

## **Come And Drink**

### **John 7**

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In John 7, I want to make it clear, we come to a new division of the gospel of John. Let me back up and kind of give you the divisions. There are different places to outline this, but this is one I think to be the best. In chapters 1-4, we have what is called the consideration where we have really the theme of: Behold Your God. In chapters 5-6, we just finished, we look at the section on controversy. Now, we move tonight, chapters 7-11:53, almost to the end of the eleventh chapter, to the third division of John's gospel, the section known as conflict. We move from consideration, controversy, to conflict. This is going to lead to the crucifixion. This is Jesus coming into conflict six months before the cross. Six months before the crucifixion, Jesus is going to come into conflict where the Jewish leaders now have purposed to kill Him; but He can't die at the time of the Feast of Booths, He will die at the time of the Passover because He is the Passover Lamb.

I'm going to outline this whole chapter for you tonight. There are three main divisions, and they all swirl around the time known as the Feast of Tabernacles. The first section runs from verses 1-9, where we have before the feast, and the theme there is doubt. We have the doubt of His brothers that He really is the Messiah, the Savior of the world. Let's read John 7:1-9. John says, "After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry," that's a phrase referring to Judea, having Jerusalem as its capital. He wouldn't go down to Jerusalem or walk in the area of Judea, "because the Jews sought to kill him." That sets the theme of controversy in these several chapters.

Verse 2, "Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. 3 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. 4 For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. 5 For neither did his brethren believe in him." I was going to come back to it, but at this point let me point something out. The reference to "his brethren" in verse 3, "therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea," are the same ones referred to in verse 5, "For neither did his brethren believe in him." Those brethren are His half-brothers. Mary and Joseph finally consummated their marriage and had other children. Those other children became half-brothers of Jesus. Jesus was their big brother. Can you imagine your big brother is the Messiah, the Savior of the world? I mean, you're hanging out in the bedroom and He jumps up on the toy box, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, but by Me." "Mom! Jesus is flippin out!" His brothers did not believe in Him. I'll come back to that in just a moment. "For neither did his brethren believe in him."

Verse 6, "Then Jesus said unto them, My time," take note of that, we'll come back, "is not yet come: but your time is alway ready," referring to His brothers. "The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. 8 Go ye up unto this feast: I

go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come. 9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee.” We could spend the whole night on this little section here, but I want to bring out some important points and then we’ll move on. “After these things,” what things? After Jesus had healed the man (John 5) at the pool of Bethesda, the five porches or the pools, and the lame man that was healed on the Sabbath day, that brought Jesus into conflict with the religious leaders violating, by their standards not God’s, their Sabbath law; and when He performed these miracles by feeding the five thousand, He referred to Himself as the bread of God that comes down from heaven that if a man eats thereof, he will never hunger, and he that comes to Me shall never thirst, and you had to eat His flesh and drink His blood. They’ve had enough of this. It’s time for this Guy to go. So, “After these things Jesus walked in Galilee.” This was a period of about six months. Jesus moved His ministry from Judea to the north up in the area known as Galilee. This is what is called His Galilean ministry because the Jews sought to kill Him. Now the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles was at hand, so everything we read in chapter 7 happened around or during the Feast of Tabernacles.

Just a little bit of information about the Feast of Tabernacles. There were three feasts that every male Jew had to attend in Jerusalem annually. They were mandatory feasts. They were the feast of Passover, there was the Feast of Pentecost following 50 days after that, and then there was the Feast of Tabernacles, which is our feast here in chapter 7. It was six months after the Feast of Passover. Passover happened in the springtime, around April, and Passover was that time that celebrated the exodus out of Egypt when the lamb was slain and the blood was applied to their homes, the angel came over their homes and were spared death of the firstborn, they came out in the exodus, so they would celebrate Passover. That’s when Jesus is going to die in six months because He is the Passover Lamb of God. That lamb that was slain in Egypt was a picture or a type of Jesus, the Lamb of God, who would be crucified on the cross for our sins.

