

Water of Life

Portraits of Jesus - John 7

February 14, 2021

DAY 1: Jesus goes to the feast of Tabernacles - 7:1-13

John 7:1 After this, Jesus went around in Galilee, purposely staying away from Judea because the Jews there were waiting to take his life.

1. After the feeding of the 5,000, walking on water and His many healings, the Jewish leaders were looking for ways to not only discredit Jesus but put Him to death.

2. His brothers heap scorn on Him, deriding Him for His lame methods.

John 7:2 But when the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles was near, ³ Jesus' brothers said to him, "You ought to leave here and go to Judea, so that your disciples may see the miracles you do. ⁴ No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world." ⁵ For even his own brothers did not believe in him.

3. Jesus' brothers were skeptics, and clearly did not understand who Jesus was nor the dangers that now surrounded Him.

John 7:6 Therefore Jesus told them, "The right time for me has not yet come; for you any time is right.

4. Jesus will use two phrases throughout the book of John. Both point to the central point of His life—His death by crucifixion. The timing and events surrounding the cross were important.

a. "My time has not yet come." (John 2:4; 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20).

b. "My time has come." (John 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1).

5. Jesus cannot put Himself in a situation where He may be assassinated or murdered.

6. Why is there such resistance against Jesus Christ? His teaching cuts against our very pride!

John 7:7 The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify that what it does is evil.

John 7:11 Now at the Feast the Jews were watching for him and asking, "Where is that man?" ¹² Among the crowds there was widespread whispering about him. Some said, "He is a good man." Others replied, "No, he deceives the people." ¹³ But no one would say anything publicly about him for fear of the Jews.

7. Amazingly, all of the division, outrage, innuendo, and the trashing of culture cancer in our time was alive in Jesus' time as well.

8. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 2: Jesus teaches at the feast - 7:14-24

1. Jesus goes to the weeklong feast in Jerusalem, but privately and “under the radar.”
2. This section is mixed with the Jewish leaders’ responses which are critical, along with the crowd’s response which is a mixture of admiration, astonishment, and skepticism.

John 7:14 Not until halfway through the Feast did Jesus go up to the temple courts and begin to teach. ¹⁵ The Jews were amazed and asked, "How did this man get such learning without having studied?"

John 7:16 Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me.

¹⁷ If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.

¹⁸ He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him."

3. What does Jesus tell the crowd about His teaching?

a. It’s origin (v.16): _____

b. The person taught (v. 17) _____

c. Why the teacher teaches (v. 18) _____

John 7:19 "Has not Moses given you the law? Yet not one of you keeps the law. Why are you trying to kill me?"

4. Jesus confronts the Jewish leaders and people with what should have been an obvious disconnect. They claimed loyalty to Moses’ writings (the first five books of the bible), and yet “not one of you keeps the law.”

5. What should have been the response of the people?

6. Instead of honest introspection, this is their response...

John 7:20 "You are demon-possessed," the crowd answered. "Who is trying to kill you?"

7. What we don’t understand we demonize, in this case what Jesus is saying and Jesus Himself.

John 7:21 Jesus said to them, "I did one miracle, and you are all astonished. ²² Yet, because Moses gave you circumcision (though actually it did not come from Moses, but from the patriarchs), you circumcise a child on the Sabbath. ²³ Now if a child can be circumcised on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing the whole man on the Sabbath?"

8. Jesus refers back to John 5 when He healed the paralytic on the Sabbath, which prompted venom, hatred and death threats against Jesus.

9. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

DAY 3: Is Jesus the Christ? - 7:25-31

John 7:25 At that point some of the people of Jerusalem began to ask, "Isn't this the man they are trying to kill?"²⁶ Here he is, speaking publicly, and they are not saying a word to him. Have the authorities really concluded that he is the Christ?

1. Not only are the people confused about who Jesus is but they are also confused as to why the Jewish authorities are not confronting Jesus.

2. The central issue is this: "Is He the Christ?" Is He the long-awaited Messiah?

John 7:27 But we know where this man is from; when the Christ comes, no one will know where he is from."

3. Someone in the crowd says He is not the Messiah, based on the belief that "no one will know where He is from."

John 7:28 Then Jesus, still teaching in the temple courts, cried out, "Yes, you know me, and you know where I am from. I am not here on my own, but he who sent me is true. You do not know him,²⁹ but I know him because I am from him and he sent me."

