

# Sermon – Then and Now, John Chapter 7

Preached at Cloverdale 10/27/24; VF class, Maxwell FPC

**After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him. <sup>2</sup> Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. <sup>3</sup> His brothers therefore said to Him, "Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. <sup>4</sup> For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world." <sup>5</sup> For even His brothers did not believe in Him.**

- Feast of Tabernacles was an important festival where all the males were required to come up to celebrate. It was one of the three pilgrimage feasts. It would be the perfect stage to perform on due to the large crowds.
- His relatives suggested he go there to perform. They didn't believe and must have wanted to see the performances as well. Their suggestion makes sense, but the reasoning behind it is not spiritual or for the glory of God.
- Don't be surprised if people you expected to support you, don't believe in what you are doing for God. Don't be surprised if even your relatives don't believe in your salvation and testimony.

This happened back then, but here is what it could mean now. There is always the temptation to put on a performance. It makes perfect sense logically, for Jesus to seek a larger stage openly. But notice, this is a similar temptation that the devil presented to Jesus.

Still today, there is a temptation to perform. I have faced this several times and pride and fear are often for me the primary reasons. The desire to please people, and look good, and find favor and applause can be a temptation if the opportunity is not led by the Holy Spirit.

**<sup>6</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. <sup>7</sup> The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil. <sup>8</sup> You go up to this feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, for My time has not yet fully come." <sup>9</sup> When He had said these things to them, He remained in Galilee.**

- Jesus' response is that he is hated because he tells us that the things we do are evil. Few people want to hear that what they are doing is wrong. That doesn't make sense to me, because if I'm doing something wrong that is going to result in my failure, I should want to know.
- Why can't the world hate unbelievers? Because they will not oppose the world. They want to fit in and avoid persecution. They want to be liked.
- That was then, this is now. If we believe in Christ and are followers, we have an obligation to tell the world what they are doing may be wrong. But to do this, you need the power of the Holy Spirit. For several reasons:

- The Holy Spirit provides guidance and revelation because He is the Spirit of Truth.
- The Holy Spirit will guide you on how to approach the world in the right Spirit with the right questions and right timing. If you already know the world will not like it, then you need to be careful to understand how to minister to them and meet them where they are.
- Is there anyone that you need to say something to on your job, family, church, relationships, etc.? Follow the steps.
- Notice, Jesus tells his brothers that their “time is always ready”. What does that mean? Then he tells them to go up to this feast. What did it mean then? That they are ready to go up and celebrate this last feast.
- What does it mean now? Is Jesus telling us the same thing right now? Yes. Our time is now. Because of Jesus, our time is always ready and we should continue to go up to this Feast of Tabernacles.
  - Where is this Feast place today? How do I get there? Follow the steps.
- The Feast of Tabernacles will be fulfilled by Christ after his second coming. He will fulfill this feast appointment. He tells his brothers he is not coming yet...but when his time comes, he will arrive on the scene. Just because Jesus doesn't show up when we want or expect, it doesn't mean that he isn't coming. He is coming back! He will be there on time.

# Sermon – Then and Now, John Chapter 7 – Part 2

Preached at Cloverdale 11/3/24; VF class, Maxwell FPC

Last week we looked at Jesus and his discussion with his brothers and his decision to delay going up to the Feast of Tabernacles. Let's review what we covered.

- Don't be discouraged if people you expected to believe in you don't support you.
- Beware trying to please and perform for the crowd.
- We have an obligation to lovingly inform others that they might be wrong.
- Our time is now.
- Peace is available now, when you go up there. Know how to follow the steps of the Gospel to celebrate this feast.

**<sup>10</sup> But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. <sup>11</sup> Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, "Where is He?" <sup>12</sup> 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." <sup>13</sup> However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews.**

- Some people are looking for Jesus to show up for the wrong reasons. The Jewish leaders want to kill him because he is a threat to what they want to do and what they want to hold onto. Be careful with this attitude.
- Back then, they are looking for Jesus but they don't know he is already there. That was then, this is now....when you get there, just wait on Jesus, he will show up.
  - What does it look like to wait on Him? The steps.
  - Jesus was there, they just didn't realize it because they didn't see him. That was then, what about now? Do you know he is there even though you may not see him in your situation?
- The Feast of Tabernacles will be fulfilled by Christ after his second coming. He will fulfill this feast appointment. He tells his brothers he is not coming yet...but when his time comes, he will arrive on the scene. Just because Jesus doesn't show up when we want or expect, it doesn't mean that he isn't coming. He is coming back! He will be there on time.
- Nothing has changed today. Some people still don't really know who Jesus is. Many people still will not talk about Jesus in public because they are afraid. How about you? Do you really know who he is? Are you afraid to talk about him in public? Why?

**<sup>14</sup> Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught. <sup>15</sup> And the Jews marveled, saying, "How does this Man know letters, having never studied?"**

Learning, teaching and understanding are important in the middle of your situation. The situation you are in right now may be an important parable of learning opportunity you need in the transition between where you are now and your journey to God's peace.

The middle of your situation is a teaching moment. What are you learning from this?

**<sup>16</sup> Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. <sup>17</sup> If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or *whether* I speak on My own *authority*. <sup>18</sup> 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. <sup>19</sup> Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?"**

**<sup>20</sup> The people answered and said, "You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?"**

### Summary

Our time is now. Peace is available now, when you go up there.

Wait when you get there, Jesus is coming.

In the middle of your wait, hear. Learn, and understand the word.

If you seek God's will, it will protect you from false doctrine.

