

John – A Devotional Commentary from God’s Daily Word Ministries

Chapter 7

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Scripture references for lessons on John: The New King James Version.
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John 7:1-9 - Lesson #73

Within about 24 hours Jesus had miraculously fed over 5000, walked on water, taught about eternal life and the bread from Heaven, and called many to the point of decision. Most heard His words and decided to "walk with Him no more" (John 6:66). But a select few joined with Peter and said; "You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). This had been an exciting day!

John 7:1-9

"After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him. Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. His brothers therefore said to Him, 'Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world.' For even His brothers did not believe in Him. Then Jesus said to them, 'My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil. You go up to this feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, for My time has not yet fully come.' When He had said these things to them, He remained in Galilee."

Chapter 6 records events near Passover, probably in April, and Chapter 7 begins with the Feast of Tabernacles which was six months later. We know from the other gospels that Jesus continued to minister in Galilee during these six months, but those events were not chosen for John's message; "these are written that you may believe Jesus is the Christ" (John 20:31).

Jesus' brothers did not believe His message, but they had certainly heard Him speak and presumably seen Him perform miracles which could attract a crowd. They thought the best way to accomplish His stated goal (whatever that might be) would be to perform His wonders on the biggest Jewish stage possible. During the Feast, Jerusalem would be filled with people from all over Israel and if they could witness Jesus performing miraculous works, even those who had previously walked away would be convinced.

Jesus declined the offer and remained in Galilee because; "My time has not yet come." With a clear understanding of God's plan Jesus knew it was not His time for a final confrontation. He would follow later and continue to teach, but opposition was growing and there were several things yet to be accomplished. But the time was always right for His brothers because their lives did not confront the world, they were friends with the value system characterized by darkness. They were accepted and loved by the world.

We all have a desire, even a need, to be accepted. The question is: Where do we go to fill this need? The world relentlessly pulls with the promise of an accepting love, and all it asks is that we compromise the truth and remain in darkness. But Jesus calls us to step by faith into the light of His forgiveness. The time is never right to continue on our path of destruction, but the time is NOW for stepping into His everlasting love.

Have A Great Day!

John 7:10-13 - Lesson #74

Jesus' brothers wanted Him to travel from Galilee to Jerusalem and make a grand entry at the start of the Feast of Tabernacles. They encouraged Him (some say sarcastically) to "show Yourself to the world" (John 7:4). But there was a growing number of Jews who "sought to kill Him" (v.1), so Jesus declined the invitation because "My time has not yet come" (v.6).

John 7:10-13

"But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, 'Where is He?' And there was much complaining among the people concerning Him. Some said, 'He is good'; others said, 'No, on the contrary, He deceives the people.' However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews."

The time had not yet come to make a grand entrance into Jerusalem, but Jesus had no intention of ignoring one of the required feasts; "Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles" (Deuteronomy 16:16). Jesus perfectly fulfilled all the requirements of the law and also the perfect timing of His Father. Jesus went to the feast in a manner which would not draw attention to Himself.

Recall that when John refers to "the Jews" he usually means the group of Jews who were opposed to Jesus and His ministry. Most people in Jerusalem were Jews, as were His disciples. These contentious Jews assumed He would make His entry in a way that He could be arrested or captured and killed.

The word "complaining" is also translated as grumbling or whispering and denotes low level discussions or arguments. From the beginning Jesus preached a message which called for a decision. His message did not allow for neutral indifference. But though most had formed an opinion, both opinions were wrong. He was neither a deceiver nor simply a good man. Jesus was the Son of God who came to give eternal life.

But as is the case in every generation, the opposition instills fear in those who seek to follow Christ. Those who disagree with Jesus feel He is a threat which must be eliminated, and His followers become a threat by association.

Sadly, we live in an indifferent generation where everything has become acceptable, including a "whatever" religion which keeps Christ on the shelf. But for those who follow Jesus as the only way to eternal life there remains an opposition which causes fear. If they cannot control through physical persecution they pound away through ridicule and rejection. Do we voice our belief or have we become controlled by the fear inducing minority? Let's become more bold in our allegiance to Christ. Let's speak openly and without fear about our Savior, the true Son of God.

Have A Great Day!

John 7:14-18 - Lesson #75

Jesus went to the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem in a manner which would not attract attention. The opposition against Him had grown and the beliefs of those at the feast had become greatly divided; "However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews" (John 7:13).

John 7:14-18

"Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught. And the Jews marveled, saying, 'How does this Man know letters, having never studied?' Jesus answered them and said, 'My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him.'"

