



John 7
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn now to the seventh chapter of the gospel according to John. Back in the fifth chapter of the gospel of John, Jesus was in Jerusalem and He went to the pool of Bethesda where there were many sick people gathered around the pool of Bethesda because of the healing powers that were manifested on the first one who could get into the pool after the waters have been troubled. And Jesus saw a man who was lying there who had been there for a long time and He asked the man if he wanted to be healed. And the man told Jesus the reasons why he wasn't healed. When the waters were troubled, as he was struggling to get into the waters someone always got there ahead of him. And Jesus told the man to take his cot and to go home. And immediately he was healed and he took his cot and started home.

The problem was that it was the sabbath day and when the Pharisees saw him carrying his cot on the sabbath day, they asked him why he was doing that which was not lawful to do; bearing a burden on the sabbath day. And he said, The One who healed me is the One who told me to take my cot and go home. They said, Who was it? He said, I don't know. Later Jesus found him in the temple and told him not to sin anymore lest something worse would happen to him. And then he went to the Pharisees and said it was Jesus who healed me and told me to carry my cot.

So that began the conspiracy to kill Jesus. It was determined then that He must be put to death. Throughout the book of John, Jesus keeps referring to His hour which He said had not yet come. And as He was making reference to this, it is obvious that Jesus has a timing, schedule that He is working by. That of the Father's. The perfect time for Him to be presented as the Messiah of Israel, the time in which He is to offer Himself as a sacrifice for sins. So because this conspiracy to put Him to death has developed in Jerusalem by the religious leaders, Jesus wasn't going to Jerusalem for a period of time. Actually, the time differential between chapter five and chapter seven is about two years. And Jesus is avoiding the confrontations in Jerusalem because they are still smarting over the fact that He commanded a man to carry his cot on the sabbath day.

Totally disregarding the fact that the man who had been lame for years was healed, they were upset because it was on the sabbath day that the miracle was wrought on this man. So,

Jesus was not walking [according to John here] in the Jewry, because they were seeking to kill Him (7:1).

After the experience of the healing of this man, Jesus remained in the area of the Galilee: ministering up in the Galilee region and was not going down to Jerusalem because of this conspiracy to put Him to death and it can't happen before God's ordained time.

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

The feast of tabernacles took place in the seventh month of the Jewish calendar. The Jewish calendar began with the month of April, that was the first month of their religious calendar. The seventh month was in later September or early October, it varied from year to year because they went by the lunar calendar. But we read in Leviticus chapter twenty-three concerning this feast of the tabernacles. If you want to turn to Leviticus twenty-three, in verse thirty-three, "The Lord spoke unto Moses saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of the seventh month shall be a feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD. On the first day shall be a holy convocation: you shall do no servile work therein. Seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be a holy convocation unto you; and you shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and you shall do no servile work therein. These are the feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day: Beside the sabbaths of the LORD, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which you shall give unto the LORD. And also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: and on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath" (Leviticus 23:33-39).

Notice that the feast is in conjunction with the feast of tabernacles. That is, it's to begin also on the fifteenth day and thus, a double feast. This second feast is often called the feast of in-gathering or the

feast of harvest and it is sort of similar to our Thanksgiving. That is, giving thanks unto the Lord and rejoicing in that the harvest has been brought in. “40 And you shall take on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days.”

So the feast of tabernacles was a feast of rejoicing. Feast of thanksgiving and rejoicing. “And you shall keep it a feast unto the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: you shall celebrate it in the seventh month. And you shall dwell in booths” [or succoths; and thus it is also called the feast of Succoth because of these little booths or tabernacles]; “and all that are Israelites born shall dwell in these booths: And your generations may know that I have made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God. And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD” (Leviticus 23:41-44).

Now as tradition developed concerning this little booth that they would build, they were little lean to's that they built next to their houses. And they developed sort of patterns or plans for these and according to the patterns, you would make them out of palm thatches but you would leave enough space. You had to have more shadow than sun. In other words, as you build it you had to let the sunshine through but there had to be more shadow than sun. And you couldn't make it so thick that at night you couldn't see the stars. You had to be able to see the stars up through the thatches at night. And the family would move out during this eight-day period of the feast and live in these little booths. At night when the children would be lying there and they would say, Daddy, I see a star up there. The daddy would say, Our fathers lived in the wilderness under the stars for forty years and God preserved them and kept them that forty years. And so there were all of these beautiful things to remind them of God's preservation of the fathers through the journeying in the wilderness for a forty-year period of time.