Make sure they see God and not you when you speak to them.

Judge correctly; if God doesn't get the glory then it probably is wrong. Just because it doesn't happen like you expected, doesn't mean that God isn't in it.

Your ideas and doctrine might make sense to you, but you need to make sure what you say and do comes from God and brings Him glory.

Follow the steps.

# Sermon – Then and Now, John Chapter 7 – Part 3

Preached at Cloverdale 11/10/24; VF class, Maxwell FPC

**<sup>16</sup> Jesus answered them and said, “My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. <sup>17</sup> If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or *whether* I speak on My own *authority*. <sup>18</sup> 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.**

Last week we continued our sermon series in John Chapter 7 and the Feast of Tabernacles. Let’s review again some major points from the previous weeks.

- Our time is now. Peace is available now, when you go up there.
- Wait when you get there, Jesus is coming.
- In the middle of your wait, hear. Learn, and understand the word.
- If you seek God’s will, it will protect you from false doctrine.
- Make sure they see God and not you when you speak to them.
- Just because it doesn’t happen like you expected, doesn’t mean that God isn’t in it.
- Your ideas and doctrine might make sense to you, but you need to make sure what you say and do comes from God and brings Him glory.
- Follow the steps.
  
- People who speak from their pride and self to show off are not in right standing with God.
- If it isn’t for God’s glory then it doesn’t profit and is out of alignment with God’s will.
- Those that seek to bring glory to God are righteous.

**<sup>19</sup> Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?” <sup>20</sup> The people answered and said, “You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?”**

**<sup>21</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, “I did one work, and you all marvel. <sup>22</sup> Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. <sup>23</sup> 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? <sup>24</sup> Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.”**

Jesus’ response to their questions about his ability and qualifications.

- Jesus challenges them that they cannot keep the law and poses a question. If you have the law and can’t keep it, why are you trying to kill me? They can’t keep the law so Jesus is the answer but they don’t see that yet.
- Jesus uses an example to teach them.

- When he healed the blind man on the Sabbath, he compares it to circumcising or doing a good religious work for someone on the same day.
- If they don't have a problem doing a religious practice on the Sabbath, why should they have a problem with Jesus doing an actual healing for someone's benefit on the same day?
- The lesson is we shouldn't judge based upon what we see, instead look at it from a Kingdom perspective and you won't miss it or judge in error. You really can't judge correctly unless you have and are guided by the Holy Spirit.
- Just because it doesn't happen the way you expected or preferred, doesn't mean that God isn't in it. How can you know whether your judgement is righteous? Follow the steps and see if God gets glory.

As I was preparing for this sermon, the Spirit woke me up and posed several questions in my mind. The questions were:

- Why do you think Jesus healed the man on the Sabbath? Why not tell him to come back tomorrow?
- What problems did the healing on this day cause?
- That was then, what about now?

These questions prompted the following responses when I presented the same questions to my class:

- He healed on that day because there was an immediate need.
- It was the fulfillment of prophecy and shows us the spirit and intent of ministry.
- He did it for us. To show us an example and caution for us today.
- That God is greater than the Law.
- It revealed their hearts and errors in their thinking.
- They were more concerned with tradition and appearances rather than the healing and outcome.
- It revealed their jealousy.

Is this condition still in existence today? Absolutely.

- People will still value tradition over mercy. It is causing the church to lose new generations.
- Just because it didn't happen in accordance with your expectations and order of worship, doesn't mean that God is not in it.
- Praise God that Jesus healed on the Sabbath, so we can be aware and cautious and not let our flesh get in the way of the Gospel.

(Read my AI results for John 7)

**<sup>25</sup> Now some of them from Jerusalem said, "Is this not He whom they seek to kill? <sup>26</sup> But look! He speaks boldly, and they say nothing to Him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is truly the Christ? <sup>27</sup> However, we know where this Man is from; but when the Christ comes, no one knows where He is from."**

The ones in the crowd from Jerusalem knew that the crazy and jealous church people wanted to kill Jesus. So they are surprised that Jesus is speaking out in public. That was then, this is now. When your time has come, don't be afraid to share the Gospel today.

There is confusion because they hear what he is saying and see the boldness in his teaching but they are having a problem accepting him because they know where he is from. That was then, what about now?

Application – When Jesus becomes a part of you, don't be surprised if people have trouble accepting the Jesus in you because of where you are from. Don't be discouraged if they don't pick up on what you are saying because of where you come from.

People might remember where you came from the last time you talked to them. Don't let your past or where you came from yesterday, keep you from speaking the truth boldly but in love to others.

**<sup>28</sup> Then Jesus cried out, as He taught in the temple, saying, “You both know Me, and you know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. <sup>29</sup> But I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me.”**

**<sup>30</sup> Therefore they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. <sup>31</sup> And many of the people believed in Him, and said, “When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this *Man* has done?”**

Jesus tells them you know where I came from in the natural, but I'm coming to you not in the natural but in the power of God who has sent me. This still applies today.

You can know about Jesus in the natural, but you really won't know him unless you see him from a spiritual perspective. Why don't they know the Father....because they don't know Jesus or see the Father in him. Can this failure to believe in the truth still happen today? Yes.

God protects and covers him. Because of the signs many people believe in Jesus.

Are there still signs today to reveal the truth? Yes! What's your sign?