4. In one sense Jesus is actually from three places. His origin of location was in heaven. He was born in Bethlehem. He was raised in Nazareth. All three were prophetic.

John 7:30 At this they tried to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his time had not yet come.

5. The leaders had "had enough." They tried to seize him in order to stone Him for blasphemy. Even though they "tried" to seize Him, "no one laid a hand on Him." We are not told the human element here. What we are told is the divine element that "stayed the hands" of those who would seize Him.

6. We are also told why they could not seize Him. "His time had not yet come." The "time" meant the time and circumstances of the crucifixion where Jesus would die for the sins of mankind.

John 7:31 Still, many in the crowd put their faith in him. They said, "When the Christ comes, will he do more miraculous signs than this man?"

7. There were "many" in the crowd that did put their faith in Him. The miracles that they watched Him perform were evidence enough.

8. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 4: Is Thirsty for the Water of Life

1. Several days pass.

John 7:37 On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. ³⁸Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him."

John 7:39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive....

2. The Feast of Tabernacles commemorated God sustaining His people for forty years in their wilderness wanderings with manna and water. Daily during the feast the priest poured water over a rock remembering how God provided water for the people out of a rock.

3. On the last day, Jesus uses this same metaphor to symbolize our real need of God.

4. Thirst. Every human being is thirsty. Four questions arise. (1) For what are we thirsty? (2) What can quench that thirst? (3) Do we even know we are thirsty? (4) What awakens thirst?

Question #1: For what are we thirsty?

There is a difference between what believe we are thirsty for and what we are actually thirsty for. The design of our human nature is that we are thirsty for God whether or not we think it so, or feel it. It is a fact of God's design of human nature. Unfortunately, our sin nature convinces us that we are thirsty for something other than God.

Question #2: What can quench our human thirst?

Jesus tells us that our thirst can only be quenched through Him, through a type of relationship with Him that acts like refreshing water to a dry, empty soul. Any other "thirst quencher" we pursue eventually acts like salt water. The law of diminishing returns takes over. Our soul increases its cravings and demands until it finally gives up on what we believe will quench our thirst. Then, we go charging off in search of a new "thirst-quencher."

Question #3: Do we even know we are thirsty?

Human beings will **deny our thirst** of God, by **numbing it**. That occurs through substitute water. This begs another question.

Question #4: What awakens a thirst for God?

a. One way is through **personal pain** that finally digs down deeper into our souls to awaken a deeper thirst for God we did know was there or did not want to admit. Pain becomes the surprising key that finally unlocks the door of our soul.

b. A second way we become aware of a deeper thirst is when all other "waters" have been tried and they are all seen as **insufficient to quench thirst**.

c. A third way is the realization that even what we consider **our "best" substitute waters cannot quench** our thirst.

Isaiah 55:1 "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost."

5. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 5: The anatomy of unbelief - 7:45-53

1. The Pharisees sent the temple guards out to arrest Jesus, but they came back empty-handed.

John 7:45 Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why didn't you bring him in?"⁴⁶ "No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards declared.

2. Why didn't they arrest Jesus?

3. What follows is a stunning anatomy of how unbelief works. Under each of the verses below, jot down what kept unbelief alive? What justifications or rationalizations did they use? What methods of debate?

John 7:47 "You mean he has deceived you also?" the Pharisees retorted.

John 7:48 "Has any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in him?"

John 7:49 "No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law--there is a curse on them."

John 7:50 Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier and who was one of their own number, asked,⁵¹ "Does our law condemn anyone without first hearing him to find out what he is doing?"

John 7:52 They replied, "Are you from Galilee, too? Look into it, and you will find that a prophet does not come out of Galilee."

4. This episode presents a contrast between an open mind and a closed mind. It demonstrates the elements that create the potential for belief or the framework for unbelief.

(a) Accuse those with whom you disagree of being deceived (v. 47).

(b) Point out that the ruling class, the educated, the elite, and intellectuals don't believe (v. 48).

(c) Accuse those who do believe of being ignorant and uneducated (v. 49).

(d) Demonize those who believe. Name call. "Mob" insinuates that they are fools and dangerous (v. 49)

(e) Accuse them of being controlled by evil (v. 49).

(f) Assume only you have all the fact and that your facts are all correct (v.52).

SUMMARY: None of these methods deal with the actual topic itself.

5. What strikes you from today's devotional?