

The Gospel of John

7:11-24

Welcome back to this week's study in the book of John.
As with this study and all bible studies, remember to pray before you start.

Last week we read of Jesus talking to His brothers, who didn't believe in Him at the time. They were telling Jesus to go to the Feast of Tabernacles, and Jesus told them to go ahead that it wasn't time for Him to go yet. And as we learned, it may have been because Jesus wanted to seek the Lord before going. The end of last week's study we did read that Jesus did finally go. This week we will read of the Jews confronting Jesus again as He gets there.

One more note on last week's study. Remember I said that there was a seven-month period between chapter 6 and 7. Well chapter seven also starts the last six-month's of Jesus' ministry before He is crucified.

✎ John 7:11-15 Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, "Where is He?" And there was much complaining among the people concerning Him. Some said, "He is good"; others said, "No, on the contrary, He deceives the people." However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews. Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught. And the Jews marveled, saying, "How does this Man know letters, having never studied?"

When I read this, it seemed like I was in the middle of a really good movie, as you read of the anticipation of Jesus' arrival. Then the mention of what others are saying in secret, wondering if Jesus will show up. Then in the middle of the feast Jesus shows up and does what only Jesus can do, and that's teach God's word.

But this is not a movie and it's not just a story to entertain people. That is one of the coolest things about the bible, that it's all true. Everything you read actually happened, or will happen. There is no changing the story. And if you read to the end of the book, you know that we as Christians will live happily ever after with the Lord.

When you read the bible over and over, you start to know what's going to happen before you get there. It's like watching a movie a few times, you know what others are supposed to do and you think that this is a piece of cake and you know it all now.

We tend to do this with the bible and the stories we read in it. We know that Abraham shouldn't give into his wife Sarah's request to sleep with her handmaid, but he does. We know that God will bless Abraham and Sarah with a child even at the age of over a hundred. We want to encourage Joseph to hang in there when he is thrown in a pit by his brothers, because we know the end of the story and how he will become the right hand man to the Pharaoh of Egypt.

We want the children of Israel not to worry because God is about to part the Red Sea for them and He will deliver them from the hands of the Egyptians.

We tell David not to sleep with Bathsheba because we know the results. But he does it anyway and we shake our heads at him in disappointment.

We tell Samson not to be so foolish and stop being a woman chaser and listen to God. But he doesn't.

We urge Daniel to hang in there even though he is thrown in a den of lions to be eaten for obeying God and not man.

We tell Peter not to deny the Lord, but he does anyway.

We look down on Thomas because he doubted that Jesus rose from the dead and he wanted to see evidence of Jesus' resurrection.

We read in Acts of what Paul (Saul) did, but we know he turns out ok as the Lord meets him on the road and he is converted to Christianity.

Yes, it's so easy to tell others what to do when you already know the outcome or have read the story. But when it comes to our lives, we seem to blow it so many times.

We go through the same things others have in the bible, and even though we can encourage them along and can tell them what to do, we fall the same way they did in the bible.

All of this is to say that the bible is 100% true, including everything that the people went through. The stories are there so we can learn from them and from others mistakes.

It also shows us that no matter how wise or rich you are, like king Solomon, or even if you deny Jesus like Peter did. Or if you blow it big time like Samson did, or whatever mistake you made, that God will forgive you and will never leave you no matter how bad you blew it or even how many times you did.

Look at Abraham who listened to his wife instead of God, and who lied to save his own skin. These are just a few things Abraham did, but still God loved him and blessed him.

Why, because that's what God does, and that's why He is God!

We don't need to understand what God does, just believe in Him.

So here it is, the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Jewish leaders are looking for Jesus. Why are they looking for Jesus?

John gave us the answer last week.

 **John 7:1** *After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him.*

But as we learned, Jesus spent time with the Father and I believe the Father told Jesus to go ahead to this feast. So Jesus goes with no fear of His life, because He knows His time has not come yet for Him to die.

So the Jews are looking for Jesus and everyone else is talking about Him saying: ***Some said, "He is good"; others said, "No, on the contrary, He deceives the people."***

There seemed to be much confusion about Jesus, and we know this confusion was not from God.