**<sup>32</sup> The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things concerning Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him. <sup>33</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “I shall be with you a little while longer, and *then* I go to Him who sent Me. <sup>34</sup> You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come.” <sup>35</sup> Then the Jews said among themselves, “Where does He intend to go that we shall not find Him? Does He intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? <sup>36</sup> What is this thing that He said, ‘You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come’?”**

The Pharisees are concerned that the people will start believing in Jesus and that is a threat to their staying in power. When you get close to believing in Jesus, the enemy gets nervous.

We can blame the Pharisees but consider this. Anyone who want to remain in control of their lives, will have a problem with Jesus. You don't have to be religious to have a problem with Jesus. Whenever, you don't want to change or lose control, you have the “Pharisee virus” and you will miss the first step which is the cross. Self has to be dealt with before you can believe truly in Jesus as the Messiah.

Jesus predicts his going to the cross. They cannot follow him and will not find him because they don't believe. Same principles in effect today, if you don't believe him, you won't find him and you can't come to heaven where he is.

Why can't they find him? They don't believe. The same way they needed to find him back then, is the same way and process we need to find him today. A more important question is where is Jesus going?

- Jesus says he is going to be with his Father. How does he plan to get there? It is through the steps.
- The cross, the grave, the resurrection. The Pharisees don't know how to get there because they don't believe in the Jesus as the way.

Do you know where Jesus is today and do you know how to follow him there?

Summary

Wait when you get there, Jesus is coming.

In the middle of your wait, hear. Learn, and understand the word.

If you seek God's will, it will protect you from false doctrine.

Make sure they see God and not you when you speak to them.

Judge correctly; if God doesn't get the glory then it probably is wrong. Just because it doesn't happen like you expected, doesn't mean that God isn't in it.

Your ideas and doctrine might make sense to you, but you need to make sure what you say and do comes from God and brings Him glory.

Follow the steps.



# Sermon – Then and Now, John Chapter 7 – Part 4

Preached at Cloverdale, Maxwell, Kilby week of 11/17/24

## John Chapter 7

### **<sup>2</sup> Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand.**

- Feast of Tabernacles was an important festival where all the males were required to come up to celebrate. It was one of the three pilgrimage feasts. It would be the perfect stage to perform on due to the large crowds.

**<sup>32</sup> The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things concerning Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him. <sup>33</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "I shall be with you a little while longer, and *then* I go to Him who sent Me. <sup>34</sup> You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come." <sup>35</sup> Then the Jews said among themselves, "Where does He intend to go that we shall not find Him? Does He intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? <sup>36</sup> What is this thing that He said, 'You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come'?"**

The Pharisees are concerned that the people will start believing in Jesus and that is a threat to their staying in power. When you get close to believing in Jesus, the enemy gets nervous.

Why can't they find him? They don't believe. The same way they needed to find him back then, is the same way and process we need to find him today. A more important question is where is Jesus going?

Jesus predicts his going to the cross. They cannot follow him and will not find him because they don't believe. Same principles in effect today, if you don't believe him, you won't find him and you can't come to heaven where he is.

Question. How is it that these church people will not be able to find Jesus, but I remember a thief on the cross who believed and he knew where Jesus was going and was able to follow him there? What is the difference?

## Luke 23

**<sup>40</sup> But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? <sup>41</sup> And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." <sup>42</sup> Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom."**

**<sup>43</sup> And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."**

Amazing, the self-righteous church folks don't know how to find Jesus, yet this prisoner does. What great faith. What was the difference? His humility and his faith in looking to Jesus for hope is a perfect example of following the steps. He knew where Jesus was going, and now he knows how to follow him there and to be with the Father.

Do you know how to follow Jesus to where he is today?

## Sermon – Then and Now, John Chapter 7 – Part 5

Preached at Cloverdale, Maxwell, Kilby week of 11/24/24

**<sup>37</sup> On the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. <sup>38</sup> He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” <sup>39</sup> But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet *given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified.**

**<sup>40</sup> Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, “Truly this is the Prophet.” <sup>41</sup> Others said, “This is the Christ.” But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?**

Tabernacles lasts for 7 days.

If you are not thirsty or otherwise in need, you probably ain't coming to look for Jesus. When you find yourself in need, be humble and come to Jesus. Drinking means believing in Him. There is a promise that He will revive you from the inside.

Jesus refers to the scriptures to support his announcement.

See Isaiah 55:1.

“Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters;  
And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat.  
Yes, come, buy wine and milk, Without money and without price.

See Isaiah 12:3

Zech 13:1, 14:8, Isaiah 44:3, 55:1

Let's look at some key observations before we look at ChapGPT results.

In the natural, activity, dry and hot weather, filtration, etc., all can cause you to become thirsty in the natural. In the spiritual sense, the same thing can cause spiritual dehydration. Trying to work out my own salvation rather than surrender to Christ, dry seasons where bank account is dry, can't get what I need, problems, worry, etc., all are examples of being thirsty and in need spiritually.

Jesus says to come to him and drink and he will provide relief. In the natural, when I'm thirsty, I go through a 4-5 step process. I recognize I'm in need because I'm thirsty. I turn from what I was doing and turn to trying to find something to relieve my thirst. I have hope as I find a bottle of juice or Gatorade. Just seeing the Gatorade doesn't satisfy my thirst, I have to believe and drink it. After I drink the Gatorade, I'm refreshed. Next, if I have enough, I may share some drink with others who I may see are thirsty. In this natural example, I just outlined the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In order to satisfy your spiritual thirst, you have to recognize the need. Then you turn from trying to solve your thirst yourself and instead look to Jesus. Finding Jesus provides hope, but just knowing about

Jesus and being around others who know him will do very little to resolve your think until you drink...which is to believe in Jesus. Once you believe in your heart that Jesus is the answer, the Holy Spirit is the living water that satisfies your thirst. You should have more faith in Jesus than Gatorade.

