

## Threats, Division and Belief – John 7



MEMORY VERSE: “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’”  
John: 7:37-38

### DAY 1 JOHN 7:1-13— Disbelief and Muttering

1. Why wouldn't Jesus go about in Judea as He did in Galilee? v.1
2. What does Jesus' brother's advice reveal about their understanding of God's plan and who Jesus is? vv.1-5
3. What do you think Jesus meant by His response to His brothers? vv.6-8
4. Jesus went to Jerusalem privately rather than publicly. What were the various conclusions of the people who were looking for Him and muttering about Him? vv.10-13
5. How does this passage speak to you about the importance of God's timing in your life; or about how to discern whether the advice people give you is worthy? vv.1-13

### LEARN THE TRUTH

Jesus was surrounded by division, disbelief, misinformation, false accusations, suspicion, and threats on His life. Christ's time to die on the cross for all mankind was then just six months away. In spite of chaos and opposition, He taught truth, and some recognized who He was and believed in Him.

### DAY 2 JOHN 7:14-24— Hypocrisy and False Accusations

6. Why did the Jews marvel at Jesus' teaching in the temple during the Feast of Booths? vv.14-15

7. What is unique about Jesus' teaching? vv.16-18
8. God gave laws to His people through Moses. Which of the 10 Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17) do you think the crowd of Jews broke during their exchange with Jesus at the temple? vv.19-20
9. What hypocrisy did Jesus point out to them? vv.21-23
10. Why are Jesus' words in verse 24 so important? How might you apply them in your own life?

### DAY 3 JOHN 7:25-31 — Curiosity and Belief

11. Thus far, the "crowd" has referred to Jewish leaders and Jews who had come to Jerusalem for the Feast of Booths (or Tabernacles). Now, some of the local Jews who lived in Jerusalem had their own thoughts and questions. What were they? vv.25-27
12. What answer did Jesus give those people about Himself? vv.28-29
13. What about Jesus' response do you think they found insulting?
14. What opposite reactions did people have? How had their reactions grown in intensity (compared to vv.10-13)? Why do you think they had such different responses to Jesus? vv.30-31

15. Considering all that was against Jesus, why was He still safe? v.30

## DAY 4 JOHN 7:32-39 — “Seeking” Jesus

16. What did the chief priests and Pharisees do? v.32

17. Many years earlier, the ancestors of these Jews were exiled by God to Babylon for 70 years because of their constant rebellion against Him. What did God promise those Jews?  
Jeremiah 29:10-14

18. What then do you think Jesus meant by His statement in verse 33?

19. On the last day of the feast, what promise did Jesus give anyone who is a true seeker? vv.37-39

20. What is still true today for the honest seeker and for the dishonest seeker?  
Psalm 119:9-16

Matthew 7:7-8

Matthew 7:21-23

21. Jesus had just offered the Living Water of the Holy Spirit, an extremely hopeful and positive promise. What do you think predisposes a person to either recognize and believe truth, or to mock Jesus?  
vv.40-44
22. What was faulty with the reasoning of those who said Jesus couldn't be the Christ? (vv.41-42)  
Luke 2:1-7
23. Why did the officers not arrest Jesus? What tactics did the Pharisees use to intimidate the officers for failing to do as they had been ordered? vv.45-49
24. Remember that Nicodemus was the Pharisee who had met privately with Jesus (John 3). What strikes you about the exchange between him and his fellow Pharisees? vv.50-52
25. Can you think of a time when you, like the Pharisees, doubted God because you didn't have your facts straight; or a time when you were ridiculed by people who were hostile to God? What insight did you gain from those times?

## LOVE THE TRUTH

People were divided about Jesus in His day and they still are today. We must be convinced in our own hearts that He is the Messiah, rather than just a great man. We must know His Word so we grow in trust and belief and are able to stand firm when people misunderstand God or belittle us for our faith.

## John 7

### Threats, Division, and Belief

Though Jesus' brothers had known Him His whole life, they did not yet recognize that He was the son of God. Psalm 22 and 69 are quoted extensively in the New Testament as they foreshadow the sufferings of Christ. "For it is for your sake that I have borne reproach, that dishonor has covered my face; I have become a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my mother's sons. For zeal for your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of those who reprove you have fallen on me." (Psalm 69:7-9) His brothers did eventually come around! Jesus's brothers were James, Joseph, Simon and Judas. (Matthew 13:55) His brother James was not the apostle James, but is the most likely author of the letter, or epistle, that bears his name. His brother Judas is the most likely author of the book of Jude. We must be careful that we do not give people bad advice as His brothers did. God does not have to share His whole plan with us. We can be immature or uninformed and it would be wise to be quiet. We might also think twice about giving the God of the universe our sage advice.

The Feast of Tabernacles was one of the 3 feasts men were required to celebrate in Jerusalem. One day we will see just how every jot and tittle in the Bible points to spiritual truths that we might not yet grasp. In the mean time, it is fascinating to learn those that we can understand. At this feast, the Jews lived in booths, or tents, which reminded them of God's deliverance and guidance when they were freed from slavery in Egypt. It also reminds us today that this earthly tent, or body, is not our home, and that God is even now is preparing a heavenly home for us. (2 Corinthians 5:1-5) This feast was also a time to give thanks for the harvest and to ask God for continued blessing. Does this remind us today of the spiritual harvest where people are ripe for hearing the gospel? (John 4:35) The Feast of Booths included extensive pouring out of water, reminiscent of Moses striking the rock and God providing water for His people in the wilderness. At the last day of the feast, when the water was being poured out, Jesus cried

out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" (John 7:37,38) This was a promise that the Holy Spirit would be given to God's children after Jesus was crucified, resurrected and ascended to heaven. God fulfilled this promise during the Feast of Pentecost. (Acts 1:8; 2:1-13) For years the Jews had celebrated these feasts, and they should have recognized Jesus right away when He spoke in the temple. The honest seekers did recognize Him as the Christ, but the dishonest ones were oblivious and opposed to the truth. We must always pray for eyes to see!

### WALK IN TRUTH



One of the biggest problems the Jews had about Jesus was that He was from Nazareth, a town in Galilee because it was prophesied that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem, a town in Judea, where King David was from. Jesus was indeed born in Bethlehem, but He grew up in Nazareth. Christ's critics wrongly assumed He was not from the very place in which He had actually been born. A worldly census commanded by Ceasar changed the course of history, and fulfilled the prophecy about the Savior of the world. (Luke 2:1-7)

Every one of us has times when the Bible does not make sense to us. We have limited understanding and perspective. But God will bless us if we believe in Him and keep on seeking, learning and trusting. When we trust Him and obey His commands, we actually grow in understanding. When something doesn't quite add up, take your doubts to God, asking for insight and understanding. Choose to believe what you can't yet see. You will be blessed!

# Notes