

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to John 7

We are continuing our verse by verse study through the Gospel of John

Let's pray...

And for the past couple of weeks – as we have been in chapter 7 – one of the things that John has clearly pointed out for us – was that Jesus came to bring to division.

And I have pointed out over and over again that the reason is that Jesus is Truth and Truth is divisive.

However, one of the other things that I think John clearly points out – especially here in chapter 7 – is the irony of what is occurring.

And I believe that John points these ironies out to us to show us the unadulterated truth about who Jesus is – but also to show us the unadulterated hypocrisy found in the lives of Jesus' audience – which by the way, should reveal to us the same hypocrisies in our own lives.

For example, everything that we have learned in chapter seven – it is taking place during the Feast of Tabernacles, the feast that celebrated God's complete provision of

their harvest and also celebrated God's faithfulness to provide for His people, by dwelling with His people in the wilderness.

The religious rulers, the crowds, Jesus' half-brothers – they are at the feast celebrating God dwelling with them in the wilderness yet, they fail to see that God is standing right before them. (irony)

Jesus tells the crowd that they don't see and recognize Him as the Son of God because they do not know God personally.

If their will was to do God's will then they would know who Jesus is.

They were consumed with external religious practices – yet they had no relationship with God. (irony)

They wanted to kill Jesus because He healed on the Sabbath – and Jesus showed them they were guilty of doing the same thing when they circumcised on the Sabbath. (irony)

When Jesus told them in our study last week – that He was going to a place where they wouldn't be able to find Him – immediately, they began to mock Him, "Is He going to hide out and teach among the filthy, repulsive Greeks?"

Yet, after His ascension, Jesus will send His people out by the power of the Holy Spirit to those filthy, repulsive Greeks (irony)

Let's look at verse 37 again –

I explained how on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles – the priest would carry water from the pools of Siloam and he would pour it over the alter and the people would be singing Psalms

And it was at this precise moment – that the John writes the following occurred -

[Jhn 7:37-39 NKJV] 37 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. 38 "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

In the middle of a feast that celebrates God's provision, He asked if anyone lacked – “I know your pools are full of water and your coffers are full of grain - but if any of you thirst and long for something more, come to me and drink!”, and then He extended to them the invitation to come to him and drink.

Not only could He satisfy their thirst, but out of their hearts would flow rivers (plural) of living water.

By the way, the word for heart is the word for gut, womb or cavity

This is an invitation to take something that is dry, lacking, and lifeless, and make it life giving.

If you come to Jesus in belief, God won't simply dwell with you, He will dwell in you.

If you believe in Jesus, you will receive the Holy Spirit, and from the Holy Spirit dwelling in you will flow rivers of living water.

Meaning: the fruit of the Holy Spirit will flow out of you and your life, and be a blessing to both you and those around you.

A river of love, a river of joy, a river of peace, a river of patience, a river of kindness, a river of gentleness, a river of goodness, a river of faithfulness, and a river of self-control will flow from you.

So we see irony in this as well.

And we are going to see more irony in our text this morning.

So in our text this morning, there is great confusion and division surrounding who Jesus is and what He's come to accomplish.

Remember, you have the religious rulers, you have the pilgrims that have come to observe the feast and you have the locals from Jerusalem.

But, in the middle of the confusion and the division, there's one group that's more certain about who Jesus is than anyone else.

The pilgrims and the locals keep going back and forth – but the religious rulers – they have already made their decision.

They are certain that Jesus is a blasphemer that He is deceiving the foolish.

But, we will see yet again that they are not judging with right judgment. Their judgment is based strictly upon appearances.

- Remember the warning that Jesus gave them and us back in verse 24 - Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.

[Jhn 7:40-52 NKJV] 40 Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, "Truly this is the Prophet."

So here we see the response of the crowd to Jesus' bold invitation for anyone who is thirsty to come to him and drink.

The crowd is beginning to lay their cards on the table, showing who they think Jesus is.

So here in verse 40, we have one group.

They think that Jesus is "the Prophet"

These people are referring to Moses' words in Deuteronomy:

(Dt 18:15 NKJV) "The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear,

Now, I have to make the point that in the Gospel of John, this is the second time that the crowd has tried to identify Jesus as the Prophet.

After Jesus fed the 20k people back in John 6, the crowd exclaims, “This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!”

They connected Jesus’s miraculous provision in the middle of nowhere with God’s miraculous provision of manna for his people in the wilderness, through the prophet Moses.

So the crowd connected the dots back then - they got excited that they found the prophet – however, that excitement went away when they followed Jesus to the synagogue in Capernaum.