Jesus talks about living water. There is a difference between living water and still water. Living water is moving. Stagnant water doesn't move and can stink. We had a pond like that near where I grew up. Jesus compares the Holy Spirit to living water. That means the Holy Spirit refreshes and cleans and flows us in the right direction. So many years I spent my time in church not moving much...just sitting in the pews.

Other observations

- Living water symbolizes leaving old things behind. There are old sins, heartbreak, failures, etc., that I don't want sticking to me like a dirty ring in the bathtub. I need it all washed away.
- After referring to ChapGPT, I saw where stagnant water has a role. At step two, we need to be still (reference Psalm 23) where we can reflect and consider our current state and look to change or repent. The transition though must occur where we move from being still to being led by the Spirit to get moving for the Kingdom.
- After ministering and pouring out myself to others and ministry, I can easily become tired and empty. During these times, I need to go back through the process and the wells of salvation and get refreshed. As the commercials state, is He in you and stay thirsty my friend....so we can go fill someone else up.
- There are some drinks I never would try unless or until someone tells me about some new drink and recommends it. That is in the natural, spiritually, we should be recommending and telling someone about a thirst quencher that Jesus provides.
- One thing that can get stagnant water moving is the wind or a storm. The Holy Spirit is sometimes referred to the wind. The Holy Spirit moving over the stagnant waters of your mind can get you moving in the right direction.

What causes thirst?

Thirst is a physiological response triggered by the body's need to maintain water balance and ensure proper functioning. The main causes of thirst include:

### 1. Dehydration

- **Loss of fluids:** Activities like sweating, urination, defecation, or breathing cause water loss. When water loss exceeds intake, dehydration occurs, signaling thirst.
- **Hot weather or exercise:** These increase fluid loss through sweat, leading to thirst.

### 2. High Salt or Sugar Intake

- Consuming salty or sugary foods raises the concentration of solutes (like sodium or glucose) in the blood. The brain detects this and signals thirst to dilute these substances.

### 3. Low Blood Volume (Hypovolemia)

- A drop in blood volume due to blood loss, diarrhea, vomiting, or excessive sweating triggers thirst as the body needs more water to maintain blood pressure.

#### 4. Dry Mouth (Xerostomia)

##### . Psychological Factors

- Anxiety or stress may create a sensation of dry mouth, mimicking thirst.

In essence, thirst is the body's alarm system for maintaining hydration and ensuring all systems work optimally.

#### 1. Living Water: Symbol of Growth and Renewal

Living water, with its flow and energy, can represent vitality, change, and the potential for transformation. Characters encountering flowing water might feel invigorated, inspired, or renewed.

- **Example:** A weary protagonist comes across a spring or a stream while journeying through a barren landscape. Drinking from the clear, cool water restores their strength and rekindles their hope. This can parallel their inner journey—perhaps they're learning to let go of past regrets or embracing a newfound purpose.
- **Example:** A river crossing marks a pivotal moment in the story. The flowing water symbolizes leaving behind old ways and stepping into an unknown future. The character might physically or emotionally "cross over" into a new phase of life.

#### 2. Stagnant Water: Symbol of Stasis or Decay

Stagnant water can represent inertia, corruption, or emotional stagnation. When a character encounters it, it might reflect their inner struggles or external conflicts.

- **Example:** A stagnant pool in a desolate area might symbolize a society or community that has become corrupt or complacent. The protagonist might feel a sense of revulsion, motivating them to "stir the waters" and create change.

#### 3. The Transition Between Stagnant and Living Water

A powerful narrative device could involve a transformation of water itself, paralleling a character's growth.

- **Example:** A dried-up riverbed that once carried living water is now a place of despair. As the character heals or brings renewal to their surroundings, the river begins to flow again, symbolizing the return of life and hope.
- **Example:** A stagnant pond becomes clearer and starts to ripple after a significant event—a storm, an act of kindness, or the character's decision to take action. This change reflects the protagonist's movement from inaction to growth.

#### 4. The Balance of Both

Sometimes, stagnant water isn't inherently bad—it provides a chance for stillness and reflection before action.

- **Example:** A character rests near a quiet, unmoving pool, finding it peaceful rather than oppressive. The stillness allows them to gather their thoughts, understand their emotions, and prepare for the next step. It might contrast with the chaos of living water to show that both are necessary in life's journey.

39. What is it, this living water? The Holy Spirit. The Holy Ghost will provide relief and comfort. When you are in need, always be able to go back to Jesus and he through the Holy Spirit will supply what you need in order to take care of your dry season or what you are thirsty for.

If you believe, by promise you will get the Holy Spirit dwelling inside you. This power will overflow and benefit others. Living waters means waters that are moving. The Holy Spirit will show you how to live and move.

Evidence that revival is here; from inside something good, the Holy Spirit will flow out of some folk. What has God placed inside of you will start to flow out. This word and the power of the Spirit behind it should be inside of you and should be flowing out...and into someone else.

Rivers flowing.....mean, stuff is moving...not sitting still. Some folk are here today because somebody told somebody about somebody up in here.

Revival not only means it's moving, but it's alive and moving, flowing in the right direction. You ought to be getting renewed strength and revival to live right and make the right life decisions through the leading of the Holy Ghost and working the word.

Jesus provides the answer if you can come to me and make it here, step one, then drink, take in what Jesus is putting down, then you'll have peace like you've never had before. You may have a dry moment, but when you tap into the Holy Spirit, your dry spell won't last very long.

