



Spring Study Discussion Guide #7

Sermon Title: Where is He?

Biblical Reference: John 7:1-39

Date Preached: Sunday, February 26th, 2023 @ 11am

Fall Study Date: Wednesday, March 1st, 2023

Ice Breaker

To get to know each other as a group let us go around the room and have everyone answer the ice breaker question.

Tell us about your most memorable pet.

Sermon Summary

This past Sunday we studied John 7. This part of the book of John is called by some “The Period of Conflict” because the Bible shows the religious leaders having many confrontations with Jesus. The leaders are making a determined effort to kill Him. Because of their hostility, Jesus was ministering in Galilee to stay out of their jurisdiction. In this chapter, Jesus has a conversation with His brothers about going to the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem. The Feast of Tabernacles was one of the feasts that all the men of Israel were required to go to. It was to commemorate the time of the Exodus when God tabernacled among His people. His presence was visible as a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The feast also commemorated the Lord’s provision for them.

The people remembered how God supplied their need by giving them water from the rock. They looked forward to the time when God would once again be among them as the Messiah, and all the nations of the earth would come to Jerusalem for guidance. All the Jewish men went and dwelled in booths on the rooftops and in the open places. The Jews lit two great candles every night representing the pillar of fire. The priest went to the pool of Siloam get water and pour it out every morning at the time of sacrifice as a symbol of the water God provided from the rock. Although the Jews were celebrating the presence of God, they missed that God was physically among them as a fulfillment of the very thing they were celebrating. This passage also shows that Jesus’ own siblings did not believe He was God and they mistook Him as well. We, like them, are here tonight to celebrate the Lord being among us. If they missed it so, can we.

How do we miss the presence of God?

Quick Review

- Were there any insights the Lord showed you or anything that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you? Either from the sermon or from your personal study of this passage?
- How did the Holy Spirit speak to your heart from these passages/lessons?

My Testimony

- Most of us have heard someone say something like this: “And God was there the whole time, I just could not see Him, I was so blind.”

Can you tell us about a time when God was working in your life doing significant things and you missed Him at the time?

Digging Deeper

1. How the People Familiar with Jesus Miss Him.

In this passage Jesus has a conversation with His siblings about going to the feast. They wanted Him to go to the feast right away and do His miracles in the public forum. He told them it was not His time and He went later in the middle of the feast. Even though it appeared as if they believed and supported Him, the Bible says they did not believe.

Ask a volunteer to read:

Joh 7:1 After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

Joh 7:2 Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.

Joh 7:3 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.

Joh 7:4 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.

Joh 7:5 For neither did his brethren believe in him.

Joh 7:6 Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready.

Joh 7:7 The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

Joh 7:8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come.

Joh 7:9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee.

Joh 7:10 But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

Joh 7:11 Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?

Discussion Questions:

- Why would Jesus be unwilling to walk in Judea just because they wanted to kill Him? Do you think He was afraid?
- Why do you think Jesus' brothers suggested He go to Jerusalem? How was His siblings' reasoning in verse four like many people's reasoning in the world today?
- Jesus rejected their plan in verse eight. How do you think would you have responded to Jesus?
- The Jews wanted to kill Jesus according to verse one, yet His siblings told Him to go. If you were in Christ's shoes, how would this possibly make you feel?
- Matthew Henry, in his commentary on verses three and four, says Jesus' siblings wanted what was best for themselves instead of what was best for Jesus. Do you think that many Christians approach prayer in the same way? How can we encourage one another to change this?
- In verse eight Jesus said He was not going to go to the feast **yet**. He came later in the middle of the feast in verse ten. Many newer versions of the Bible leave out the word "**yet**". They do this even though the word for yet "**οὐτω**" is in most of the manuscripts we have. It is in all the manuscripts before the fourth century. It is not found in only two manuscripts from the fourth and fifth century. This creates a problem and makes it appear that Jesus changed His mind. Here is an example from the *ESV Joh 7:8 You go up to the feast. I am not going up to this feast, for my time has not yet fully come.*"

Do you think this is important, why, or why not?

- How could this passage help us in how we interact with our family and close friends?
- What does it say about our view of God when we attempt to give Him instructions?
- Do you see any similarities between the brothers' suggestions and your own prayer life?

- Considering how Christ’s brethren treated Him. How can we moderate our approach to God (what we expect, how we pray, etc.)?

In the following verse Jesus talks about timing. Jesus let them know He will go up to the feast, just not yet. He had other things to do first, and lived His life according to what His Father wanted Him to do.

Discussion Questions:

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Joh 7:10 But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

- You have often heard: God’s timing is not our timing. But what does this passage teach us about His timing?
- What observations have you made in your life concerning your timing compared to His timing? What principles or Bible verses help us to be patient?
- Why did the world hate Jesus? Do you believe the world hates present-day Christians? Why or why not?
- Who was Jesus referring to as the “world” in verse seven?
- Jesus went up to the feast in secret. Why do you think that was? Why did he not stay away?

Taking It Home

The following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they felt and what they can do because of discovering the truths and principles in the text:

1. What truth or principle in this text was most impactful for you?
2. How did this truth or principal challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?
3. How will you put into practice what you have learned today?