† **1 Cor 14:33** *For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.*

So who brought this confusion?

satan of course, and he used the Jewish leaders to do it. How do we know this? Because of verse 13.

✎ *However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews.*

Or as it says in the NLT.

✎ **John 7:13 (NLT)** *But no one had the courage to speak favorably about him in public, for they were afraid of getting in trouble with the Jewish leaders.*

Fear is one of the biggest things satan uses and we all seem to fall for it.

It's fear that keeps us from sharing Jesus with others.

It's fear that keeps us from doing the work the Lord has called us to do.

It is fear that stops some from going to a home group because they fear they will be called on to read or pray.

It's fear that hinders us from praying with others.

It's fear of not being accepted by your friends that causes you to go places you shouldn't be going to as a Christian.

It's fear that stops you from tithing or giving back to God.

It was fear that prevented others to ask the religious leaders questions about Jesus.

Maybe if people did ask the religious leaders, they would see how true Jesus' words were and how wrong the Jewish leaders teachings were. Because we know that they taught their own man made rules, which were most of the time were totally different then what God had said.

People were talking all over the place about Jesus, but their talk was in secret so they wouldn't be thrown out of the synagogue.

✎ *Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught. And the Jews marveled, saying, "How does this Man know letters, having never studied?"*

Through the whole feast, people were talking about Jesus. Then in the middle of the feast, Jesus shows up and starts teaching in the temple.

We don't know all that Jesus was teaching on, but I wonder if He answered the questions of those who were arguing about Him. Then the only thing they could think to say was:

"How does this Man know letters, having never studied?"

I've told you this before, but I don't have a high school diploma and I never went to collage or seminary.

I am not against any of these, but you don't need the world's education to teach God's word or to share the gospel. All you need is prayer, and reading God's word, the Holy Spirit will do the rest; you can see the evidence of that right here in this website. It has taken over 15 years for this to grow to what it has and I always have and always will give all the glory to the Lord for all of it. It's not by my wisdom or talents that this has been happening, but by the grace of God to use someone like me.

Everyday I still can't believe it, but I see it with my own eyes what the Lord has done. The Lord wants to do the same with you to. Maybe not teaching on the Internet or maybe He does. But the Lord wants to use you, that's right, you. All you have to do is say, "yes Lord use me", and be obedient to what He wants you to do. And even when you mess up, like I have many times, He will still use you as you repent and turn to Him.

So the Jews marveled, because Jesus taught things that took them years to learn. The problem was that they were too expectant on man to teach them, rather than the Lord. They seemed to know their own man made laws very well, but God's law, even though they had memorized it, they didn't understand it.

✎ ***John 7:16-19 Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him. Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?"***

There it is, Jesus gives glory to God and testifies that it's the Lord speaking through Him, and it's the Lord giving Jesus the knowledge. Jesus lets them know how to determine if anyone's teaching is from the Lord or man.

✎ ***He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him.***

When others teach according to the world's way, there is much emphasis on themselves rather than the Lord. But when the Lord is using a person, the glory and the teachings point to the Lord and not the teacher or the one speaking. That's what you find in Jesus' teachings, they always point to God and glorify God. Jesus goes on to say.

✎ ***"Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?"***

The Jewish leaders were so quick to make sure that everyone followed God's law and they taught the people to follow it, but they themselves were quick to break God's command.

Their thinking is that “*we are holy men of God; we even have the robes we are wearing to prove it.*” It’s not the clothes or the education that makes a man; rather it’s what’s in a man heart that determines who he is.

These religious leaders seem holy on the outside, but inside they were seeking to murder a man, and that man was Jesus. Why did they want to kill Jesus?

Remember back in chapter five when Jesus healed the man at the pool of Bethesda? Then Jesus told the man to take up his bed and walk. This made the Jewish leaders angry, because according to their tradition, this man was breaking the Sabbath and Jesus told him to do it.

† **John 5:16-18** *For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working." Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.*

So their come back to Jesus was.

