

Bibles???

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

Turn your bibles with me to John 8

Let's pray...

So before we start, I want to make sure that we clearly understand the setting of what's about to take place.

So I want to remind you, that from the beginning of chapter seven, all of this is taking place during the Feast of Tabernacles.

This is the key –

The Feast of Tabernacles was one of the three feasts that every Jew was required to travel to Jerusalem to observe.

This was a feast dedicated to celebrate all the different ways that God has provided for His people.

It celebrated God's complete provision of the harvest – (took place in September)

And it was also a time to celebrate how God faithfully provided for His people in the wilderness as He dwelt among them.

So, John, inspired by the Holy Spirit, has been showing us how Jesus is the fulfillment of this feast.

In the middle of a feast that celebrated God dwelling with his people in the wilderness, Jesus came and tabernacled (dwelt) among his people; and, now, the Holy Spirit tabernacles (dwells) within the hearts of His people.

In the middle of a feast that celebrated God's provision, as the priest would pour water over the altar -

Jesus invited those who were thirsty to come to him and drink.

Out of the heart of those who believe in Him will flow rivers of living water because the Holy Spirit will come and dwell in them.

So, now we know with confidence that the LORD will never leave us because He dwells in His people.

So nothing is being done by chance –

Jesus is making these announcements at the perfect time.

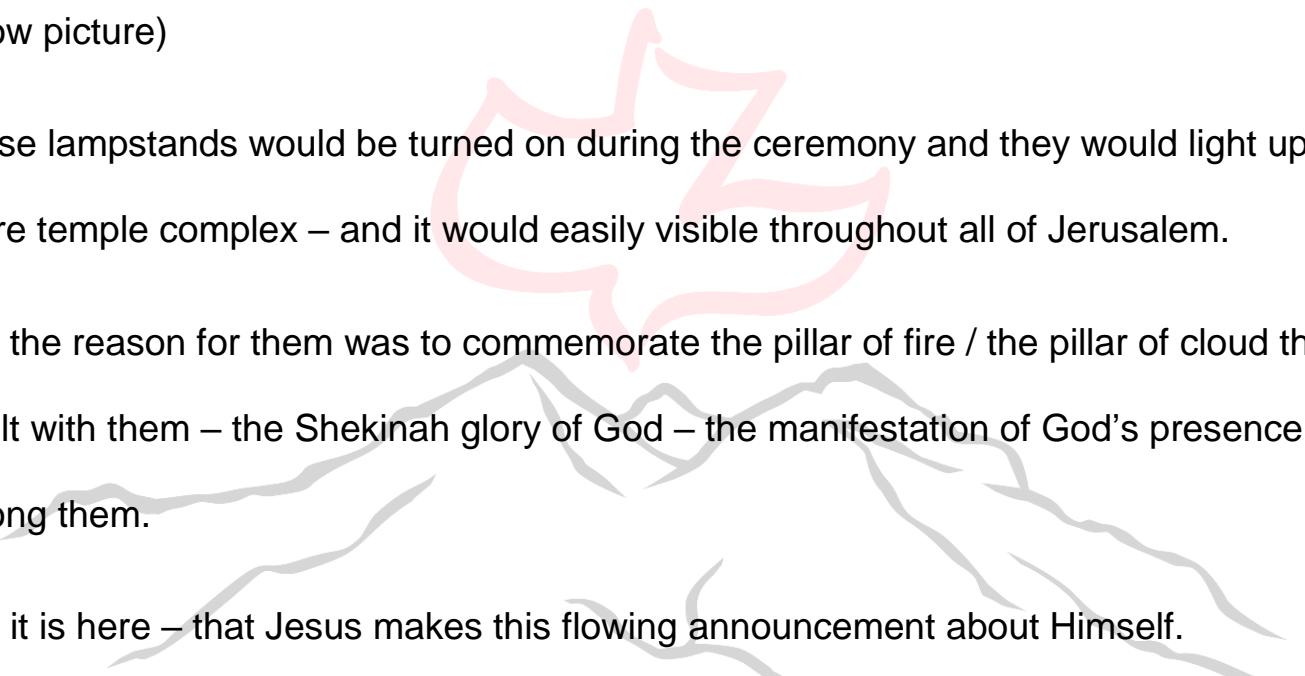
He wants the multitude to make the connection between the ceremonies that are taking place during the feast and Him – because they all point to Him.

So here in our text – we have another one of the ceremonies that was about to occur.

Again, John doesn't provide the details of the ceremony – because he wants to focus on Jesus' announcement.

But in the area known as the woman's court in the temple, there stood four ginormous candelabras or lampstands

(show picture)



These lampstands would be turned on during the ceremony and they would light up the entire temple complex – and it would easily visible throughout all of Jerusalem.

And the reason for them was to commemorate the pillar of fire / the pillar of cloud that dwelt with them – the Shekinah glory of God – the manifestation of God's presence among them.

And it is here – that Jesus makes this flowing announcement about Himself.