Though the time was not right for a grand entrance into Jerusalem, the time was always right to teach. Jesus would continue His teaching ministry right up until the end of His time on earth, and the outer court of the temple was a natural place for a Rabbi to present His message.

As Jesus taught, the Jews marveled that He knew the scripture so well, having never attended an official rabbinical school; "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matthew 7:28-29). Even as a young boy talking with the teachers in the temple, Jesus knew the word of God; "And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding" (Luke 2:47). But those who have come to believe in Jesus are no longer astonished, for we understand Him to be the entire truth, the very Word of God; "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14).

When Jesus taught from the scripture, He showed how the writings of what we now call the Old Testament pointed to Him as the coming King; "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me" (Luke 24:44). Jesus did not claim this as His own interpretation of scripture but as the message given for Him to deliver by God.

Jesus was the promised King who would set His people free, but He also came to announce the character of God: "No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him" (John 1:18). The announcement of God's character was a call to repentance in preparation of true freedom, and this "doctrine" is seen as teaching from God only as someone "wills to do His will."

Let's seek a greater understanding by being diligent to follow and glorify His name in all we do. His will is the way of truth and His word is the lamp which lights our path. Let's continue to study and follow His word, and then prayerfully begin to better understand and appreciate the absolute truth of His everlasting word.

Have A Great Day!

John 7:19-24 - Lesson #76

A crowd had gathered to listen to Jesus teach in the temple. They marveled at His knowledge of the scriptures since He had never been officially trained. Jesus responded by directing the glory to God; "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me" (John 7:16). He then moved into a mode of confrontation by claiming to be true and with "no unrighteousness" (v. 18).

John 7:19-24

"Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?' The people answered and said, 'You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?' Jesus answered and said to them, 'I did one work, and you all marvel. Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, so that the law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath? Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.'"

During His last trip to Jerusalem, Jesus chose to heal a man on the Sabbath. This apparent violation of Sabbath Law greatly angered the Jewish leaders and Pharisees who believed their Law was the path to being "right" with God; "For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him" (John 5:16). So Jesus began by asking how they can respect the Law if they do not even keep the basic law of "You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:13). He then continued by revealing their inconsistent application of the Law.

The law of circumcision was first given as a sign of God's covenant with Abraham (Genesis 17:10), and then included with the Law given through Moses; "And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised" (Leviticus 12:3). When the eighth day fell on the Sabbath the child was still circumcised even though the Law said to do no work.

Jesus revealed a huge flaw in the belief system of the Jewish leaders and Pharisees. They had become so attached to their detailed interpretation of the Law that they completely missed the true character of God which the Law revealed. Was it possible that God would institute a system which allowed for circumcision on the Sabbath but not complete healing? Of course not! A true understanding of the Sabbath would compel one to honor God by demonstrating His character - which Jesus did perfectly by compassionately healing. The Jewish leaders were passing judgment based on the blind outward adherence to a religious system and Jesus said to judge according to the heart of righteousness which He revealed.

The outward acceptance and compliance with religious rules and systems cannot make us right with God. Righteousness is only found in the forgiveness given through faith in Jesus, not in what we do. And when we are graciously allowed to walk in a right relationship with God, we are to reflect His character of compassion, mercy and love in all we do as we honor Him from our heart.

Have A Great Day!

John 7:25-29 - Lesson #77

Jesus began to confront those who had gathered to listen to Him teach; "Why do you seek to kill Me?" (John 7:19). Though they denied that anyone wanted to kill Him, Jesus addressed their judgment that He did not follow the Sabbath Law; "Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with a righteous judgment" (John 7:24). In this, Jesus was boldly declaring the actions of the Jewish leaders to be hypocrisy.

John 7:25-29

"Now some of them from Jerusalem said, 'Is this not He whom they seek to kill? But look! He speaks boldly, and they say nothing to Him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is truly the Christ? However, we know where this Man is from; but when the Christ comes, no one knows where He is from.' Then Jesus cried out, as He taught in the temple, saying, 'You both know Me, and you know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. But I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me.'"

Notice that the crowd acknowledged what they had just previously denied. They knew their leaders wanted to kill Jesus, but now they were amazed that Jesus would speak so boldly - in the temple for all to hear. Surely this would bring an immediate response from the Jewish leaders! But no one was saying anything. Had they learned something about Jesus since His last visit to Jerusalem? Was He the Christ?