Then there was the Feast of Pentecost, when the day of Pentecost came (Acts 2), the Feast of Ingathering and so forth, and then the Feast of Tabernacles. Now, the Tabernacles, sometimes called Sukkot or booths, was to celebrate their time in the wilderness journey. They would move out of their homes and actually live inside little shacks or a lean-to, so it’s called Sukkot or tabernacles, little shacks. They even today will do this, they’ll build the shack and just have it outside their house like we would have a Christmas ornament of the Nativity. They may not actually live in it; but it’s to celebrate the time they were in the wilderness and God kept them, provided for them, and sustained them during their journey in the wilderness. It reminded them of the fact that they slept under the stars and had to trust God during that 40-year time to provide all of their needs. This took place in around September-October, lasted for eight days, seven days and then the final eighth day of that Feast of Tabernacles or booths. It was on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, which is our September-October.

Verse 3, “His brethren therefore said unto him,” that’s all just setting the stage, “Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.” The brothers of Jesus did not really believe that He was the Messiah. They’d been hearing about His miracles, and they’re trying to kind of force Him to, “If You’re really the Messiah, then go into Judea and

show Yourself as the Messiah. People will follow, and people will believe,” they’re doing it in an aggravated way. They were antagonistic toward Him, “If you’re really the Messiah, then go down and perform some miracles. Why are you hiding up here in Galilee?” The disciples, mentioned in verse 3, are not the twelve disciples. These are just those who are followers of Christ in the southern area of Judea. They said, “For there is no man,” this is part of their little speech to their big brother, Jesus, “that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world,” it’s time to really come out publicly, “For neither did his brethren believe in him.”

Notice what Jesus says, “My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready. 7 The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. 8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come.” We’re all familiar that Jesus used the common phrase in the gospels the idea of “My hour is not yet come.” I want you to understand the distinction here. The “hour that has not yet come” Jesus is referring to, it’s a different Greek word that is translated time here. Jesus is referring to His crucifixion, His death by crucifixion. What we see in this interchange between His unbelieving brothers and Himself is that Jesus was walking in the Father’s timetable for Him. Jesus knew when He would die, thus He is divine, His omniscience; and Jesus was in the Father’s will about His death on the cross. He wasn’t doing what He wanted, He was doing what the Father wanted. This is a very important point for you and me. The same should be true of us. Don’t let the world press you into its mold. Don’t let them talk you into doing things that are out of God’s will. Jesus could’ve said to His brothers, “Oh, I’m just going to show you. I’m going to go to Judea, and I’m going to do some super miracles for you. You guys don’t believe Me? Well, watch this.” No, He was committed to the Father’s purpose, plan, and timing for His life. How commendable is that for us as well.

What does He mean here when He says, “My time is not yet come”? He’s referring to the time of His public show and demonstration. I believe it has primary application to what we know as Palm Sunday, when Jesus would get on the little donkey and ride triumphantly into Jerusalem fulfilling the Scriptures that He would come on a donkey, meek and lowly, that your King cometh to you upon a donkey. Jesus is saying, “This is not the right time for My public display or My public demonstration,” but Jesus was walking according to the purpose and plan of His Father in heaven. I think that we should pray and ask God to guide us, lead us, direct us, and keep us in the center of His purpose, plan, and will for our lives. Amen? Nothing more important for you to say, “God, you bought me by Your blood, I belong to You. Guide me, lead me, direct me according to Your timetable.”

In verse 7, Jesus mentions, “The world cannot hate you: but me it hateth,” and He tells us why, “because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.” It’s the same thing today. The world hates Jesus because He testifies that its works are evil, right? And the same reason the world hates you and me is because we testify of it that its works are evil, so you have that hostility. The same reason the world rejected Jesus is the same reason the world rejects us, Jesus’ followers. He tells them, “Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come. 9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee.”

