

That You May Have Life in His Name - June 4, 2023

John 7:25-52

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We are in a year long study through the gospel of John. Last week, Caleb led us through the first part of **John 7** - Jesus arriving in Jerusalem during the Feast of Booths - the people of God remembering on an annual basis that God has always provided for his people, has always led his people and protected them. If you have your Bible you can turn to **John 7, we'll finish this chapter today.**

These past few weeks for me have been filled with thoughts on eternity. One of my heroes of the faith, Timothy Keller is now with his Savior after a multi-year fight with pancreatic cancer.

If you are unfamiliar with the life, ministry, teachings and writings of Tim Keller, I cannot more strongly recommend his works to you; nor can I adequately express my gratitude for his impact on my own theology, faith, and calling to be a pastor.

The words that we are clinging to this year, from John's gospel, have brought me much hope!!

- **John 30:21 - in believing these things that are written you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and in believing in Him we may all have eternal life.**

In his last days, Keller had been in and out of the hospital before entering hospice Thursday May 18. Michael Keller, Tim's son and a NYC pastor as well, said his father had prayed this during his final hours, "I'm thankful for all the people who've prayed for me over the years. I'm thankful for my family, that loves me. I'm thankful for the time God has given me, but I'm ready to see Jesus. I can't wait to see Jesus. Send me home."

- My prayer, our prayer as a church, is that each of us, young and old, those currently walking with Jesus and those who will, would finish their race and echo His words... "I'm ready to see Jesus! Send me home!"
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As we begin today, remember the context of John 7. We find Jesus and his disciples in Jerusalem during the feast of booths, one of Israel's weeklong celebrations of God's faithfulness to carry His people through the wilderness and deliver them into the promised land.

Jesus has been teaching in the temple during the feast, and there is division among the people about what they are hearing, and who is this that teaches them this way...

Jesus defends the justice and mercy of God to heal on the sabbath, and yet there are still those who would kill him for breaking their traditions.

read [John 7:25-52](#)

³⁰So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come. ³¹Yet many of the people believed in him. They said, "When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done?"

They spoke with clear logic when they asked, **“When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this Man has done?”** It is fair to ask, who has done more than Jesus?

If Jesus isn't the Messiah, then when Messiah comes, will he...

- Do more miracles than Jesus?
- Teach with more insight and authority than Jesus?
- Love more remarkably than Jesus?
- Suffer with more courage than Jesus?
- Atoned for more sinners than Jesus?
- Raise from the dead with more triumph than Jesus?
- Ascend to heaven in greater glory than Jesus?
- Present a greater Gospel than Jesus?
- Change more lives than Jesus?
- Free more addictions than Jesus?
- Comfort more grief-stricken hearts than Jesus?
- Heal more broken hearts than Jesus?
- Restore more marriages than Jesus?
- Triumph over more tyrants than Jesus?
- Gain more followers than Jesus?¹

John 7:32-36 → Jesus is not speaking in parables or cute stories. He knows his time is coming, he knows his time is coming, when He will willingly lay down his life for the Glory of His Father and for the freedom of those held captive by sin.

- But as John has just previously said... “they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him because his time had not yet come” (v.30).

But he's far from done during this feast...

[37] On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. [38] Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” [39] Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Deeply moving moment in the life, ministry, and preaching of Jesus.

- For where he said it - standing outside the temple itself.
- When he said it - during the feast of booths, or tabernacles, with water being poured out in offering at the temple, remembering God's providing water in the desert.
- And how he announces this radical claim, literally crying out with passion and invitation for the people of Israel to come to him, the true King, sent by the Father in heaven.
- Also, this message is timely, the last time he will see them all gathered for a feast in Jerusalem before his arrest and crucifixion at the Passover of his death.
 - Over and over again, the heart of the Father on display ... come to me and drink...come to me!

¹ I'm indebted to Guzik for this string of questions. Taken from <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/john-7/>

Fulfilling the words of Isaiah the prophet:

Isaiah 12:1–4

[1] You will say in that day: “I will give thanks to you, O LORD, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, that you might comfort me.

[2] “Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the LORD GOD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.”

[3] With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. [4] And you will say in that day:

“Give thanks to the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples, proclaim that his name is exalted.”