Getting to Jesus is only the first step, you gotta drink, and believe in order to get the water and the refreshing. Too many of us get here but we come here dry and leave here dry. But if you only drink you can leave here different and refreshed.

There is a divine process involved. They couldn't get the Spirit just yet. They had to wait for further steps in the process in order to receive the Spirit. If Jesus needed to be glorified first, what is the process? What does Christ being glorified have to do with us? How was he glorified? How do we bring glory to God today?

- Jesus was glorified after his death (cross), burial (grave), and resurrection. The next step in the process is receiving the Holy Spirit. If you don't have this foundation in Christ, if you have not followed Christ through these steps, you cannot enjoy the baptism or fullness of the Holy Spirit.
- Christ being glorified draws us to him. As his disciples (John 17) God and Christ are glorified in us when we follow the steps. Doing the will of God glorifies God. It is hard to really bring God glory without the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- When God delivers us, He receives glory. Our testimony brings Him glory when others learn about what He has done and how He brought us out.

What are people thirsty for? Whatever you are thirsty for, Jesus gives the answer.

Verse 40. Many believed when they heard this saying. You have to know something about the Feast of Tabernacles from their perspective in order to understand why they started to believe.

Results from ChatGPT when asked why did the people believe after Jesus said this?

In **John 7:37-39**, Jesus speaks during the Feast of Tabernacles (also called the Feast of Booths), which was a major Jewish festival commemorating God's provision for Israel during their time in the wilderness. Jesus says:

"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them."

Some in the crowd believed because of several key factors:

1. **Connection to Messianic Expectations:** The idea of "living water" had deep roots in Jewish Scripture. For example, passages like **Isaiah 55:1** ("Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters...") and **Ezekiel 47** (which describes water flowing from the temple bringing life to everything) were associated with God's provision and the future Messianic age. Jesus speaking of "living water" may have reminded people of these prophecies and stirred hope that He was the Messiah.
2. **Jesus' Authority and Wisdom:** Throughout His ministry, Jesus spoke with authority, often in ways that amazed the crowds (see **John 7:46**). His words about eternal life and living water may have resonated deeply with those seeking spiritual fulfillment and truth, leading some to believe He was sent from God.
3. **Signs and Miracles:** Earlier in John's Gospel, Jesus had performed many miracles, which created a sense of expectation and belief among the people.
4. **Personal Spiritual Thirst:** Jesus' metaphor of living water speaks to a deep spiritual need. People were drawn to Him because they sensed He could offer them something beyond what religious rituals and systems could provide—true spiritual satisfaction and eternal life.

Ultimately, belief arose from the convergence of their expectations for the Messiah, Jesus' powerful teaching, and the spiritual thirst that Jesus promised to satisfy.

Feast of Tabernacles. See Jeremiah 17:13.

The Feast is 7 days long. Leviticus 23:33-44, Deuteronomy 16:13-17

Season of Our Joy

- Festival teaches on the Messianic Kingdom and the joy of that kingdom
- In order to more fully understand the Season of Our Joy, a part of the Sukkot celebration called "The Daily Water Pouring Ceremony" must be explained. This is mentioned in the Mishnah (oral traditions)
  - o This ceremony became a focus of the joy that the Torah commands for Sukkot
  - o Priests divide into three divisions (trinity?)
    - 1<sup>st</sup> division would slay the sacrifices found in Numbers 29

- 2<sup>nd</sup> division would go out the eastern gate of the temple and cut willows 25 feet in length. The priests would then form rows with the willows. So there would be row after row of willows.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> division, headed by the High Priest, went out the gate called the Water Gate to the pool known as Siloam (John 9:7-11) which means “gently flowing waters”
    - High Priest drew the “living water” in a gold vase
    - High Priest’s assistant held a silver vase containing wine
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> divisions would march back to Jerusalem at the same time
    - The willows would make a “swishing” sound as they approached the city
    - The Hebrew word for “wind” is the same word used for “spirit”.
  - As each party reached their gate, a shofar was blown
    - Then one man would stand up and play the flute
    - The flute player is called “the pierced one.” (Psalm 22:16; Zechariah 22:10; John 19:34-37; Revelation 1:7)
    - The flute player leads the procession and blows the call for the wind and the water to enter the temple
  - Priests carrying the willows (2<sup>nd</sup> division) come into the temple and circle the altar 7 times
  - Priests that were slaying the sacrifices (1<sup>st</sup> division) are now ascending the altar and begin laying the sacrifices on the fires
  - The High Priest and his assistant (3<sup>rd</sup> division) ascend the altar and all the people of Israel are gathered around the courts
  - The people sing the song “Mayim”, saying, “With joy we will draw water out of the well of salvation.” (Isaiah 12:3)
  - The High Priest pours the contents of both vases (water and wine) over the altar (Isaiah 44:3) as the 1<sup>st</sup> division priests lay the willows against the altar, making a Sukkah (a picture of God’s covering)
    - Jesus was on the tree or altar when his heart was pierced (John 19:34) and then the blood (wine) and water flowed. God, through Jesus, was providing a covering (Sukkah) for all those who believe in Him.
- Jesus said that He was the living water being poured out during this ceremony;
  - Rain is a prominent feature for the Feast of Sukkot.
  - Rain represents the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on THAT DAY
  - In the Talmud (oral traditions) it is read, “Why is the name of it called the drawing out of water? Because of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit according to what is said ‘With joy shall ye draw out of the wells of salvation’” (Isaiah 12:3)

Application for today: Follow the steps. The Holy Spirit inside of you has the power to meet your needs and provide relief and comfort while you wait.