Now, we move from before the feast and the doubt of His brothers to secondly, verses 10-36, a larger section, during the feast and the debate that would happen mainly with the Jewish leaders and some of the people who were unbelievers and not His followers. The theme here is debate, so we move from doubt to debate. I want to outline this section for you. In verses 10-13, we have they debated His character. It says, "But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast," but this is the key here, "not openly, but as it were in secret." Some people accuse Jesus of lying here. Jesus said, "No, it's not My time, you go up. I'm not going to go up." What He meant was, "I'm not going up the way you want Me to go up. I'm going to go up in the Father's time. I'm going to go up in the Father's way." The same thing should be true of you and me. We're going to be in the Father's timing, and we're going to do it the Father's way. He would go up, but He's not going to go up in a public show or demonstration. He's going to go up secretly, verse 10.

Verse 11, "Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?" He didn't go with His family or His disciples. He didn't go in a big group or entourage. He didn't go with his brethren. He just went up secretly, and they kind of lost Him in the crowd. A lot of pilgrims would be there for the Feast of Tabernacles. "Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he? 12 And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people. 13 Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews." The Bible says, "The fear of man bringeth a snare," Proverbs 29:25. Nothing worse than living your life by the fear of man. This is something that the Lord really spoke to me about as a young man coming to Christ because before that I was living for the opinions and approval of my friends. I finally said, "Forget that! I want to live for God," and all my friends turned against me. Don't live for the approval and the applause of the world, live for God. Don't be afraid of what man may do unto you or what man may think about you. In this section here, we have them debating His character. The Jews are looking for Him, and they heard the people murmuring.

The world is always divided over who Jesus is. Every Christmas, TIME Magazine does a cover story on: Who is Jesus? You think after this many years they'd get it straight, right? All these different opinions, ideas, and views...remember when Jesus turned to His disciples and said, "Who do men say that I am?" "Some say You're John the Baptist. Some say You're Elijah. Some say You're a Prophet come back from the dead." "But, who do You say that I am?" That's the question, "Whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Who is Jesus Christ? He is the Messiah, the Son of the living God. Amen? Some people think He's just a good man. Some people think He's just a prophet, but here we have two categories: He's a good man or He is deceiving the people.

C.S. Lewis talked about Jesus either being liar, lunatic, or Lord. Those are the only three categories you have. He claimed to be God, either His claims are true or false. No question about it, Jesus claimed to be God—I and the Father are One—and they picked up rocks to try to stone Him to death. Jesus' claim is either true or false. If it is false, then He either lied about

it or He's deceived thinking He is the Son of God and needs to be institutionalized, locked up, or pitied. He's either a liar, a lunatic, or maybe His claims are true, and I believe they are, Jesus Christ is Lord. He's not just a good man. So many people today don't want to call Him a liar. They don't want to think of Him as a lunatic, but they don't want to trust Him as Lord. The truth is, that category of being a good moral teacher does not exist. He's either a liar, He's deluded, or He is who He claimed to be—the Lord of lords and the King of kings. So, who is Jesus? They were confused about who He was.

Then, they began to debate and discuss His doctrine, verses 14-18. "Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught." Now, we're in the middle of the feast. It's an eight-day celebration, and in the middle of that week of Feast of Booths, Jesus goes to the temple. Remember He went, again, secretly, not making a big show, but He began to teach. "And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" What that means is, "He didn't go to our rabbinical schools. He doesn't have our degrees. He didn't sit at our feet." They thought they were the only ones that had any knowledge of God or His Word, "How does He really know these things?" Little did they realize that He is the Son of God. "And Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." I love that! Every preacher should be preaching God's Word, not his own ideas. Jesus said, "I've come to share what the Father gave Me to share. It's not My doctrine." He says, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. 18 He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory," take that to heart, "but he that seeketh his glory that sent him," which is what Jesus was doing, "the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him."

These religious leaders of the Jews were seeking their own glory, not the glory of God the Father. Jesus was delivering His message for His glory. Again, that's what we should do. We should be delivering God's message for the glory of God. I want you to go back for a minute to verse 17. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God," this is an amazing statement from the lips of Jesus. Perhaps a better translation would literally be: If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak of myself.