The same thing is happening here.

They are connecting the dots – the Feast of Tabernacles, Moses providing water by striking the rock, here is Jesus inviting them to drink –

So they are thinking, “There are just too many similarities between Jesus and Moses. He has to be the Prophet that Moses was talking about. Therefore, we must listen to him.”

41 Others said, "This is the Christ."

Let’s stopped there -

So one group identified Jesus as the Prophet, here another group identified Jesus as the Christ – the Messiah, the Anointed One.

The One who is anointed is divinely set apart by God for a specific task.

[Luk 4:18-19 NKJV] 18 "The Spirit of the LORD [is] upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to [the] poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to [the] captives And recovery of sight to [the] blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; 19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

Jesus, as He opens up the scroll of Isaiah -

He is the one who was sent by God to rescue, redeem, and restore anyone who comes to him in belief.

He is the Messiah, He is the Anointed One that the OT has prophesied about!

So these two groups think that the Prophet and Messiah are two different people –

However, we know that both of these proclamations are true about Jesus

So, both of these groups of people have recognized and connected Jesus as one whom the OT has prophesied about.

However, there is another group

Look at the last portion of verse 41

But some said, "Will the Christ come out of Galilee? 42 "Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?"

This group of people, like the religious leaders, are not judging with right judgment; they're judging by appearances.

They're looking at Jesus and they're trying to connect the dots – they are looking over all of the things He's said and done, and they're thinking through the OT prophecies pertaining to the Christ, and they come to the conclusion that He's not the Christ.

They think that Jesus is from Galilee – after all, that is where He has been hanging out. Galilee is where all the hillbillies live!!!!

And they know that the Christ is to come from the line of David and born in Bethlehem.

So, in their eyes, Jesus can't be the Christ.

They failed to read Isaiah 9:1-2 – that speaks of the Messiah – whose ministry was in Galilee.

Now, here is a question -

Why doesn't John address their false understanding about Jesus here?

He kind of leaves it unresolved -

The Gospel of Matthew and Luke provide us with the narrative of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem – why didn't John include that here or anywhere.

Matthew and Luke provide us with a genealogy of Jesus – showing us that He is in fact a descendant of David – John could have done it here. But he didn't.

Rather than give us more information or evidence supporting Jesus as the Christ, what John is doing here is, he is taking his flashlight here and exposing the crowd's inability to judge with right judgment, which should give us more evidence to the fact that Jesus is the Christ.

We've come to a point in this gospel where John is beginning to force us, the readers, to look at the evidence and decide for ourselves.

Up until this point, John has strategically laid out an abundance of evidence for Jesus being the Christ.

Turning water into wine, healing the lame man, healing the nobleman's son, His conversation with the Samaritan woman, the feeding of the 5000, the evidence is clearly there –

And now, with the crowd, we're beginning to be forced to make decisions about who we believe Jesus is.

is He the Anointed One or is He a blasphemer that fooled people?

This crowd came to this conclusion without learning more about Jesus and therefore, they rejected Him.

They're content to come to a conclusion about Jesus with the visible evidence that they have.

So, ironically, this portion of the crowd rightly understands the prophecies surrounding the Christ. But, they don't rightly understand that the Christ is standing right before them in Jesus, offering them eternal life.

43 So there was a division among the people because of Him.

Jesus's words are dividing the crowd down the middle.

Part of the crowd is connecting the dots and identifying him as the Messiah/Prophet. Another part of the crowd is rejecting him as a deceiver.

There's no middle ground of apathy when it comes to Jesus.

We either submit to Him as Lord, giving Him your full attention, trust, and obedience. Or we respond to him in hostility, rejecting Him as a deceiver.

44 Now some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him.

Why did no one lay a hand on Him?

Because "His hour had not yet come (v.30)."

No persecution falls outside the sovereign hand of God.

The crowd didn't lay a hand of Jesus because it wasn't in God's timing for them to do so. Yes, Jesus will eventually be arrested. But, not yet.

45 Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why have you not brought Him?" 46 The officers answered, "No man ever spoke like this Man!"

Back in verse 32, the Pharisees heard that the crowds were murmuring – some of them were starting to believe in Jesus – so the Pharisees send members of the Sanhedrin police to arrest Jesus.

When the officers return without Jesus in their custody, these leaders want to know what happened.

"No one has ever spoke like this man!"

The officers heard first hand the message of Jesus – they heard His invitation to come to Him and drink, and rather than arrest him as a blasphemer, they come back saying to the religious leaders, "We couldn't arrest him because we've never heard anyone say the things Jesus is saying."