As time went on and the temple was built in Jerusalem, they began to have ceremonies concerning the water. And a priest would go down and fill this little silver pitcher with water. Other priests would go and fill water jugs but the high priest would take this little silver pitcher of water and pour it on the altar. It was a symbol first of all of the water that came out of the rock, but also it was sort of a prayer and a looking forward to the rainy season now, in order that the land may be watered by God during the winter months. Sufficient rain to fill the streams and the cisterns and all in order that they might survive through the next summer.

And so there was quite a ceremony and the people would sing Psalm 115 to 118 as this water was being poured and they were asking for God's salvation. Hosanna in Psalm 118. So it was quite an interesting ceremony.

The water would be poured down on the pavement there in the temple where the people would then sing praises unto God. Great rejoicing. It was a time of rejoicing in God's goodness and in God's benefits to them.

But because the eighth day was a sabbath day, holy convocation, they could not bear any burdens. Thus there was no procession to the pool of Siloam. No water being poured out and that also was significant in acknowledging that God kept His promise. He brought them into the land, the land that was well watered, flowing with milk and honey.

The feast of tabernacles was one of the three major religious feasts that was compulsory for the adult males living within a radius of twenty miles of Jerusalem to attend. Three times a year, all of the adult males within a twenty-mile radius of the city of Jerusalem were to present themselves to God. Those that lived outside of the twenty-mile radius came as often as they possibly could.

Josephus tells us that there were millions of people that would often gather during these feasts in Jerusalem. The city would overflow with the pilgrims that would come. The feast of passover which is in the first month of the Jewish calendar, beginning on the fourteenth day of the month. The feast of Pentecost that was fifty days after the feast of unleavened bread which was at the end of the feast of the passover. They would count fifty days to the feast of Pentecost or the feast of first fruits. And then the third major feast was the feast of tabernacles.

And now the feast of tabernacles is coming up. Now this is the final year of the ministry of Jesus. In fact, the feast of tabernacles is here taking place just about six months before Jesus is to be crucified. So as we come into the seventh chapter, we are entering into the last six months of the ministry of Jesus prior to His crucifixion.

His brothers [that is, the half brothers, the sons of Mary and Joseph who still at this point did not

believe His claims] *said unto him, Depart from here, and go into Judaea, that your disciples also may see the works that you do (7:3).*

Go on down to Jerusalem, to the feast. Do Your miracle things down there so that Your disciples who are down there might see them also.

For there is no man that does these things in secret, who seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world (7:4).

They are suggesting that Jesus go down there and demonstrate His powers. Let them see it because if You're wanting to be known, You don't hide in a corner. You do things out in the open. But John tells us,

For neither did his brethren believe in him. Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready (7:5,6).

Throughout John, Jesus is referring to "the hour has not yet come" and to the time that has been appointed. But here this is not the same Greek word. Jesus knew that the hour of His being offered as a sacrifice for sin was established and set by God. And His hour of being revealed as the Messiah to the nation, that was a time, a set time appointed by God. And as we have pointed out in going through the prophecies of the Old Testament, those of Daniel chapter nine, where Daniel tells the very day the Messiah will come. "From the time the commandment goes forth to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to the coming of the Messiah the Prince will be seven sevens, and sixty-two sevens" (Daniel 9:25), or 483 years. Time had not yet come. The word is "hora," from which we get our word "hour." It's h-o-r-a in the Greek. We get our word, "hour" from that. The hour has not yet come.

This particular word here is "kairos," and it isn't an appropriate time. He's not saying that He's not going to go down to Jerusalem but you go ahead and go. You go ahead. But it isn't an opportune or appropriate time for Me right now. He will be coming a little later. He will be coming after the feast is already in progress. But He won't be going down in advance. He said,

The world cannot hate you (7:7);

He recognized that there was this smoldering hatred for Him in Jerusalem going back to the healing of this man at the pool of Bethesda. He realized that this was still smoldering and that they hated Him. And so He said, "The world cannot hate you,"

but it does hate me, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil (7:7).