Jesus reveals a very very important and profound truth here; that is, a willingness to obey is the secret of learning God's truth. When you study the Bible, read the Bible, hear God's Word, for you to get an understanding and for God to speak to your heart, then you have to be willing to obey. If you put up a wall and say, "Well, I don't care what God says," and "I don't really want to know what God says," and "I'm not going to obey what God says," then why is God going to reveal anything to you? The secret of being a recipient of God's revelation in His Word is a willingness to do His will, understanding, "God, You speak and I will obey." I love that statement by the boy Samuel in the temple under Eli the priest. He actually said, "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening." That's the idea—not just listening, but I will obey. When you open your Bible, you should say the same prayer: "Lord, speak. I'm listening, and that's with an idea of obeying You." If you want to get more out of your Bible study, then be willing to obey what is taught in God's Word. If any man is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether

it is of God. I love verse 18, "He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him."

They begin to debate His works in verses 19-24. "Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?" Jesus says. "The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?" First, they say, "Oh, He's a good man. No, He deceives the people." Now, they're saying, "This dude is demon-possessed. No one is trying to kill Him." "Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel. 22 Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man. 23 If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?"

What Jesus is doing is now kind of going on the offense in the temple with the religious leaders, pointing out to them their inconsistency. He's showing them that they don't really respect and obey God's law, and He talks about the law that Moses gave of circumcision. They will circumcise a man on the Sabbath day and not see it as a violation of working on the Sabbath day, and Jesus said, "Because I've healed someone on the Sabbath day, because I've done this good work, I performed this miracle," and again, that's an allusion to chapter 5, the lame man, and chapter 6, the feeding of the five thousand, "I've done these miracles and you're all upset with me, but you guys violate your own Sabbath law yourselves." Notice verse 24, "Judge not according to the appearance," which is what religious people do, even still today, what the Jews did, "but judge righteous judgment." They were judging on outward appearance.

In verses 25-31, they begin to debate His origin. This is a fascinating section. "Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill?" We move from His interaction with the religious leaders, the Jews, to just some of the populous or the people in Jerusalem. They said, "What's the deal here? Aren't they wanting to kill this guy?" "But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? 27 Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is." The people are kind of looking at Jesus saying, "This is really kind of confusing. I thought the Jews wanted to kill Him. Do they think that He might be the Messiah? But, how can He be the Messiah? We know where He's from. We know what His background is, but when the Messiah comes, no one will know from whence He is."

Most likely, (I can't be dogmatic about this, but I think it's the best interpretation) when they say in verse 27, "...but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is," that was a current traditional understanding of the Jewish people, but it's not something based on Scripture. It's something that the Jews believed about Messiah at that time, that they wouldn't really know His origin. Later on in the chapter they knew that He would be from Bethlehem, but there would be mystery involved as it came to His origin. This was something they held to and believed, but the Old Testament is very clear that He would be born in Bethlehem.

Verse 28, "Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know

whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. 29 But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.” Jesus points out two things in verse 29, that “I know him,” and “I am from him, and he hath sent me,” so, I know the Father, and I’m sent from the Father. “Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.” It wasn’t time for Him to be arrested and crucified. The time that God had in His schedule would be Passover, not Tabernacles. “And many of the people believed on him,” this is the theme of John’s gospel, is the gospel of belief, “and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?” That’s a great question.

Remember when Nicodemus (John 3) came to Jesus and said, “...we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.” Think about the miracles that Jesus did. He turned water into wine, fed, with a couple fish and a few loaves, five thousand people, walked on water. These are miracles we’ve already seen Him do in the gospel of John. Wait until we get to the study of Lazarus, dead three days, and Jesus says, “Lazarus, come forth,” and raises him from the dead. I don’t know of anyone else that did miracles like Jesus did. He calmed the sea, walked on water, cleansed the leper, gave sight to the blind, opened the ears of the deaf, gave the ability to speak for those who were unable to speak—all of the powerful miracles that Jesus performed. So, they’re debating, “Is He really the Messiah? We don’t really know His origin or where He’s come from.”