[Jhn 8:12-30 NKJV] 12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

What did Jesus announce here in verse 12?

First of all, He makes the announcement again that He is God.

This is the second of the "I AM" statements that Jesus makes in the Gospel of John.

I am - “*ego eimi*”, this is the Greek equivalent of God’s name, “I AM” – this is the basic interpretation of God’s name “Yahweh”

This is what God told Moses at the burning bush when Moses asked God His name:

(Ex 3:13–14 NKJV) Then Moses said to God, “Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?” 14 And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’ ”

So not only does Jesus announce that He is God

He announces that He is the light of the world

And the reason it is of significance is because in the Old Testament – light was a metaphor that was often used in reference to God, the Messiah and God’s word.

[Psa 27:1 NKJV] 1 [A Psalm] of David. The LORD [is] my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD [is] the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?

[Psa 119:105 NKJV] 105 NUN. Your word [is] a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.

[Isa 60:1-3 NKJV] 1 Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. 2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you. 3 The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising.

Everyone knew what Jesus was referring to when He said He was the light of the world.

Jesus was not claiming to be a light among many other lights – He is the light.

And just as the Children of Israel would have been lost without the Lord going before them in a pillar of fire, mankind is hopelessly lost in darkness without Jesus.

Now, think about this –

For the Children of Israel, what was the purpose of the pillar of fire?

Was it so they could just sit there and be marveled by it – ohhh – ahhh

Was it just a decoration for them to look at?

No, the purpose of the pillar of fire was for them to follow it.

And in the same way that the Children of Israel were supposed to follow the pillar of fire, we are to follow Jesus.

And He will lead us those who followed to eternal life.

Notice Jesus' words again,

He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness

It doesn't say, he who followed me at one time shall not walk in darkness

Or those whose parents or husband or wife follow me shall not walk in darkness

You see church, belief in Jesus is not merely something intellectual

It is a lifestyle, it is an active following after Jesus Christ.

And if we have an active following of Jesus Christ – then we don't walk in darkness.

This means, not only are we not hopelessly lost – but we also shine because His light illuminates our lives.

That means those around us see the light

Church, we are not to cover that light -

[Phil 2:14-15 NKJV] 14 Do all things without complaining and disputing, 15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

We can hide that light through compromise, or because we are afraid of what someone might say if they find out that we are believers.

13 The Pharisees therefore said to Him, "You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true."

Jesus announcement should have been a cause for celebration –

The announcements of the arrival of the Messiah, the Shekinah glory returning to the temple for the first time in 1000 years

But the religious rulers – they are not in a celebrating mood.

"Jesus, what you just claimed was extraordinary. However, because You made the claims about Yourself, they are invalid according to the law – therefore, we don't accept Your claim"

"If you want us to follow You, You're gonna' have to do better than just tooting Your own horn."

Now, the truth is that Jesus wasn't the only one that was proclaiming this message.

When we started our study in the Gospel of John, we saw John the Baptist was a witness, in John 5, we saw that both the scriptures and God the Father bore witness to who Jesus is.

So again, just like we saw last week, the religious rulers, their concern is not with justice.

Their only concern is in silencing Jesus Christ.

They have already made up their mind.

They have already judged Him

Jesus deserves to die.

14 Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from and where I am going.

Jesus response to the religious rulers –

Even if I made the claims I made by Myself – it doesn't mean that I am lying.

In fact, they are true because I am truth.

You see, there is no darkness in Him –

Jesus isn't from this world –

The religious rulers still see Jesus as the son of Joseph

They still see Jesus as just a baby born in Bethlehem – who grew up in Galilee

He is eternal

He is the Son of God

He is the source of truth

Therefore, He needs no witness

15 "You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. 16 "And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I [am] with the Father who sent Me. 17 "It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. 18 "I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me."

Jesus rebukes the religious rulers for judging according to appearance instead of righteous judgment.

They judged the woman with wrong motives – as they were only trying to trap Jesus

They judged Jesus because He healed a lame man on the Sabbath, they judged Jesus because of His appearance – because in their eyes, He was just a hillbilly from Galilee.

And Jesus says –

I judge no one – because the first time He came, He came to save

However, the second time He comes, He will come to judge and His judgment will be true.

I asked you make a note when Jesus says, “**for I am not alone**”

Once again, this is a declaration of deity. We really don't see the significance of this statement in the English -

But, What Jesus is saying here is,

I have never been alone

I am not alone now

And I will never be alone

The purpose, the direction, the existence of my life on earth, is ordained of God.

He never leaves me alone

And then Jesus tells them – “You want a second witness to believe what I said, I will give you a second witness – and that is My Father”

19 Then they said to Him, "Where is Your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also."

The phrase, “Where is your Father?”

This is a taunt directed at Jesus

They are being hostile toward Jesus

We will see this in our study next week – in verse 41

Jesus, you were born of fornication –

We heard the rumors Jesus

Where is Joey? That is, if Joey is your real dad.