If Jesus were to come in here right now, would he say and declare that now is the time? While we are praying for revival, we better start celebrating, I think it is already here. Revival is already here. What we are praying for and hoping for is already here. We just missed it. Do you know what time it is? Season is here, time is now!

Evidence that revival is here; from inside something good, the Holy Spirit will flow out of some folk. What is inside that God has placed inside of you will start to flow out.....do we see that today?

Revival not only means it's moving, but it's alive and moving, flowing in the right direction. You ought to be getting renewed strength and revival to live right and make the right life decisions through the leading of the Holy Ghost and working the word.

You don't have to stay thirsty for long anymore, just follow the steps and believe. It starts with you!

Note: some believe, but others question whether Jesus could be the Messiah. They question because of where they think he came from. They know what the scripture says, but they haven't really understood Jesus. When you dig deeper into who Jesus really is, the scriptures will support him, rather than work against him. What do you believe about Jesus? Do you really know who he is?

Another observation: If you are thirsty in the natural, you recognize the need to obey your thirst. So you turn from what you were doing and you start looking for something to drink that will satisfy your thirst. When you find that drink or water fountain, you start drinking it and take it in. You do that because you believe that once inside you, the thirst will be taken care of. That is what we do naturally. Spiritually, I just presented you with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



## Sermon – Then and Now, John Chapter 7 – Part 6

The challenge in believing in Jesus.

**<sup>42</sup> Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" <sup>43</sup> So there was a division among the people because of Him. <sup>44</sup> Now some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him.**

The people are correct. The scripture in Micah 5 indeed states that the Messiah will come from Bethlehem. This is a problem for them. The scripture points to Bethlehem but they think he came out of Galilee.

### Micah 5

**"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
Though you are little among the thousands of Judah,  
Yet out of you shall come forth to Me  
The One to be Ruler in Israel,  
Whose goings forth *are* from of old,  
From everlasting."**

Questions: Why did they not know that Jesus was born in Bethlehem? What do the people need to do to make the connection between Jesus and the scripture? Do I really need to know where Jesus came from in order to start to believe?

Let's see what my AI app says about this.

The question of why the people and Pharisees did not recognize that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, despite prophetic expectations, involves several possible explanations based on historical, cultural, and scriptural contexts:

### 1. The Secrecy of the Event

- **Circumstances of His Birth:** Jesus was born in a humble setting—a stable, and laid in a manger (Luke 2:7). His birth was not widely publicized and was only announced to a small group of shepherds (Luke 2:8–20) and later to the Magi, who arrived some time after.
- **Flight to Egypt:** Soon after His birth, Joseph and Mary fled to Egypt to escape Herod's decree to kill all male children in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:13–15). This sudden departure might have obscured the details of Jesus' origins.

### 2. Limited Documentation

- **Census Records:** While Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem for the Roman census (Luke 2:1–5), such records may not have been accessible to most people.

### 3. Assumptions Based on His Ministry Location

- **Association with Nazareth:** Jesus was raised in Nazareth, which led to His common identification as "Jesus of Nazareth" (Matthew 2:23, John 1:45–46). This likely created a widespread assumption that He was born there. Nazareth is in the lower region of Galilee.
- **Prejudice Against Galilee:** Many in Judea looked down on Galilee as an unlikely place for the Messiah to come from.

#### 4. Messianic Expectations and Misinterpretations

- **Misunderstanding Prophecy:** While Micah 5:2 explicitly identifies Bethlehem as the birthplace of the Messiah, some Jewish leaders may have been focused on other aspects of Messianic prophecies and overlooked this detail.
- **Focus on Political Power:** Many expected the Messiah to be a political or military leader. Jesus' humble beginnings and ministry did not fit their expectations, making them less inclined to investigate His origins.

#### 5. Divine Plan

- **God's Timing and Revelation:** According to the Gospels, Jesus' identity as the Messiah was revealed progressively. The lack of widespread knowledge about His birth may reflect God's plan to reveal Jesus' mission in His time and manner.

These factors combined to create a situation where many people, including the Pharisees, were unaware or dismissive of Jesus' true birthplace. The irony is highlighted in passages like John 7:41–42, where some people express doubt about Jesus being the Messiah because they wrongly assume He was not born in Bethlehem.

Leaving ChapGPT, why today would we rely upon assumptions and not dig deeper into the background of a person or concept?

- Lazy or not interested in digging deeper. Not seeing the need.
- Thinking we already know all we need to know about the situation.
- Don't have time; too busy.
- We may not know where to look or ask to find out more.
- We get information from an unreliable source.
- Prejudice.

The blind man who was healed in John Chapter 9, didn't know where Jesus was from, but he believed. It doesn't say he knew he was born in Bethlehem. The power of his testimony is that he recognized the miracle that Jesus performed in his life and that was enough to get him started in believing until Jesus shared with him additional information.

What is the application for us today?

- If we don't see the need, we will not look to Jesus.
- If we don't understand or recognize and appreciate what he has done for us, we will not believe or be interested in learning more about him.

- Reference Paul's desire to want to know him in the power of his resurrection....Philippians 3, do we desire to know him like that?
- What is the risk if we don't find out more about Jesus? We might miss his coming in our life situations and not believe that he is the Messiah in our right now situation. Do you want to believe in him like that?