Fifthly, we have (verses 32-36) the warning that Jesus gave them here in the middle of the Feast of Tabernacles. “The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him,” arrest Him. They heard the people talking about Him and thought, You know what? It’s time to get Him arrested. It’s time to put this thing to bed. “Then said Jesus unto them,” by the way, notice they sent people to arrest Him, but “no man laid hands on him.” “The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him. 33 Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me.” That “little while,” by the way, would only be about six months before He would be crucified. He said, “Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come.”

I’ve always loved the fact that Jesus didn’t mess around with these guys. He basically said, very politely, “Uh, you don’t know where I came from. You don’t know where I’m going, and where I am going, you can’t come.” I’m going to heaven, but you’re not. I’m going to go back to the Father, but you won’t see Me there because your father is the devil. You’re not going to heaven. These are pretty pointed words that Jesus has for these religious leaders.

Verse 35, “Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?” Is He going to go out into Gentile territory and teach among them? “What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?” They had no comprehension of who He was or what His words meant.

The last section, verses 37-53, is indeed marvelous. This is the last day of the feast. “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. 38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. 39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) 40 Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet,” no doubt, alluding to Deuteronomy 18, that God would raise up a Prophet like unto Moses. “Others said, This is the Christ,” the Messiah. “But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? 42 Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? 43 So there was a division among the people because of him. 44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.” Let’s stop right there.

Verse 37, “In the last day, that great day of the feast,” now, there’s a lot of debate about this “last day, that great day of the feast,” whether it was day seven, which some view as the last day, or whether it was day eight. It doesn’t really matter—day eight, day seven—but it was at the end of the feast. It was the culmination of the feast. But there’s some significance, and I’ll mention it to you, whether it’s day seven or day eight of the feast. “Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. 38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.”

At the Feast of Booths something marvelous took place. Every day the priests would go with a big golden pitcher in procession down to the Pool of Siloam, fill the pitcher with water, and bring the pitcher back through the water gate. (Some of you are leaving for Israel in just a couple of weeks, and you’re going to see how this all plays out in the Pool of Siloam and the Temple Mount area. It’s really kind of cool.) They would come into the temple area, and there’s a little confusion about exactly where they would pour the water out, whether on the altar or on the temple grounds there on the stone floor, but it was a procession where they would bring this pitcher of water and pour out the water. All the people, waving palms and different branches, would begin to sing the Hallel songs. They would begin to sing and to praise God—with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. Now, what did that symbolize? The Feast of Booths symbolized their journey and wandering in the wilderness, so they’d live in these little lean-tos, these little booths. Well, the water being poured out and their celebrating every day symbolized when Moses struck the rock. What happened when Moses struck the rock? They were complaining for water, and Moses struck the rock at God’s direction and what happened? The water came gushing out, right?

Now, this is a perfectly fitting story for me to teach tonight because we had water gushing out at our house today. We had an upstairs bathroom toilet overflow, and it filled the whole bathroom and started to leak through the living room and all kinds of stuff. I spent the day sopping up living water in my bathroom, and all day as I’d been reading this I thought, Man, this is a perfect message for me tonight.

Jesus is the Rock that was smitten and brings forth the water of life—salvation. Here’s the

thing. On the last day, and this is where the confusion comes, it's either on the seventh day or the last day, and the first theory is that on the seventh day the priest would actually go seven times with the water and pour out the water, so the whole temple grounds would be just flooded and symbolic of the living water that came from the rock and they'd be singing Hallel songs. Then Jesus stood up at that moment and announced, "I am the living water. If you're thirsty, come to Me and drink." He took advantage of all that water being poured out and used that as an illustration, "Come to Me. I am the water of life. You can drink of Me and be satisfied." The other thought is that maybe the eighth day, which is considered here the last day of the feast, no water was poured and that's when Jesus stood up and said, "I am the water of life. If you're thirsty, come to Me and drink." It would be symbolic of their having entered into the promised land and God's provision in the Messiah, the Savior of the world.