They were sent out to arrest a deceiver and they came back thinking he's a truth-bearer.

They're saying to the teachers, the these religious leaders, "We've grown up hearing y'all teach, but Jesus is speaking with generosity, with a clarity, with an authority that we've never heard.

We couldn't do what you told us to do.

He's making connections between Himself and the OT that are compelling."

You see, as we are going to see, these religious rulers are going to have a lot of misconceptions about Jesus.

And many of those misconceptions will come because they really never spent any real time with Jesus.

Everything was second hand –

When these officers hear Jesus face to face, it blows their minds.

Church, there is a difference between what some people say about Jesus and who Jesus really is.

That is why we find in the other three gospels, when Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do men say I am"

And they answered, "some say John the Baptist, some say, Elijah, and some others say, one of the prophets."

Did that matter to Jesus? No

Jesus said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

And that is what Jesus is asking us here this morning

"Who do you say I am?"

Do you know what you believe in????

But Jesus, I am very sincere – wrong answer

But Jesus, I try to do good – wrong answer

But Jesus, I give a lot of money – wrong answer

47 Then the Pharisees answered them, "Are you also deceived? 48 "Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him? 49 "But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed."

Look at the response from the Pharisees – directed at the officers.

Are you guys also deceived?

Are you stupid or something???

If we are not following Him, then you shouldn't follow Him.

Whatever we do is right and whatever He does is wrong

We are the religious ones – we know what is right.

The evidence they're giving to support the idea that Jesus is not the Christ is themselves.

Their justification for why Jesus cannot be the Messiah has nothing to do with Jesus and everything to do with their assessment of Jesus.

Jesus cannot be the Messiah because we have not believed in Him.

Never mind the works that Jesus has done throughout his life, never mind the words you just heard him proclaim, you're an idiot who has been deceived if you believe in Him.

The religious leaders are seeking to strip the officers of any opportunity to decide for themselves, and they're seeking to pressure them into placing their hope and confidence in their expert knowledge.

Ironically, those who are supposed to know the law don't recognize the Giver of the law and the One that the law points to, Jesus (Jn 5).

The one's who boasted in their wisdom and expert knowledge are pointing their fingers, claiming that others are deceived, when, in fact, they are the ones who are deceived.

And, ironically, this foolish crowd that is "accursed" and that "does not know the law" knows the truth.

John highlights and exposes their hypocrisy by bringing up Nicodemus in verse 50.

50 Nicodemus (he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them) said to them,

51 "Does **our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?"**

John does two things here –

He reminds us that Nicodemus had previously gone to meet with Jesus because he had a few questions for Him (John 3)

Nicodemus went to Jesus at night and said, “Hey! We’ve seen all of these things that you’re doing.

We know that you’re a teacher that comes from God.

No one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.”

Jesus then tells Nicodemus that “unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

So John wants to remind us that Nick has heard the gospel.

He knows the truth about Jesus – we really don’t know if he was a believer at this point – we know he was a believer when we see him again in chapter 19.

But Nick, unlike the other religious rulers, he wants to judge with right judgment.

He challenges the logic of his counterparts.

Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?"

I had you make a note of Nick referring it to "our law"

Because to the Pharisees – it was always referred to "the law"

The Pharisees were in the business of bringing condemnation to others through "the law"

"the law" was the tool they used to achieve this.

Next week, when the Pharisees bring the woman caught in adultery to Jesus – the law says we must stone her, what do You say?

However, Nick is trying to apply the law to himself as well.

He is using the law to bring clarity to himself and the others.

Before we judge Jesus in being guilty of being a blasphemer, let's see what the law says.

And if they did refer to "the law" they would have seen that a person must be heard and that evidence and witnesses must be considered before a person can be charged as being guilty.

You see, Nicodemus is exposing the Pharisees inability to keep the law, which means they're ironically the ones who stand accursed. Where they're seeking to condemn

Jesus, they're actually condemning themselves – because he is exposing their inability to judge with right judgment.

52 They answered and said to him, "Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee."

So because the Pharisees were convicted by what Nicodemus said, they resort to attacking him.

"Nick – are you on His team now? Are you also a hillbilly?"

Nick – if you knew your bible, you would know that no prophets come out of Galilee

Once again, their words ironically fall short of being truthful because there were actually at least two prophets who came from Galilee: Jonah and Nahum.

So they exposed themselves as hypocrites.

They prided themselves as being the authority of the law and of the scriptures and failed at both.

