointedly, Alma does, in Alma 5, and I guess that's what's happening here. As you just said, Hank, look at how these groups divide up. "I'm going to worship him," the blind man says. The rest, "Let's kill him."

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 37:10 So, we shouldn't be surprised at how we as human beings can experience sometimes truth and light and Christ himself, and to just be taught by what John is trying to teach us of all that he is offering us. He is all of this. He is the living water. He is the bread. He is the light of the world. He is the good shepherd.

Hank Smith: 37:35 This paragraph from Come Follow Me wraps up what we've been saying. "Although Jesus Christ came to bring peace and good will toward men, there was a division among the people because of him. People who witnessed the same events came to very different conclusions about who Jesus was. Some concluded he is a good man. Others said, "He deceiveth the people." When he healed the blind man on the Sabbath, some insisted, "This man is not of God. He keepeth not the Sabbath Day." Others said, "How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?" Yet despite all the confusion, those who searched for truth recognized the power in his words, for never man spake like this man. The Jews asked Jesus tell us plainly whether he was the Christ. He revealed the principle that can help us distinguish truth from error. "My sheep hear my voice," he said. "I know them and they follow me."

38:22 What a great summary there of everything we've been talking about. These have been a fun four chapters. Jenet, what do you hope our listeners walk away with after they study John 7, 8, 9, and 10, which are just, man, we could have gone on for another few hours, I think.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 38:41 Intimidating to talk about these chapters. I think for me, it's been so powerful to just study deeply all He is, and so grateful for the testimony of John who witnessed his life and then goes back and writes and pulls together all these testimonies of the Lord himself when he says, "I am the light of the world. I am that I am. I am the door. I am the good shepherd. Before Abraham was, I am. I was the one who said, 'I will go.' I am the resurrection and the life. I am the way, the truth, and the life. I am the vine." And he is trying to help us know I am, I will be, I was for you, all of these things that you so yearn and need. I am so grateful for that truth. I know that is truth. I know, I know He is that, and he yearns to be all of that for us.

39:43 So, here he is teaching us in these sections, I am the fulfillment of all of these things. I am here at the Feast of Dedication. This was pointing toward me. Feast of Tabernacles, this was pointing toward me. I am. I will do. And you just think, here's John yearning for us to know what he came to know as he came to see this good teacher, then the Son of God, right, all the way

through that, the redeemer of the world, and he wants us to know he is all of that. He will be all of that. Receive him.

Hank Smith: 40:15 I hope everyone listening can be like this blind man who says, "Listen, I don't know everything, but there's some things I know because I've experienced them myself," and hold your ground. Yeah, hold your ground on the things you know.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 40:30 Yes. So powerful. Where I was blind, now I see, like our own personal witnesses. Thank you, Hank. A couple final thoughts as this relates to our mortal experience and relationships. I have a dear, dear friend who experiences same-sex attraction, did, and I remember him describing what it meant to come to know Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. I was thinking of how he might have felt like the blind man accused, in a sense, who has sinned, why is my life this way. And as he's wrestling with that, what that means, he'll describe offering to God on an altar, having to say, standing before and thinking, "I can't have... I want to have all these joyful things. I don't know how." And, John, as you testified earlier, it's as if he's standing there saying, "There is no way. I am the way." And watching in his life, just like the blind man, coming to see the goodness of God and find way to the miracles that he would never have thought possible. He really is our way-maker that way.

41:37 But then I think what's powerful about these sections, the final thought is that he invites us into being good shepherds. I love how the Hafens will talk about in married life, they'll talk about the work of a father, of a husband is to nourish and cherish his wife even as the Lord loved the church. Our work is to help our partner and our children do what the Savior said. I came that they might have life more abundantly and that we develop greater life. So, as you see him respond to the woman caught in adultery, he frees her, he responds with what is needed, what is truthful to help her grow. He does the same thing with the man who is born blind.

42:20 As the good shepherd, that's what he's doing, and he invites us into that, and that if we are good shepherds with him, we won't run. When the wolves come, the wolf of adversity or the wolf of personal imperfection or the wolf of individualism, whatever the things are that we grapple with in ourselves, we will be good shepherds with him in that work of love for those we have been called to be shepherds to, beginning in our families, first of all, and what a call there is, and in our wards, and in our ministering, and that he invites us into that sacred work of being a good shepherd, nourishing, giving life.