Jesus says these six things. I want you to notice them in the text. No water being poured and He says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." Notice the first thing He says, "If any man," in other words, the gospel is universal—anyone can come to Jesus and drink. He didn't limit it to just the Jews or just the Gentiles or just good people or just bad people or just smart people or just rich people. The gospel is universal. The second thing He said is, "If any man thirst, let him come," so first, if you're thirsty, come to Me, "If any man thirst, let him come." Thirdly, He said, "Come," and I love that. It starts with anyone who is thirsty can come, and who do they come to? Here's the fourth, they come to Me. Fifthly, He said, "Come...and drink." Anyone can come, anyone that's thirsty can come to Him and drink, and the results (verse 38), "He that believeth on me," which is the equivalent of coming to Him in faith, "as the scripture hath said," and we don't know what specific Scripture Jesus had in mind, "out of his belly shall flow," and that's the sixth thing He said, "rivers of living water." So, He pointed out man's problem, his thirst. God's proposed solution is to come to Him and drink, and God's promised results will be (verse 38) that out of your innermost being shall gush forth torrents of living water. Now, how cool is that? Jesus actually says, "Anyone that is thirsty can come to Me and drink."

Are you thirsty tonight? Are you thirsty for God? He realized that man has a thirst for God, and it's sad that we think that thirst can be satisfied with more money or a different relationship or power or possessions or fame. That thirst, is a God-given thirst. We were all created to know God. Everyone has a God-shaped void inside of them that can only be satisfied with a relationship with Jesus Christ. Amen? Nothing else can satisfy that longing in your heart. The reason why people are so restless—they're trying to find fulfillment, they're trying to find purpose, they're trying to find meaning in pleasure in passions and possessions and their pride—is because they have this emptiness inside.

That's the thirst that Jesus was appealing to. He said, "If you're thirsty, you need to come; and you need to come to Me." It's not just going to church. Sometimes people say, "Well, I'm going to the church," or "I'm going to a church," and that's great, but have you come to Christ? It's not enough to come on Wednesday nights. It's not enough to come on Sunday. It's not enough to be involved in Bible study. You must come to Christ. It's not about church, it's about Jesus Christ. Amen? It's about knowing Him. Church can't help you. The preacher can't help you.

Religion can't help you. You need to come to Christ and drink of Him. And, I love the fact that He said, "Out of your innermost being shall gush forth torrents of living water." What a glorious truth that is. Out of your innermost being shall come forth streams flowing of living water, verse 38. So there's that flow out from your life. You become a blessing, not a reservoir but a conduit. And, if you really want to be blessed, then be a blessing. Amen? It's not enough to come to Jesus and drink and be satisfied, you then have to say, "Lord, let my life overflow and be a blessing to others."

This is all about (verse 39) the Holy Spirit, "...which they that believe on him should receive," now take notice of this, I believe every Christian has the Holy Spirit. There's no such thing as a Christian without the Spirit. In Romans 8, Paul makes that very clear. Every Christian has the Holy Spirit, but the Holy Spirit doesn't have every Christian. You may have the Holy Spirit, but does the Holy Spirit have you? Does He have your thoughts? Does He have your heart? Does He have your will? Does He have your body? Does He have your mouth? He wants to take control of your life and flow through you to be a blessing to others. "...for the Holy Ghost was not yet given," what does he mean by that (verse 39)? He's talking about the coming of the Holy Spirit in His fullness which took place at the Feast of Pentecost in Acts 2 when they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and went out and spoke the Word with great power and great boldness. What a marvelous thing that is!

Then the response to Jesus (verse 40), "Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet," and that's from Deuteronomy 18. They thought, Wow, He's that Prophet. "Others said, This is the Christ," He is the Messiah. What a glorious truth that is, that He is the Savior of the world. "Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David," they were confused. They said, "Some say, well, He's from Galilee, and the Messiah is not supposed to come from Galilee. He's supposed to come from Bethlehem." Now, if they just knew the story of Jesus, they would find out He did come from Bethlehem. He was the son of David, but the point is in verse 43, "there was a division among the people because of him. 44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him."