<sup>45</sup> Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why have you not brought Him?" <sup>46</sup> The officers answered, "No man ever spoke like this Man!" <sup>47</sup> Then the Pharisees answered them, "Are you also deceived?" <sup>48</sup> Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him? <sup>49</sup> But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed."

<sup>50</sup> Nicodemus (he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them) said to them, <sup>51</sup> "Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?" <sup>52</sup> They answered and said to him, "Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee." <sup>53</sup> And everyone went to his *own* house.

The Pharisees still don't believe regardless of the signs and wonders because they see him as a threat. Since he doesn't follow the Law as they understand it, they are having a hard time believing. They accuse others as being deceived because Jesus in their mind doesn't follow the exact letter of the Law and they miss that Jesus is fulfilling the exact spirit and intent of the Law. Actually, they are the ones who are deceived.

Nicodemus asks them a question based upon the Law in order to help them to dig deeper into the truth. They never answer his question. Instead, they double down on the argument based on where they understand he came from. He did come out of Galilee, by way of Bethlehem, by way of heaven. They missed some steps along the way. They jumped to Galilee and missed the first step of Jesus coming from heaven.

Why are they having such a hard time believing? Application?

The ChatGPT's Response:

The Pharisees, a prominent Jewish sect during Jesus' time, did not believe in Jesus as the Messiah for several interconnected theological, social, and political reasons:

### **1. Different Expectations of the Messiah**

- The Pharisees and many other Jews expected the Messiah to be a political and military leader who would liberate Israel from Roman oppression and restore the Davidic kingdom.
- Jesus, however, emphasized a spiritual kingdom rather than a political one. His teachings about humility, suffering, and serving others contrasted with the prevailing expectation of a conquering king.

### **2. Jesus' Criticism of Pharisaic Practices**

- Jesus openly criticized the Pharisees for their legalism and hypocrisy, particularly in their emphasis on external observance of the law while neglecting its deeper principles. This put Him in direct conflict with their authority and interpretation of Jewish law, making it hard for them to accept Him as the fulfillment of the law.

### 3. Perceived Threat to Their Authority

### 4. Blasphemy and Claims of Divinity

- Jesus claimed to be the Son of God and equated Himself with God, which many Pharisees viewed as blasphemy (e.g., John 10:30-33). According to Jewish law, such claims warranted severe punishment.

### 5. Fear of Roman Repercussions

- Some Pharisees and other Jewish leaders were concerned that Jesus' growing following could incite Roman authorities to crack down on the Jewish people, endangering their nation and religious institutions (e.g., John 11:48).

### 6. Jesus' Association with Sinners

- Jesus' practice of associating with tax collectors, sinners, and others marginalized by society offended the Pharisees, who valued strict adherence to purity laws and social boundaries.

### 7. Misinterpretation of Prophecies

- Although Jesus fulfilled many Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah, the Pharisees interpreted these prophecies differently. They focused on passages emphasizing the Messiah's kingly and victorious aspects, often overlooking those describing suffering and rejection (e.g., Isaiah 53).

### 8. Spiritual Blindness

- According to the New Testament, some Pharisees' inability to recognize Jesus as the Messiah stemmed from spiritual pride and hardness of heart. This theme is emphasized in passages like John 12:37-43, where despite Jesus' miracles, they did not believe.

That was then, what about now. Why do people not believe in Jesus today?

AI Response:

People today may not believe in Jesus for a variety of reasons, influenced by personal beliefs, cultural backgrounds, philosophical perspectives, and religious affiliations. Here's a general overview:

#### 1. Religious Differences

- People from non-Christian religions (e.g., Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism) often do not view Jesus as the divine Son of God or the Messiah, as their faiths have different teachings about divinity, salvation, and the role of religious figures.
- For example:
  - In Islam, Jesus (*Isa*) is considered a prophet, not God or the Son of God.
  - In Judaism, Jesus is seen as a teacher or historical figure, but not the Messiah.
  - Other religions may not include Jesus in their belief systems at all.

## **2. Secularism and Atheism**

- Many people today identify as secular, agnostic, or atheist and do not adhere to any religious belief system. They may:
    - View Jesus as a moral teacher but reject supernatural claims about His divinity or resurrection.
    - Question the validity of religious texts and doctrines based on skepticism or reliance on scientific explanations.
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## **3. Cultural and Societal Influences**

- In some cultures, belief in Jesus or Christianity may not be a dominant or familiar framework, leading people to follow their own traditions or remain unaffiliated with religion.
  - Societal trends toward individualism and relativism may encourage people to prioritize personal spiritual exploration over adherence to established religious doctrines.
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## **4. Philosophical or Logical Objections**

- Some people struggle with philosophical questions about the nature of God, the problem of evil, or the logic of Jesus' divinity and resurrection.
- They may see Christian teachings as inconsistent or unconvincing based on their worldview.

## **5. Historical and Scientific Skepticism**

- Some question the historical reliability of the Gospels and other New Testament writings, viewing them as products of early Christian communities rather than eyewitness accounts.
  - Belief in miracles, including the resurrection, may conflict with a modern, scientific worldview.
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## **6. Personal Experiences**

- Negative experiences with religious institutions or individuals may lead people to reject Christianity or belief in Jesus.
  - A lack of personal spiritual connection or perceived relevance of religion in daily life may also contribute.
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## **7. Moral or Ethical Disagreements**

- Some reject Jesus or Christianity due to disagreements with certain teachings or the behavior of some Christians, particularly if they perceive hypocrisy, exclusivity, or judgmental attitudes.