[Jhn 7:53 NKJV] 53 And everyone went to his [own] house. [Jhn 8:1 NKJV] 1 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

The Feast of the Tabernacles is over – everyone broke down their tents and headed home.

They went home to ponder about the invitation that Jesus had given that final day.

But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives –

John doesn't tell us that Jesus went to Nicodemus' house or one of the pilgrims' house.

He went to the Mount of Olives – in a sense, He did go home – because this is where He went to pray.

This is where He went spend time with the Father

And He went there to prepare Himself for the challenge that awaited Him the next day.

And we will that challenge next week.

Let's pray...

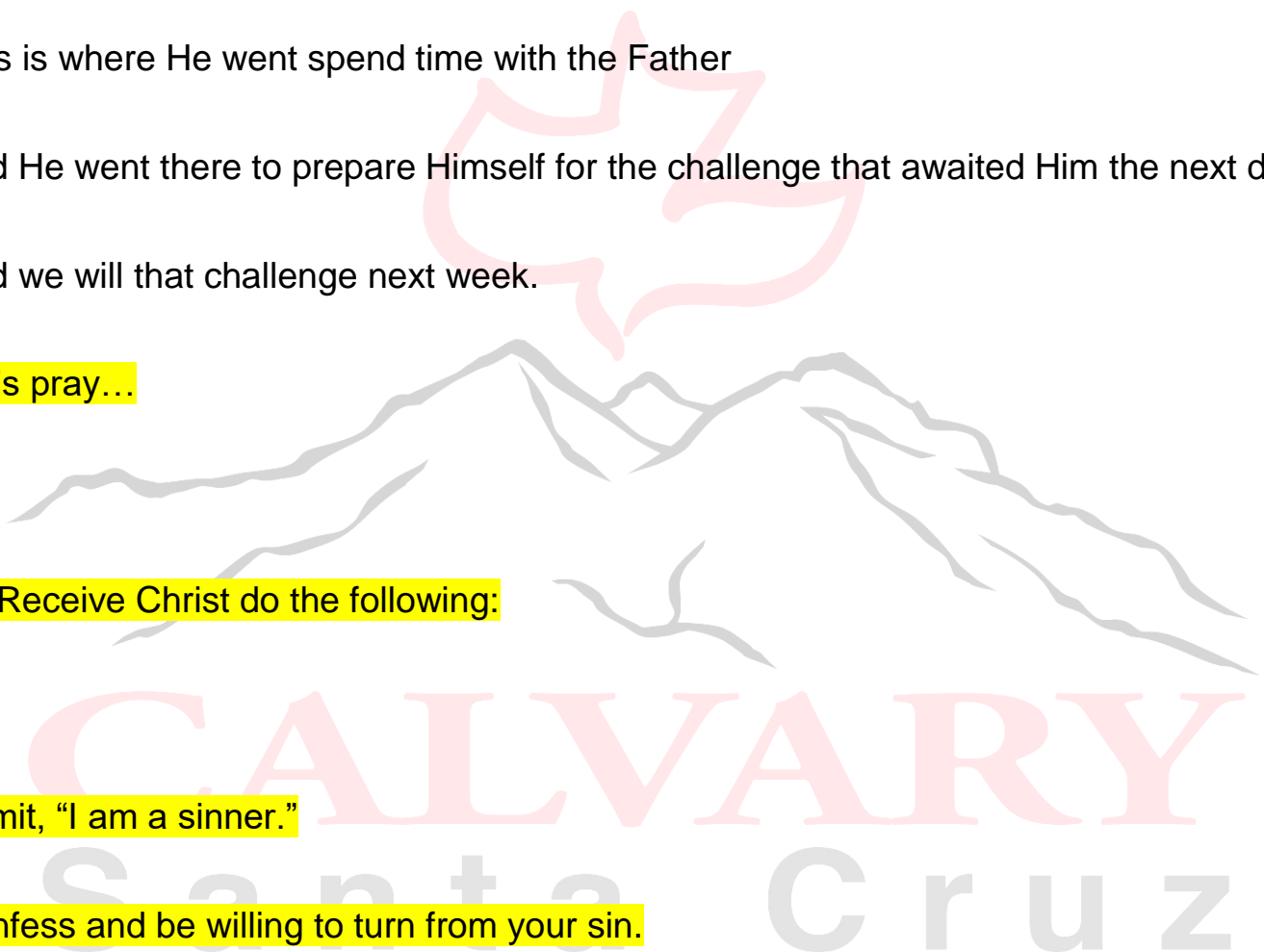
To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.



Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

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