Verse 45, "Then came the officers," or the Sanhedrin. They're the Jewish counsel, "to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?" They sent men to arrest Jesus, remember? And they come back without Jesus because the Father was protecting God the Son until it was the perfect time for Him to be crucified. "The officers answered, Never man spake like this man." If I were putting this into a movie, I would have these arresting officers spaced out. I would have them like, (speaking monotone), "Never a man spoke like this man." I don't know if I would make it in Hollywood, but they're just glassy-eyed and spaced out. They go down to arrest Him, and they stop and start listening to His words and are just mesmerized. Instead of arresting Him, they just come walking back like space cases, (monotone) "Never a man spake like this man," you know, and they were just blown away at the words that came out of His mouth, which is so cool to think about the things that Jesus said and the things that Jesus taught, truly, "Never man spake like this man," He is God.

Verse 47, "Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? 48 Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? 49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed." So, they answered and said, "Oh, you guys don't know what you're talking about. The Pharisees haven't believed on Him. You're just common people. You don't know the law. You're cursed. "Nicodemus saith unto them," and it's possible that Nicodemus was one of those officers of the Sanhedrin, "(he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,)" that's from John 3, "Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? 52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet. 53 And every man went unto his own house."

Don't stop there. I've got one more verse, and we'll pick up with it next week. I believe that John 8:1 should be in chapter 7. It says at the end of chapter 7, "And every man went unto his own house," but "Jesus went unto the mount of Olives." Do you know why? Because He didn't have a house. Everyone goes, "Oh, well, enough of this debating Jesus," and stuff, "I'm home," and they put on their little Pharisee slippers and went home. "I can't handle this Guy. We'll deal with it later." But, Jesus goes to the Mount of Olives.

At the base of the Mount of Olives is the Garden of Gethsemane, and that's where Jesus would call home when He was in Jerusalem. He would actually just roll out his bedroll under a big olive tree and lay there with His disciples looking up at the stars at night. Can you imagine crashing under the stars with the Son of God? How cool would that be? Who doesn't like to sleep outside? When I was a young boy, I used to just take the sleeping bag in the backyard and sleep on the grass. I'd go out there by myself, and I'd just lay there at night looking at the stars. It was so cool! I'd have buddies over, and my parents let us sleep on the grass in the backyard in our sleeping bags. Can you imagine having Jesus in the group? You see a shooting star, "Wow! Look it! There's a shooting star!" "Yeah, I made that one, too." Pretty cool. He knows them all and calls them all by name? How amazing! And, He flung them into space with His power. Jesus just goes out and crashes under the trees in the olive grove there at Mount Olivet.

Nicodemus is featured in the gospel of John, chapter 3. He comes to Jesus, and Jesus, remember, told him, "You need to be born again to see the Kingdom of God." Now, Nicodemus has moved a little longer and farther down the road of maybe believing in Jesus, and he defends the Lord and says, "Look, our law doesn't condemn any man before he's tried. You guys have already kind of judged Him, and you haven't really tried Him." So, later on, when you get to chapter 19, when Jesus is crucified, Nicodemus actually works together with Joseph of Arimathea to help take care of the body of Jesus and make sure that it's properly buried in that tomb. He becomes a believer, a disciple, a follower of Jesus Christ. But they didn't really (verse 52) look into God's Word. They didn't really look into the life of Christ. Had they done that, they would've understood that He was born in Bethlehem, the house of bread, He who is the bread of God whose come down from heaven; and Jesus is the son of David, He is the Messiah.

In closing, in 1 Corinthians 10:4, Paul actually says they drank of Christ. That Rock that they drank of in the wilderness was Christ. When Jesus stood and said, "If any man thirst," He

must've yelled it out really loud, "Anyone thirsty? Come to Me and drink, and out of your innermost being shall gush forth, flow forth, rivers of living water. That Jesus Christ is that Rock which was a type of Christ's death on the cross, smitten for us by God so that salvation will flow out into a thirsty world. Amen? What a glorious truth. When we drink of Him, and He fills us with His Spirit, then we become conduits to bring the living water to a dry and thirsty land in the world that we live in. Amen?