Church, this is a Direct Attack upon His Incarnation and His Supernatural Conception

They are unable to recognize Jesus as the light of the world because they do not know the Father.

And here they are celebrating the faithfulness of a God that they don't even know.

They prided themselves in being close to God because they observed and kept God's law, yet they were in fact far from God.

And what Jesus is telling them here and us as well, "If you do not accept Me and you do not know Me, then you can't know God" Period.

If we reject Jesus, then we reject God

20 These words Jesus spoke in the treasury (this was the court of the woman), as He taught in the temple; and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come.

It appears that the religious rulers wanted to lay hands on Jesus in response to His rebuke of them.

They want to arrest Him, they want to kill Him

But notice, they were not able to lay hands on Him

This is the third time since the start of chapter 7 that we see their attempt to arrest Jesus fell short, which tells us that no persecution falls outside the sovereign hand of God.

Jesus will be arrested when it's time for Him to be arrested.

21 Then Jesus said to them again, "I am going away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come."

It was back in chapter 7, where Jesus was talking to these same religious rulers and made the statement that "You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come." (34)

And the religious rulers responded by thinking that Jesus meant that He was going to go to the Greeks

However, because of their continuous rejection of the truth -

Notice that Jesus now says, you will seek Me and will die in your sin – because they refused to believe in Him.

They have rejected their only hope for salvation: Jesus.

22 So the Jews said, "Will He kill Himself, because He says, 'Where I go you cannot come'?"

Again, the religious rulers are missing the point.

In their minds, they are thinking that if Jesus kills Himself – they are not going to be able to follow Him.

The irony is that Jesus isn't going to kill Himself.

They are going to kill Him

They are the ones who will nail Him to the cross in unbelief.

23 And He said to them, "You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am [He], you will die in your sins."

Church, I found 18 times in the Gospel of John, where Jesus declared where He was from.

He is the Son of God who descended from above.

He is the creator and sustainer of all things.

He is the great I AM.

And what Jesus is telling the religious rulers here is the same thing He is telling you and I this morning.

That our focus should be on the eternal and not the physical.

We get so sidetracked on earthly things that we lose focus on what's important.

We become passionate about certain things -

What's going on in the political scene?

What's going on in the social scene?

What's going on in the financial scene? Inflation? Gas prices? Etc.

If Jesus were to come back this second, would you be excited

Don't you want to be with Him

Don't you want to look in His face

Don't you want to look in His eyes

Don't you want to spend time worshipping Him

We are not of this world – this isn't the final destination for the believer.

It doesn't mean that we don't care about it

It doesn't mean we don't witness and share and serve one another

But it means our hearts are not here

That is why Jesus tells that religious rulers that they are from beneath – your focus is the horizontal, the world, religion – where your focus should be on the vertical, in having an intimate relationship with God.

25 Then they said to Him, "Who are You?" And Jesus said to them, "Just what I have been saying to you from the beginning.

For the past couple of weeks, we have seen that Jesus has made it very clear who He is

For three days He has been telling them

I am the Bread of Life

I am the One who gives you living water

I am the light of the world

I am with the Father

So the religious rulers respond with "Who are you?"

And Jesus said to them, duhhh – have you been paying attention to what I have been saying?

He didn't say that –

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Because He is patient, because He is kind, you see, He wants to reach these guys.

However, they are suffering from spiritual blindness

They are stuck in their religious ways

Their pride is getting in their way

26 "I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him."

Jesus's message has not changed.

He is the Son of God who has come down from heaven and walked in perfect submission to the Father's will, proclaiming the Father's message.

Demonstrating His love for mankind by dying on the cross.

27 They did not understand that He spoke to them of the Father. 28 Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am [He], and [that] I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things.

The lifting up of the Son of Man here in verse 28, it is a reference to the cross.

Back when Jesus had the encounter with Nicodemus, Jesus told him "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,"

And here Jesus is saying -

When the Son of Man is on the cross, then you will understand

On Wednesday night's we finished our study through the Book of Acts a few weeks ago and we saw the fulfillment of what Jesus says here in the first 8 chapters as thousands upon thousands responded to the gospel.

And you know who those thousands where – Jews

The Jews back then needed to understand that Jesus is God, who came in the flesh and died for sins and rose again on the 3rd day

When we come to Jesus today, we need to understand that Jesus is God who came in the flesh and died for our sins and rose again on the 3rd day

The message hasn't changed church – it is the same

It doesn't change from generation to generation or culture to culture or society to society, the gospel is the same.

29 "And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him." 30 As He spoke these words, many believed in Him.

Everything that Jesus did – pleased the Father

for I always do those things that please Him.

He was without sin, He was in complete obedience to the Father's will

We can't say that about our own lives

However, God, in His grace, has made the same promise to you and me.

And we see in our last verse – that in response to His announcement – many believed in Him.

"I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

The question we must ask ourselves this morning – do we see Him and receive Him as the light of the world?

And do we allow His light to shine in us for all to see.

May we be a church that does this.

Amen.

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

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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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