

## Sunday Morning Message

July 7, 2022

*Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles – Part One (vs 1 – 36)*

*The Gospel According to John*

Text – John 7:1 - 36

Congregational Reading – John 7:25 - 31

### Introduction

In the last message from the Gospel of John from chapter six, we discussed the *Feeding of the Five Thousand*, which took place around the time of the Passover up near the area of the Sea of Galilee. Today, in chapter seven, we will fast forward approximately seven months to the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. I believe this event takes place in the third year of Jesus earthly ministry. We are only in chapter seven of this gospel, yet we are already near the end of His earthly life. As we have said many times previously in this study, John's Gospel makes no attempt to include all the events from Jesus earthly life. John's focus will be primarily on Jesus' words, not His works, and He will spend much of His book discussing the last year of Jesus life in and around Jerusalem.

The Feast of Tabernacles was an eight-day long feast that took place in the Jewish month Tishri from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup> in fall of the year, which corresponds to either late September or early October in our calendar. It was also known as the Feast of Booths or the Feast of Ingathering. It was one of the three feasts when all Jewish males were required to appear before the Lord in Jerusalem. The other two were Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and Pentecost, which both took place in the spring. During Tabernacles the people would live in booths made of boughs of tree limbs. These tents were to remind Israel that they lived in tents for the forty years that they wandered the wilderness after being rescued from Egypt. These Tabernacle feast days were a time of rejoicing and celebrated the harvest. (See Exodus 23:16; Leviticus 23:33 – 36; 39 – 43; Deuteronomy 16:13 – 15)

#### I. Jesus Disputes with His Unbelieving Brothers (vs. 1 – 9)

V. 1 – John explains that during this gap of time between John six and John seven, Jesus was geographically located in Galilee, purposely keeping a low profile from the religious leadership in Jerusalem. Ever since Jesus had healed the paralytic man in Jerusalem on

the Sabbath day (chapter five), the religious leaders were looking for an opportunity to kill Him:

*"And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day." (John 5:16)*

Jesus was not trying to escape death, but he was determining when He was going to die.

*"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10)*

*"For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." (Isaiah 50:7)*

Jesus earthly mission would culminate in His death. He knew He was going to have to die for the sins of the world, but He would die when He determined. His time had not yet come, and Jesus would not die before His time.

Verses 2 – 9 – Jesus had four younger brothers, and at least two younger sisters:

*"Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?" (Matthew 13:55-56)*

His brothers would come to full belief in Him after the resurrection. James would become the leader of the Church at Jerusalem and also would write the Epistle of James; Jude would also write the letter that bears his name.

Jesus will not go up to the feast with His brothers on their timetable. His brothers do not yet believe that Jesus is the Messiah. They knew He was different, and they also knew He could do some amazing things, but they still had not come to accept that He was God incarnate. This is a little mind-boggling to us. How could His brothers not know? However, this is the way it is with most people. Most of the world believes something about Jesus. Most people believe that Jesus was a great man who taught great things, and many of them also believe that did some amazing miraculous works. However, most of the world has not submitted to His lordship and have not turned their lives over to Him.

Jesus' earthly brothers possibly had the same expectations about the Messiah that many in Israel did. They expected the Messiah to overthrow the oppressive Roman government and clean out the corruption among the religious leaders in Judaism. So far, Jesus was

not doing any of those things. The brothers were almost daring Jesus to go to Jerusalem and get things moving if He was in fact who He was claiming to be.

Notice in vs. 16 and 16 the statement: "my time has not yet come." He said something similar to His mother at the wedding in Cana in Galilee: "mine hour is not yet come." (John 2:4) He was referring to the hour or time of His death. Jesus operated on His own timetable.

Notice in verse seven, Jesus says: "the world cannot hate you." The world loves those that belong to it (vs. 18 – 19). However, those that belong to God and live for God, the world will hate (see John 15:18 – 25; 16:1 – 3).

*"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." (2 Timothy 3:12-13)*

## **II. Jesus Delays His Appearance at the Feast (vs. 10 – 13)**

Jesus does travel down to Jerusalem but purposely hides Himself until a few days into the feast. Everybody was looking for Him (vs. 11). They wanted to see some action. They wanted to see what the religious leaders were going to do to Him, or perhaps what He was going to do to the religious leaders. Maybe this will be the time of the big upheaval. The people were confused (v. 12). Some thought He was a good man. Others though He was a fake, a deceiver. All the people were speaking in whispers (v. 13), because they were afraid of the religious leadership. Very few were willing to boldly proclaim that they were followers of Jesus.