But the crowd was quickly convinced that this couldn't be the Christ because they knew who He was and where He was from. The popular belief among the Jews was that when the Christ appeared He would do so mysteriously, being born in Bethlehem and then one day just appearing as the Christ. But everyone had heard about Jesus and His teaching, and they even knew where He grew up; "Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary?" (Matthew 13:55). No, this could not be the Christ!

Jesus cried out His response - probably changing His address to a larger crowd. His response should be considered more as a question, as if to say: You think you know Me and where I am from? The answer of course is that they do NOT really know Jesus or where He is from. Jesus was sent from God because; "He was in the beginning with God" (John 1:2). He came with the word of God; "My doctrine is not My own but His who sent Me" (John 7:16). And He came to seek "the glory of the One who sent Him" (John 7:18). Jesus made a clear distinction between Himself and those in the temple: I know God and you do not!

Do we really know Jesus and where He is from? Is He the good teacher, Jesus of Nazareth? Or is He "the Christ, the Son of God" (John 20:31) who has "come down from heaven" (John 6:42)? We must answer this question - and then live according to all the answer implies. If He is only a good teacher then we are lost without any knowledge of the Father. But if He is the Christ, we must believe He died for the forgiveness of our sin so we can truly know God.

Have A Great Day!

John 7:30-36 - Lesson #78

When Jesus first came to the feast in Jerusalem, the people were mainly debating His goodness: "Some said, 'He is good'; others said, 'No, on the contrary, He deceives the people'" (John 7:13). But when Jesus spoke in the temple He did not present Himself as simply good. Jesus consistently presented Himself such that there was no middle ground, He must either be accepted as the Christ or rejected as evil; "I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me" (John 7:29).

John 7:30-36

"Therefore they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. And many of the people believed in Him, and said, 'When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this Man has done?' The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things concerning Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him. Then Jesus said to them, 'I shall be with you a little while longer, and then I go to Him who sent Me. You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come.' Then the Jews said among themselves, 'Where does He intend to go that we shall not find Him? Does He intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? What is this thing that He said, 'You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come'?"

Once again John shows how all events and timing were in the hands of God. Jesus would not be arrested, crucified, or resurrected until the exact time determined by God. And that time would not occur for another six months; "the hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified" (John 12:23).

We don't know what the people in the temple understood about righteousness and forgiveness, but we know that John presents only one requirement for Salvation; "He who believes in Him is not condemned: but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed" (John 3:18). Though their belief may seem shallow and based only on miracles, John's point was that there were some who believed.

This section also presents a decision point for the Jewish leaders as they decided to officially send the temple police to arrest Jesus - but His time had not yet come. Jesus spoke about His resurrection and return to the Father, but they thought He was talking about the Jewish settlements outside Palestine. They did not believe Jesus could go where He would not be found, and so they missed the opportunity to truly seek and find.

Jesus is no longer walking the earth but we are still living in a unique time: "Seek the Lord while He may be found. Call upon Him while He is near" (Isaiah 55:6). It is not too late! But there is coming a day of judgment when He will no longer be found. We cannot wait!! "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of Salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2). There is much we need to understand and much resolve of commitment to which we will be called, but it must begin by opening our heart to the truth. The One sent by God has called us to believe.

Have A Great Day!

John 7:37-39 - Lesson #79

During the middle of the Feast in Jerusalem, Jesus began teaching in the temple and was quickly involved in such a confrontation that "the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him" (John 7:32). But they would not succeed because it was not yet His time and He still had many important messages to deliver.

John 7:37-39

"On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."

The Feast of Tabernacles was a memorial to how God had provided for the Israelites while they wandered in the desert. A daily ceremony was performed where the priests would pour water on the altar. This was to remind the people of how God had supplied water from a rock during their time of need (Numbers 20:7-11) and also to acknowledge God's goodness in supplying adequate rain for the following season.

In this context of the people thanking God for His provision of water, Jesus stood up and literally shouted! They did good to thank God for their water, but Jesus had something so much better!! For those who would come to Him and believe, He would provide a thirst quenching gift which would flow for all eternity. This is similar to what He told the Samaritan woman at the well: "but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst" (John 4:14).

All through the gospel of John, Jesus demonstrated that He was the Son of God who would provide for all needs during His coming Kingdom, as was promised through the prophets; "Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat" (Isaiah 55:1). But since John was writing many years after Jesus was resurrected, he could add an explanation of what was meant by rivers of living water.

The Holy Spirit was "given" on the day of Pentecost, fifty days after the Passover when Jesus was crucified; "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4). This event marked the beginning of the Church and the beginning of the Holy Spirit being given and personally dwelling within all who believe.