✠ **John 7:20** *The people answered and said, "You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?"*

Blame it on the devil. I think we give the devil to much credit for things he’s not responsible for. Now, don’t get me wrong, I know he is responsible for a lot of things in my life alone, as well as yours. But there are things we are responsible for ourselves. We just use satan as our scapegoat. The old term, the devil made me do it has always been a copout instead of admitting that we are sinners and we messed up. But Jesus never said to pray and ask the Lord to forgive you for what the devil made you do. That’s because we all have a free will to do right or wrong.

You can read your bible and listen to what the Lord tells you to do, and on the other side the devil is telling you to do the opposite. But the choice is yours, who you will listen to? When we listen to the Lord we are doing His will, but when we listen to satan, that’s when WE mess up. Satan never forced you to sin, but he sure can make sin tempting and seem good in our eyes.

So the Jews can’t understand what’s going on here. How can this lowly carpenter know just as much and more about the bible then they do? They don’t understand, so it must be evil, at least that’s what they thought.

✠ **John 7:21-24** *Jesus answered and said to them, "I did one work, and you all marvel. Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, so that the law of Moses should not be broken,*

***are you angry with Me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath?
Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."***

So what was this one work that Jesus did?

Once again we have to go back to chapter 5 speaking of when Jesus healed the man at Bethesda. After all that was when this all started, seven months ago, and they still wanted to kill Jesus for what He did back then.

This is what happens when you hold anger inside. As time goes on, it even festers and gets worse than it was before. It was seven months since Jesus healed the man but as we read this week they were still looking for Him.

✎ **John 7:11** *Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, "Where is He?"*

You may think that seven months is a long time to hold a grudge against someone. But if you think about it, are there people that you were angry with, that you still may be angry with after many years.

That's why the Lord tells us to go and reconcile ourselves with these people.

✠ **Matt 5:23-24** *Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.*

Seek the Lord's forgiveness and seek theirs also.

Jesus goes on to explain why this was not a sin.

✎ **"Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, so that the law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath? Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."**

Jesus speaks of circumcision and explains that they keep referring to Moses as the one who gave them the law of circumcision, but actually it all started with Abraham, that's what Jesus means by **fathers**.

✠ **Gen 17:9-11** *And God said to Abraham: "As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you."*

It seems the religious leaders put so much emphasis on Moses, that they worshipped Moses more the God. They continually quote Moses, but was it not God who gave the law to Moses!

Jesus goes on to say in a sense; so if you keep the law of God and circumcise a man on the Sabbath day are you not doing what you call work? If you do what God says on the Sabbath and circumcise a man, why get mad at me because I healed a man on the Sabbath day just as the Father told Me to. Neither of these are works, but you guys are judging according to what you see with your physical eyes. But as the religious leaders you should be judging with spiritual eyes.

Do you look at these young Christian bands with colored hair, tattoos and loud music and judge them because of what you see?

I would suggest buying one of their CD's or going to their website and don't listen to the music, but just read the words that they write, here is an example of a song by Kutless called Saved.

You ask me why I need this faith
I tell you now it's the only way
To be set free from all your pain
You must accept these words I say
I need your focus just this day
Let me reveal to you a friend
He'll give you purpose and eternal life
He is the Christ and to Him I say

I know that You are the only way
To be saved from my infirmity
You shed Your blood
You gave Your love away
Oh all to cover me

I tell you now that He is the way
Jesus You ransomed my frailty
Yes I found I know He is the truth
The truth the life and the way
The way

I know that You are the only way
To be saved from my infirmity
You shed Your blood
You gave Your love away
Oh all to cover me

I cry out to You

With the love that fills my heart
I give my life to You
In faith I won't depart

Oh now won't you come and take Him in
He'll be more than you could ever dream
It's Jesus Christ in Him we trust
He is the truth the life and the way
The way, the way, the way
To be saved

I know that You are the only way
To be saved from my infirmity
You shed Your blood
You gave Your love away
Oh all to cover me

I cry out to You
With the love that fills my heart
I give my life to You
In faith I won't depart
I know it'll be all right, okay

Now if that's not the gospel, I don't know what is!
Well that's it for this week. This conversation isn't over yet, so come back next week.

May God richly bless you in His love grace and mercy and may you judge with righteous judgment, not mans.