Illustrate – It is the same way today. Few people like to talk about Jesus openly. Very few want to make it known publicly where they stand regarding Jesus. Jesus has many closet followers, like Nicodemus, who we will see again here in this passage.

## **III. Jesus Dodges the Attempts by the Religious Leaders to Apprehend Him (vs. 14 – 36)**

In the midst of the feast, Jesus comes out from hiding Himself and begins to teach openly in the Temple. It was a common practice for prominent rabbis to teach in one of the courts surrounding the Temple where many would be gathered, especially during these major feasts.

### **A. They are Amazed (vs. 14 – 15)**

The religious leadership was amazed at the words that Jesus spoke because they knew He had no formal training. He spoke the word of God with authority because He was the Word of God; He was the word made into flesh.

*"And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers." (Luke 2:46-47)*

*"And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."  
(Matthew 7:28-29)*

Formal training is not a prerequisite to Bible preaching and teaching. God can train and teach His ministers without any training. What is required today is:

1. A saved individual who is hungry to learn and share what he learns.
2. A Bible
3. The indwelling Holy Spirit of God who will guide into all truth.
4. A good Bible believing church that will teach and disciple believers.

Illustrate – Pastor Clark; Bobby Roberson; Curtis Hudson; D. L. Moody; Charles Haddon Spurgeon

I believe in education or formal training, but it is not required. If it is available and you can get it, then do it. It will help you. But understand that your authority does not come from the institution that confers a degree upon you; it comes from God, and from the local church that recognizes God's hand upon you.

Illustrate – The local church is primarily responsible to train. It utilizes many tools:

1. Preaching
2. Sunday School
3. Discipleship
4. Bible Institute
5. Bible College

### **B. They are Admonished (vs. 16 – 29)**

The main thrust of this passage deals with the fact that people who truly know God will also know that Jesus is the Messiah that was sent from God (vs. 17 & 28).

Note – If you really want to know God, He will reveal Himself to you. You are as close to God as you desire to be.

*"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you..." (James 4:8)*

**In vs. 21 – 24**, Jesus references the healing of the paralytic man from back in chapter five. The religious leaders were still upset about that because Jesus healed him on the Sabbath day. Jesus basically states that it was the right thing to do – it was a righteous judgment or a right decision.

There was another similar event which took place shortly after Jesus healed the paralytic man. It is recorded by all three of the synoptic writers, but not by John.

*"And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him. And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days. Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other. Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him." (Matthew 12:10-14)*

**In vs. 25 – 29**, we see the confusion of the people. They claim that nobody would know where Messiah would come from. However, that was not true:

*"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." (Micah 5:2)*

Some erroneously thought that Jesus was born in Galilee (vs. 41 & 52). They should have done better research.

Practical Note – Did you ever notice that people sometimes spout off about stuff that they have no clue about. You see it a lot on the news. People make all kinds of bold claims that are later shown to be false. Sometimes its out of ignorance, but sometimes it is because they are intentionally trying to deceive. This is one of the Devil's greatest weapons – deceit – Fake News. He is the father of lies. Christians, however, are bound to the Truth. We cannot lie, or at least, we are commanded to only speak what we know to be true. The lost world, however, does not have to play by those rules.

### C. They are Averted (vs. 30 – 36)

Twice in this passage, it is mentioned that the Jewish leaders attempted to take Him, but we know that Jesus would not be taken until the Passover, which would not be for another six months. Jesus was going to die on His timetable.

The religious leaders had no idea what Jesus was talking about. He was referring to His ascension back up into Heaven from where He came. They would not be going there with Him, because they were rejecting Him. If they would only receive Him, then they could follow Him into Heaven.

### Conclusion

You and I are going to die on His timetable also:

*"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:"* (Hebrews 9:27)

That is why I usually do not worry about all the things that people are petrified of in this world. God is in control. God is sovereign over my destiny. God will determine the time and manner of my death.

Illustrate – My mom was not worried about COVID. She wasn't careless or stupid. She wore the masks when she went out, but she never stopped doing what she wanted to do. She continued to do the Food Bank ministry at her church. She was adamant about the fact that she wanted to see her children and especially her grandchildren. She did die during the COVID time, but it was not COVID that killed her, it was cancer. But really, it wasn't cancer, it was just her time.

*"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith; That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again."* (Philippians 1:21-26)

Christian, you will die on the Lord's timetable. When you are no longer needed down here, God will take you up to Heaven.