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## 8. Freedom of Belief

- In today's pluralistic world, people are exposed to a wide variety of belief systems and philosophies, leading some to explore other spiritual paths or to simply remain undecided.
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Question: So, why do people today believe in Jesus?

### AI Response:

People believe in Jesus as the Messiah for a variety of spiritual, theological, historical, and personal reasons. Here's an overview of the key motivations:

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### 1. Fulfillment of Prophecies

- Many Christians believe that Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah, such as:
    - Being born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2, Matthew 2:1).
    - His suffering and death aligning with Isaiah 53's "suffering servant."
    - His lineage tracing back to King David (2 Samuel 7:12-16, Luke 3:31).
  - They interpret these fulfillments as evidence that Jesus is the promised Savior.
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### 2. Belief in the Resurrection

- Central to Christian faith is the belief that Jesus rose from the dead three days after His crucifixion, as described in the Gospels.
  - The resurrection is seen as proof of His divine nature and victory over sin and death, validating His claim to be the Messiah.
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### 3. Teachings and Moral Authority

- Jesus' teachings on love, forgiveness, humility, and compassion resonate deeply with believers.
  - His life is seen as a perfect example of selflessness and obedience to God, inspiring followers to emulate His character.
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### 4. Personal Spiritual Experiences

- Many people report personal encounters with Jesus through prayer, worship, or a sense of His presence in their lives.
  - These experiences often lead to a transformative relationship with Jesus, reinforcing their belief in Him as the Messiah.
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## **5. New Testament Testimony**

- The New Testament, particularly the Gospels, documents Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Many view these accounts as reliable historical evidence for His messianic identity.
  - The writings of the apostles and early Christians, such as Paul, emphasize Jesus as the fulfillment of God's promises to humanity.
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## **6. Promise of Salvation**

- Jesus is seen as the Savior who offers forgiveness of sins and eternal life to those who believe in Him (John 3:16).
  - This promise of redemption and reconciliation with God provides hope and purpose for believers.
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## **7. Global Influence of Christianity**

- The widespread and enduring impact of Jesus' teachings and the growth of Christianity over 2,000 years are seen by many as evidence of His divine mission.
  - The lives of saints, martyrs, and ordinary Christians who have demonstrated profound faith and love are often cited as testimony to Jesus' transformative power.
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## **8. Miracles and Signs**

- The miracles attributed to Jesus in the Gospels, such as healing the sick, calming storms, and feeding multitudes, are seen as signs of His divine authority.
  - Modern believers sometimes point to answered prayers and miraculous events as evidence of His continuing presence and power.
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## **9. Community and Tradition**

- Growing up in a Christian family or community often provides a strong foundation for belief in Jesus.

- Church teachings, rituals, and fellowship help reinforce the idea of Jesus as the Messiah and provide a sense of belonging.
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## 10. Faith in God's Plan

- Many Christians see Jesus' life, death, and resurrection as the central part of God's plan to redeem humanity.
  - Believing in Jesus is viewed as trusting in God's promise to bring salvation and restore creation.
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Micah 5

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
*Though* you are little among the thousands of Judah,  
*Yet* out of you shall come forth to Me  
The One to be Ruler in Israel,  
Whose goings forth *are* from of old,  
From everlasting."

<sup>3</sup>Therefore He shall give them up,  
Until the time *that* she who is in labor has given birth;  
Then the remnant of His brethren  
Shall return to the children of Israel.

<sup>4</sup>And He shall stand and feed *His flock*  
In the strength of the Lord,  
In the majesty of the name of the Lord His God;  
And they shall abide,  
For now He shall be great  
To the ends of the earth;

<sup>5</sup>And this *One* shall be peace.

David Guzik:

a. **He has laid siege against us:** Micah announced that Israel will be humbled by foreign powers, and even her judges will bear insults.

b. **But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah... out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel:** In the coming time of humiliation under foreign powers, God would raise up a great **Ruler** from a humble place — **Bethlehem**.

**Bethlehem** was well known as the hometown of David; yet it was never a great or influential city. It was truly **little among the thousands of Israel**. Yet God chose it as the birthplace of the Messiah.

**Bethlehem** means *House of Bread*, and Jesus is the Bread of Life ([John 6:35](#)).



**Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting:** This glorious promise was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and Micah's prophetic voice declared that though Jesus came from Bethlehem, He did not *begin* there. His **goings forth** are from eternity past.

The Bible tells us that Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End ([Revelation 22:13](#)).

Before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, He existed as the *Second Person of the Trinity* ([John 17:5](#), [17:24](#)).

From eternity past, God's plan of the ages included Jesus ([1 Peter 1:20](#), [Ephesians 1:4](#)).

**He shall give them up, until the time:** Micah anticipated a future time, one that was partially fulfilled in the Babylonian exile and return, but will be ultimately fulfilled in the Great Tribulation and restoration of Israel. In both those eras, when the LORD will seem distant from Israel **until the time** for restoration is ready.

**Then the remnant of His brethren shall return... He shall stand and feed His flock in the strength of the LORD:** After the time of Israel's trial the LORD will restore gloriously. The *Ruler* born in Bethlehem will tenderly care for **His flock in the strength of the LORD**.

**They shall abide, for now He shall be great to the ends of the earth:** The greatness of the *Ruler* from Bethlehem becomes the standing of His people. They **abide** because of His greatness.

**This One shall be peace:** It isn't just that the *Ruler* from Bethlehem *brings peace*; He *is peace*. As Paul wrote of Jesus in [Ephesians 2:14](#), *He is our peace*.

That was then, is there a right now application from all this today?

Yes there is!