

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

Galilee – the common people
Jewry – the religious leaders

Again, we have an indication of chronological flow in the narrative. Jesus traveled around the Galilee and avoided going back to Judea because some of the Jews there were ready to kill Him.

Pastor Bob pointed out that there is an interval of about six months between the end of chapter six and the beginning of this chapter, since that is the approximate time between Passover and the Feast of tabernacles.

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

John 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.

John 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.*

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

The time for the Feast of Tabernacles was drawing near. (This feast is in the autumn, around October, 5 days after Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.) His brothers urged Him to go to Judea and perform miracles for His followers. They were using their own logic. If a man can do these kinds of things, he should show the world and capitalize on it. He shouldn't hide himself. Then John tells us that Jesus' own brothers didn't believe in Him. I wonder where they thought His power came from if they didn't believe He was the Son of God. It seems like they just wanted to be a part of the spotlight of His reflected glory from performing miracles.

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

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

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

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

John 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.

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

John 7:12 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.

John 7:13 Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.

Jesus told His brothers that the timing was not yet right. Too many people hated Him because He was exposing their evil hearts and deeds with His testimony.

His life was in possible jeopardy, and it was not yet the foreordained time for Him to lose His life.

“your time is always ready” – I think He is saying that they are not saying and doing things that affect their coming and going. They are not the ones pointing out sin in peoples’ lives—He is.

So Jesus sent His brothers to the feast without Him. After His brothers left, He went to the feast also—in secret. The Jews were looking for Him and asking people where He was. Many people were talking about Him and many were defending Him as a “good man.” Others felt He was a deceiver. No one spoke out about Him publicly for fear of the Jewish leaders.

John 7:14 Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.

John 7:15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

John 7:16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

John 7:17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself.

John 7:18 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.

John 7:19 Did not Moses give you the law, and *yet* none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

John 7:20 The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?

About halfway through the feast Jesus went to the temple courts and began to teach. The Jews were amazed at His knowledge, especially since they knew He had not been educated in their schools. Jesus then told them that He was teaching what He had been taught by the One who had sent Him. Those who choose to obey God will find out if He is telling the truth or just speaking as a man. A man who speaks on his own behalf does it to gain honor for himself. One who speaks and works for the honor of the one who sends him has no reason to lie; he has no selfish motive. Then Jesus points out that Moses gave them the law and not one of them had kept the law. So He wanted to know why they were trying to kill Him for the things He did that they thought broke the law. The Jews, the spiritual leaders, basically said, “You’re crazy; no one’s trying to kill you.”

I just noticed that they didn’t deny that they did not keep the law. Instead of focusing on that truth, they chose to defend their intentions by slandering the One who declared that truth. That type of response is still employed today. Those who declare the truth of God’s word are often slandered by those who refuse to accept that truth.

John 7:21 Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.

John 7:22 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.

John 7:23 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?

John 7:24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

Jesus then hit the issue that had caused Him to leave Jerusalem the first time—the healing of the man on the Sabbath. According to the law of Moses, every male was to be circumcised on the 8th day, even if it fell on the Sabbath. If it is OK to circumcise a child, what is wrong with His healing a man on the Sabbath. Then He told them—Stop making judgments by appearances; make judgments that are based on what is righteous. See with your heart, not with your eyes. See with God’s eyes, not your own.

I have a really bad habit of trying to put myself in stories of the Bible and thinking I would surely have been much smarter in my actions/reactions. It’s beyond my comprehension to think that someone would get angry at the healing of any person. Then I stop and think of some of my own reactions in life. (Being behind the wheel of a car brings out some of the worst.) I often react to what “appears” to be happening without taking time to realize that I don’t know what is happening in the life of the person to whom I’m reacting. People deserve more of our love and understanding, especially if we claim the name of Christ.

John 7:25 Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill?

John 7:26 But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?

John 7:27 Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.

Some of the people started realizing that this was the man that the Jewish leaders wanted to kill. They saw that He was speaking in public and no harm was coming to Him. They began to conclude that the authorities must have decided that He was the Christ. They couldn’t accept this as truth since they knew where Jesus was from. They had learned that when the Christ came, no one would know where He came from. (I thought they expected Him to come from Bethlehem. I guess very few, if any, of His friends knew He had been born in Bethlehem.) Again, their response is based on their expectations.

John 7:28 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.

John 7:29 But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

John 7:30 Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

Jesus was still teaching in the temple courts. He called out in answer to their thoughts and murmurings. “Yes, you know me, and you know where I am from (Nazareth).” He also told them that He was not here on His own, but because of the One who sent Him—someone they obviously didn’t know. Whether they recognized who sent Him or not, He knew who had sent Him. Not only that, He was “from” him. The Greek for the word “from” is *para* which means “from beside or by the side of.” Again, I think they recognized that He was claiming to be the Son of God. Because of that claim, the Jewish leaders tried to seize Him, but no one actually laid a hand on Him because it was not yet the right time. These many references to it not being the right time emphasize that God is in control of every detail regarding His plan of redemption for man.

This is also a beautiful example of how the Lord will intercede supernaturally if necessary to ensure that His purposes are carried out. No child of God needs fear harm from any man. The Lord will only allow what is meant for good in the life of a believer, one who loves Him.

Romans 8:28 “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”

John 7:31 And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this *man* hath done?