Things haven't changed. The world still hates Jesus today because He testifies against the works that they are evil. People don't want to be rebuked for sin. They want their sin to be accepted. They want you to be tolerant of their evil. They want to sin with no rebuke whatsoever. And Jesus said, "It hates me because I testify." I tell them that their works are evil. They didn't like that. And so,

You go up to the feast: I'm not going up yet unto this feast: for my time [again "kairos"] is not yet full come (7:8).

The opportune moment.

When he had said these words unto them, he stayed still in Galilee. But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret (7:9,10).

Sort of slipped in without any fanfare into the city.

Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and they said, Where is he? And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, No; he deceives the people. Howbeit no man spoke openly of him because of the fear of the Jews (7:11-13).

The Jews had already determined that if any person claimed that Jesus was the Messiah, they'd be put out of the temple. They wouldn't be able to worship in the temple if they claimed that Jesus was the Messiah. Interesting that to the present day, if a Jew claims that Jesus is the Messiah, they are not considered a Jew. They will not allow a Jew to immigrate to Israel who claims that Jesus is the Messiah. They won't allow them what they call the Alyah, the immigration into Israel. Though they may have Jewish mother, Jewish father, all the way back. They say, No, you're not a Jew if you believe Jesus is the Messiah. You can't become a citizen of Israel. And so things haven't changed that much in 2,000 years. Here they had established, if anybody said Jesus was the Messiah, they would be put out of the temple.

There was a lot of whispering kind of thing going on concerning Jesus. Some saying, He's a good man. And others saying, Oh no, He's a deceiver. Interesting, isn't it, how that people have to be opinionated concerning Jesus. You can't be neutral. He made too many radical claims that completely removed any attempt at neutrality concerning Him. His claims were so radical that He was the Son of

God, that He was sent by God. That He was the only way by which a man could come to God. That He was the resurrection and the life and if you believed on Him, you would never die. Radical claims that do not allow any neutrality concerning Him. You either believe or you don't.

He was either a good man or He was a deceiver. He can't be both. He was either the Son of God or He wasn't the Son of God. He can't be both. And so there was a division as there always is concerning Jesus. And today the world is divided in their opinions concerning Jesus. And tonight, all of us have an opinion concerning Jesus. We're not neutral. We either believe that He is the Son of God, the Savior of the world or you have to believe that He is a fraud, a deceiver. You're with the crowd that says, Oh, no, He deceived the people.

You see, Jesus said, If you're not for Me, you're against Me. He didn't leave you any neutral ground. You can't say, I haven't made up my mind yet. I haven't decided yet just what I do believe. No decision is a decision, No. It's either positive or negative. You can't be neutral concerning Jesus. And so there was the division. Some say He's a good man. Others said, No, He deceives the people.

Now about the middle of the feast (7:14)

Jesus waited as the feast was now in progress, "about the middle of the feast,"

He went up into the temple, and He began to teach. And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned (7:14,15)?

How does He know all of these things and He has never been to the schools or sat under the Rabbis? In Jerusalem, there were those appointed Rabbis and the students would come and they would learn by the Rabbis. But the Rabbis had a very unique way of teaching. They would always quote the commentaries of other Rabbis. They would bring up an issue. Say that you're part of the Yeshiva. I'm a Rabbi. So I would bring up an issue of what constitutes bearing a burden on the sabbath day. I give it over to you and you have to start discussing among yourselves, Just what does constitute bearing a burden on the sabbath day?

We know the law says that you're not to do any labor or to bear any burden on the sabbath. So what is a burden? If you have false teeth, would it be a burden to put your teeth in on the sabbath day? And so you start going through all the commentaries and you would study the commentaries. You'd say, Well, Rabbi Hallel says that, and Rabbi Shima says this. And you'd always be quoting the Rabbis. No one would speak with authority. They would only speak as they would quote what a different Rabbi had said. And that was the way they studied. That was the way they learned. The mind sharpening mind. Iron sharpens iron.

They're amazed at Jesus. When He gave the sermon on the mount, they were amazed because He spoke not like the scribes and the Pharisees who just were always quoting the other Rabbis, but he said, He speaks with authority. Now as He's teaching there in the temple, they're amazed. They know that He hasn't sat under any Rabbi. How is it that He knows the scriptures so well? How is it that He has all of these learning? The understanding of the scriptures. How is it that He speaks with such authority concerning the word when He didn't sit under Gamaliel or any of the other Rabbis that happened to be in Jerusalem at that present time. Gamaliel being the most renowned of them all.