John Bytheway:	43:00	I think a phrase that's in the hymn, Dear to the Heart of the Shepherd is make us thy true undershepherd. I think I've heard that in talks before about as we minister to each other, we're trying to do what the Good Shepherd would do and be undershepherds.
Hank Smith:	43:14	Yeah, he says, "Make us thy true undershepherds. Give us a love that is deep. Send us out into the desert seeking thy wandering sheep." I like what you've said here, Jenet, that we can become shepherds ourselves.
John Bytheway:	43:28	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	43:29	Jenet, what a fantastic day. Thank you for spending your time with us today. It's been wonderful.
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	43:35	Such a privilege. These chapters are just such a gift to us. Thank you. So good to be with you.
Hank Smith:	43:41	We've loved having you. We want to thank officially Dr. Jenet Erickson for being with us today. We want to thank our executive producer Shannon Sorensen, our sponsors David and Verla Sorensen, and we want to always remember our founder, the late Steve Sorensen. we hope you'll join us next week. We have more New Testament coming up on FollowHim.
	44:01	Today's transcripts, show notes, and additional references are available on our website, followhim.co , followhim.co , and you can watch the podcast on YouTube with additional videos on Facebook and Instagram. All of this is absolutely free, so be sure to share with your family and friends. To reach those who are searching for help with their Come, Follow Me study, please subscribe, rate, review, or comment on the podcast which makes the podcast easier to find. Thank you. We have an amazing production crew we want you to know about, David Perry, Lisa Spice, Jamie Neilson, Will Stoughton, Krystal Roberts, and Ariel Cuadra. Thank you to our amazing production team.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM
THE MAN BORN BLIND?



- Hank Smith: 00:04 Hello my friends. Welcome to another followHIM Favorites. My name is Hank Smith and I'm here with the incredible John Bytheway. Hello John Bytheway.
- John Bytheway: 00:12 Hi, Hank.
- Hank Smith: 00:13 Yeah, it's always good to be together.
- John Bytheway: 00:15 Absolutely.
- Hank Smith: 00:16 John, followHIM Favorites, we take a single question from this week's lesson and this week we're in John 7, 8, 9, and 10. And the question comes from John chapter 9. What can we learn from the man born blind? This day in his life changed everything for him. Here he was born blind and probably thinking today's going to be just like any other day, but he meets Jesus and everything changes. What do you learn, John, from the man born blind?
- John Bytheway: 00:46 Well, I think one of the best things happens right at the beginning with kind of an untrue conclusion.
- Hank Smith: 00:54 Some false doctrine.
- John Bytheway: 00:55 Yeah. This is in verse two, right at the beginning. "Who did sin? This man or his parents that he was born blind?" It's like, okay, somebody did something wrong or this wouldn't happen. This is clearly a punishment and it's just a false conclusion to draw. So I love how Jesus answered it too.
- Hank Smith: 01:13 "Neither did this man sin nor his parents."
- John Bytheway: 01:16 Neither one of them.
- Hank Smith: 01:17 "This is part of the plan of God." Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 01:19 This is a fallen world that we live in and things like this happen all the time, but wonderfully it has a beautiful ending to this

story too, because of what Jesus does. But he has to teach him, doesn't he?

- Hank Smith: 01:29 Yeah. I love the man born blind because when his day changes dramatically, he's all of a sudden at the end of his day taking on the elite of his society.
- John Bytheway: 01:41 The rest of the chapter. Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 01:43 Yeah. He was blind this morning and now he's standing. I bet he didn't think, "Oh, by tonight I'll be seeing and I'll be having a debate with the hierarchy." But here he is in front of the Pharisees, who his own parents are scared of. You can tell when they bring his parents in, they're scared of and they're saying, "What happened?" And he said, "I already told you what happened. Would you want me to tell you again? Would you be His disciples? This man is of God." He's just telling them and they say in verse 24, this is my favorite part. This is my highlight. They say, "Give God the praise. We know that this man, Jesus, is a sinner." And the man answers, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I know not. Here is what I know. I was blind. Now I see."
- 02:28 To me, John, that is the essence of a testimony. There are some things I don't know, but there are things I do know because I have experienced them for myself. To me, if the qualification for having a testimony was you have to know everything. You have to have an answer to every single question. No one would have a testimony.
- John Bytheway: 02:47 Neither one of us would be here.
- Hank Smith: 02:48 It's okay to say, "There's some things I don't know. There's some things I don't understand, but there are things I do and I'm not going to back down from those."
- John Bytheway: 02:56 I have right next to verse 25, 1 Nephi 11:17 where the angel says to Nephi, "Knowest thou the condescension of God?" And his answer sounds like this. "I know he loves his children, but I do not know the meaning of all things." And boy, what a good place to start. I know he loves his children. I don't know everything, but I know enough and that's kind of like his answer, "I was blind and now I see. That's what I know."
- Hank Smith: 03:19 That's what I know. And anybody could say, "I don't have all the answers about the church, but I do know the Book of Mormon changed my life." What is someone going to say? "Nuh-huh."

John Bytheway: 03:30 You've experienced the gospel. It's working. It gives you peace and joy and a reason for living and it works. It's awesome.

Hank Smith: 03:39 It works. That's exactly right. So we hope that you'll learn also from the man born blind this week. Take advantage of this story and come join us on our full podcast. We have Dr. Jenet Erickson with us, and you are going to love the way she goes through these scriptures. And then join us next week for another followHIM Favorites.