Isaiah 49:8–13

[8] Thus says the LORD: “In a time of favor I have answered you; in a day of salvation I have helped you; I will keep you and give you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages,

[9] saying to the prisoners, ‘Come out,’ to those who are in darkness, ‘Appear.’ They shall feed along the ways; on all bare heights shall be their pasture;

[10] they shall not hunger or thirst, neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them, for he who has pity on them will lead them, and by springs of water will guide them.

[11] And I will make all my mountains a road, and my highways shall be raised up.

[12] Behold, these shall come from afar, and behold, these from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Syene.”

[13] Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth; break forth, O mountains, into singing!

For the LORD has comforted his people and will have compassion on his afflicted.

In believing in Jesus - not believing about Jesus - but in trusting him, putting all of your hopes on his promises, we find a source of life that always satisfies.

Whoever believes in Him - real, crucified, risen, and reigning - out of that man/woman’s soul is an overflowing stream - rivers of living water - the very presence of God himself in the Holy Spirit.

But our life doesn’t flip immediately does it? This life is full of moments where, like Peter, we promise faithfulness to the end, and with the next breath call down curses on him by denying him as Lord.

But for them, the spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

John 7:40-52

There is an incredible response of faith from some and others are deeply offended, ready to murder this crazy person claiming to be God.

While C.S. Lewis made famous the three possible options of how we receive Jesus - liar, lunatic or Lord - it was penned earlier by Watchman Nee in his 1936 work *Normal Christian Faith*:

A person who claims to be God must belong to one of three categories:

“First, if he claims to be God and yet in fact is not, he has to be a madman or a lunatic. Second, if he is neither God nor a lunatic, he has to be a liar, deceiving others by his lie. Third, if he is neither of these, he must be God.

You can only choose one of the three possibilities.

If you do not believe that he is God, you have to consider him a madman. If you cannot take him for either of the two, you have to take him for a liar. There is no need for us to prove if Jesus of Nazareth is God or not. All we have to do is find out if He is a lunatic or a liar. **If He is neither, He must be the Son of God.”²**

Not even the arresting officers had a reason for their lack of arrest other than, “No one ever spoke like this man!”

- Are you guys listening to this Jesus? Perhaps the ember of faith was struck in their souls when they came face to face with the idea of arresting the son of God?

In Summary

The Feast of Booths was a joyful celebration in Jerusalem. It commemorated the ingathering of the fall crops and the years the Israelites spent living in tents as they journeyed through the wilderness ([Lev. 23:33–43](#); [Num. 29:2–38](#)). Two symbols—water and light—played a significant role in this high feast. During the course of the week, water was drawn from Siloam and poured upon the altar, in commemoration of the refreshing stream that had come forth miraculously out of the rock at Meribah ([Ex. 17:1–7](#)).

Jesus’ loud invitation to the thirsty was a startling, even scandalous declaration. He was claiming to be the rock that Moses struck in the wilderness—the rock from which life-sustaining water flowed (see also [1 Cor. 10:1–4](#)). But Jesus was also looking ahead to the day of Pentecost, when “in the last days” he would pour out his Spirit ([Joel 2:28–29](#); [Acts 2](#)).³

For Those who believe:

1. God gives the Spirit, without measure - **For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure (John 3:34).**
2. Jesus sends the Spirit without reservation **“this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ (John 1:34)**
3. It is this same Spirit promised by Jesus that **enables** you to believe and **confirms** that you do:
[13] In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, [14] who is the guarantee(1) of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it,(2) to the praise of his glory. **(Ephesians 1:13-14)**

If there is anyone in this story, wrestling with the claims of this Jesus, it was Nicodemus. Desperate for truth, his faith is not one of radical transformation but of daily, small transformations.

- Whether you are overwhelmed with your sin and overjoyed by salvation today or find yourself asking, could anyone other than the Christ do these things, believe this today:
- **Jesus is the Son of God. and He still calls, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.”**
- Would your life be enraptured by this king, and **All of it a living anthem, capped off at its end with the prayer, “I can’t wait to see Jesus. Send me home.”**

² Watchman Nee, from *Normal Christian Faith*, quoted here by Justin Taylor at The Gospel Coalition:

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/is-c-s-lewiss-liar-lord-or-lunatic-argument-unsound/>

³ Scotty Smith, contributing author of Study Notes on John’s gospel in *The Gospel Transformation Bible*, ESV by Crossway.