The Holy Spirit is the very presence of God residing within our heart. He is a gift which Jesus said is even better for us than Himself; "It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you" (John 16:7). The Holy Spirit has been poured out for those who believe and will flow from our heart for all eternity. Let's come to Him thirsty and ready to drink. Let's receive His gift and flow with a river of living water.

Have A Great Day!

John 7:40-44 - Lesson #80

On the last day of the Feast Jesus stood and cried out to those who were gathered; "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38). John then helps our understanding by writing that Jesus was referring to the Holy Spirit who would be given, to all who believe.

John 7:40-44

"Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, 'Truly this is the Prophet.' Others said, 'This is the Christ.' But some said, 'Will the Christ come out of Galilee? Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?' So there was a division among the people because of Him. Now some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him."

The crowd would not have understood that Jesus was speaking of the Holy Spirit, but they had a sense His words were claiming He was someone special. We have seen people wrestle with the identity of Jesus before. After witnessing the miraculous feeding of the five thousand, many said; "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world" (John 6:14). Now, because of His words, many said the same; Jesus was the Prophet greater than Moses as promised by God (Deuteronomy 18:18).

But others argued that Jesus was not the Prophet but the Christ, which means God's Anointed (Psalm 2:2) and refers to the promised king from the line of David; "I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom forever" (2 Samuel 7:12). This was to be the Messiah who would free God's people from oppression. But Jesus was known to be from Galilee and the Messiah was to come from Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). Jesus did not fit neatly into their predefined box so some tried to arrest Him.

Today we know that the promised Prophet and the promised King were both fulfilled in Jesus. But when Jesus walked the earth the Jewish people were looking for two different people - one who would speak for God and one who would establish the kingdom. Today, with all the written scripture we can see that Jesus was indeed from the line of David, born of a virgin in Bethlehem, and One who truly spoke the words of God. And yet even today many reject Jesus as the One who came to die for the forgiveness of sin because He does not fit into their predefined box.

The issue of trying to fit Jesus into our idea of who He should be - stuff Him into our box - is more of a problem than we realize. There are many who are making themselves available to help you create a box and then affirming you when your Jesus fits so neatly. We gather together, all carrying the same box. We smile, sing, and then we go home to put our box on the shelf until next week. But this is not the Jesus of the Bible! Jesus is not in the box!! Let's stop trying to package Him and carry Him around. Let's accept and seek to understand the complete Jesus of God's revealed Word, the Son of God who gave His life so we can live.

Have A Great Day!

John 7:45-53 - Lesson #81

Talk about Jesus can cause division quicker than any other subject. Perhaps this is because the message of Jesus draws a clear line and requires a choice: "Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division" (Luke 12:51). The Pharisees understood Jesus' message and were consistently angered because Jesus said the way to eternal life was not through their religious system. They had made their choice and would no longer be swayed by words of truth. When they heard Jesus was speaking during the Feast, officers were sent to arrest Him.

John 7:45-53

"Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, 'Why have you not brought Him?' The officers answered, 'No man ever spoke like this Man!' Then the Pharisees answered them, 'Are you also deceived? Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him? But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed.' Nicodemus (he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them) said to them, 'Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?' They answered and said to him, 'Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee.' And everyone went to his own house."

The officers failed in their task of bringing Jesus, but it's interesting to note the courage in their report. Failure in arresting Jesus could have severe consequences and would certainly justify making excuses - perhaps He was gone before they arrived, or maybe the crowd assisted in His escape. But these officers simply said they didn't arrest Him because of the power of His word.

The anger of the Pharisees rose to the surface, as did their pride. Ever notice how often pride is at root of anger? The Pharisees claimed to know every detail of the Law - both the portion given through Moses and the many additional laws created through their religious system. And no one of such superior understanding would be deceived by Jesus - Jesus was only for those less educated, less trained, less religious.

But the same Nicodemus who had talked with Jesus about being born again (John 3), brought forward a finer point of the law which said they couldn't yet judge Jesus without finding out more about Him. This can't be said to be a defense of Jesus, but Nicodemus supplied just enough confusion to disperse the group - for now!

Before anything is accepted as truth it must first pass through the filter of our world view. The Pharisees had a world view of self righteousness - self-earned eternal life - and it was nearly impossible for the truth of righteousness as a gift from God through Jesus to pass into their acceptance. What world view have we formed? What view are we teaching our children? His sacrifice was a wonderful gift for the forgiveness of sin. Let's allow this truth to pass through our man-made filter. Let's receive the truth and then live all the rest of our days giving glory to the truth of God.

Have A Great Day!