Many of the people in the crowd believed in Him because they didn’t see how anyone could do more miraculous signs than this man—so He must be the Christ!

You can’t really fault their logic. It is our nature to make decisions on the facts as we see them. We base our faith on a written record and the testimony of those who knew Him together with enlightening of the Holy Spirit—which I think gives us an edge. They didn’t yet have the Spirit to help them. They were looking at a man that many of them had known as a child; they knew His family. Even with all the prophecy from the Old Testament, maybe many people had a hard time making the connection with the facts that would reveal Jesus as the Messiah. We tend to get preconceived ideas about how we think things should happen, which might make it harder to recognize the real thing when it does happen. I guess that is one of the things that makes me a little nervous when I think about the second coming. I know how I expect things to happen, but I also know that a lot of learned men differ, so it might be a bit different than I expect. You can’t really worry because you know God will protect His children, but the verses that talk about Satan “deceiving the very elect if it were possible” can give one pause. I guess I’m just saying that it must have been hard for the Lord to present Himself with continual love and patience, and it must have been hard to believe that a man they knew could be the Messiah they had expected for hundreds of years—even if He could do miracles—because many of the prophets of the past had done miracles through God’s enablement. It’s like, I feel the time is really imminent for Christ’s return, but it is hard to believe that it will really happen in my lifetime, even though the signs seem clear and unmistakable.

John 7:32 The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

The Pharisees heard what the people were saying to one another, so the chief priests and Pharisees sent the temple guards to arrest Him. This man was jeopardizing their position of power.

John 7:33 Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and *then* I go unto him that sent me.

John 7:34 Ye shall seek me, and shall not find *me*: and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come.

John 7:35 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?

John 7:36 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?

Jesus continued speaking. He told them that He would be with them for just a short time before returning to “Him that sent me.” Even though they might look for Him, they would not be able to find Him because where He was going they could not go. The people didn’t understand Him. They figured He must mean He was going somewhere far away—like to the Jews who were living outside Israel and to begin teaching the Gentiles. They just weren’t sure what else He could mean by saying they wouldn’t be able to find Him and wouldn’t be able to follow Him. Since He was representing Himself as the Son of God, you would have thought that heaven would have crossed their mind.

I just realized they weren’t that far off in one regard. Jesus was soon going to begin a ministry to the Gentiles through His disciples.

John 7:37 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.

John 7:38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

John 7:39 (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.)

On the last day of the feast Jesus boldly gave the invitation for anyone who was thirsty to come to Him to get his thirst quenched. Everyone, each individual, who believed in Him would be blessed to have “rivers of living water” flow from within Him. John then makes sure that we understand that Jesus was referring to the Holy Spirit, whom those who believed Him would receive. This would happen after Jesus had received His glorified body and returned to heaven to take His place at the right hand of the Father. Jesus also emphasized that this would be a fulfillment of the scriptures.

Jeremiah 2:13 "For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

This description of "living water" directly connects to the message Jesus told the Samaritan woman (4:13-14).

"if any man..." – This is the second time the Lord has used that phrase in this chapter. The Lord never excluded anyone from benefitting from His message. It's a phrase that also implies choice. As J. Vernon McGee explains it, "If you are thirsty, you are welcome; if you're not thirsty, you're free to reject the offer of provision."

John 7:40 Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.

John 7:41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

John 7:42 Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

John 7:43 So there was a division among the people because of him.

John 7:44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

The people knew enough to realize that He must either be a great prophet or the Christ. But they knew the Christ would come from King David's family and from Bethlehem; and they knew that Jesus was from Galilee. (Reference 7:27) So the people were divided into different groups because of Jesus. Some wanted to seize Him, but no one touched Him.

John 7:45 Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

John 7:46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

John 7:47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?

John 7:48 Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?

John 7:49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

When the temple guards went back to the chief priests and Pharisees without Jesus, they were asked why they had not brought Him in. The guards admitted that they had never heard anyone speak like Jesus. The Pharisees were arrogant. Did they really choose to believe Jesus—they who did not know the law as well as the Pharisees—when the Pharisees did not believe Him? Then they basically stated their contempt for the officers who were ignorant of the law. This is often the response of those who choose to reject Jesus—arrogance and disdain towards those who choose to believe Him.

John 7:50 Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,)

John 7:51 Doth our law judge *any* man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?

John 7:52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

John 7:53 And every man went unto his own house.

Nicodemus, who had met with Jesus in secret, was part of this group. He posed a question. "Does our law judge a man before hearing him testify about his actions." They chided him in answer. Was he from Galilee too? Didn't he know that a prophet would never come from Galilee? Then everyone went home.

Pastor Bob: Jonah came from Galilee. *2Kings 14:25* "He restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of Gathhepher." Gathhepher was a town of lower Galilee about 5 miles from Nazareth.

We all get blinded by our preconceived ideas of how or what we think things should be. Christians especially need to guard against making judgments based on appearance or on how things "have always been." For many years I let the term "charismatic" scare me into not even wanting to expose myself to the possibility that there might be good teaching and spiritual truth from anyone or any group that was tagged with that label. We should constantly determine to use the scripture as our measuring stick of what is good and bad—truth or lie—and remember to use the whole Bible and not just isolated portions of it as the basis of all our judgments. We are so conditioned in our society to look at the outward appearance instead of looking at the true beauty of the inner person. You can never know that truth until you are willing to get past the outward appearance and really get to know people for who they are.