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

In other words, I haven't sat under any Rabbi. I've sat under the Father. He's the One who has taught Me. "My doctrine isn't mine, but it is His who sent Me."

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

If you really do the will of God, you'll know that what I'm telling you is from God.

He that speaks of himself speaks for his own glory: but he that seeks his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him (7:18).

I speak with the authority of the Father who has taught Me or the things that I'm teaching.

Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law (7:19)?

What an accusation to the Pharisees who spent their lives endeavoring to keep the law. But listen to the honesty of Peter when they are trying to determine in a first church council of what obligation the Gentile believers had to the law of Moses, Peter said unto them, "Why should we put on the Gentile believers, a yoke of bondage that neither we nor our fathers were able to bear" (Acts 15:10)? Why should we put that on the Gentiles? So Peter confessed, We haven't been able to keep the law. Jesus is making this accusation of them. "Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keep the law?"

So why are you going about to kill me (7:19)?

Jesus knew that there was this conspiracy. He had been avoiding the area of Judaea because of the conspiracy to kill Him because He had healed the man on the sabbath day. So He said, You don't keep the law, so why are you going about to kill Me? Their accusation was He violated the law of Moses. He healed on the sabbath day and told the man to carry his cot on the sabbath day.

The people answered and said, You have a devil [you're crazy]: who's going about to kill thee (7:20)?

They didn't know of the conspiracy of the religious leaders that He must be put to death. They didn't know of it. So when He says, Why are you going about to kill Me? They said, Who's trying to kill You? You're crazy.

Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and you all marvel (7:21).

That was the work of the healing of the man at the pool.

Moses therefore gave unto you the law of circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers (7:22);)

That is, circumcision antedated Moses. The rite of circumcision was given to Abraham and it was the sign of the covenant that God had made with Abraham that God would make of him many nations and the covenant of the special nation "through Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Genesis 21:12). Circumcision was the sign of the covenant. It was not of Moses, it preceded Moses. It went actually back to Abraham, the fathers.

and you on the sabbath day circumcise a man (7:22).

I've healed a man on the sabbath day. You've mutilated a man on the sabbath day in circumcision.

If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken (7:23);

According to the law of Moses it was on the eighth day that the male child was to be circumcised. And of course, many times the eighth day would fall on a sabbath day. But because the law of Moses was to circumcise on the eighth day, they went ahead on the sabbath day and would circumcise the male child. So "if a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken;"

are you angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day? Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill (7:23,25)?

They began to realize, Yes, this is the One they've been talking about. They were going to kill Him. But Jesus said,

Judge not according to the appearance (7:24),

When Samuel went down to the house of Jesse at the commandment of God to anoint one of the sons of Jesse to be the king over Israel, as Jesse brought in his sons the first, Eliab, handsome, good looking, strong, well-built and Samuel thought, Oh yes. Surely this is God's chosen. But God said to Samuel, Man looks on the outward appearance and God looks on the heart. Jesus is saying, Don't judge according to appearance. How many times we're judging according to appearance. Wrong.

but judge righteous judgment. Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? But, look, he's speaking boldly, and they're not saying anything to him. Do the rulers know indeed that He is the very Messiah? Howbeit we know this man whence he is: when the Messiah comes, no man knows from whence he is (7:24-27).

They thought that the Messiah was just going to suddenly, miraculously appear. And even today they believe that concerning the Messiah, just one day he's going to appear on the scene, recognized by all to be the Messiah. And so the fact that they knew Him, they knew His mother and father, they knew Him from His boyhood in Nazareth, they were rejecting Him as being the Messiah. Maybe the rulers thinking, But we know Him, we know more than they do about Him.

Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, You both know me, and you know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom you don't know (7:28).

Yes, you know Me. You know I'm from, I grew up in Nazareth. And you see, they had come for the feast. They were all there and neighbors from Nazareth, neighbors who had watched Him grow up, fellows that maybe grew up with Him. They had a difficult time accepting Him as the Messiah and Jesus said, Yes, "you know Me. You know whence I am: but I've not come of myself, He that sent Me is true, whom you don't know." You don't know God.

But I know him: for I am from him, and he has sent me (7:29).

Pretty radical. He's a good man or He's a deceiver. Is He deceiving them when He declares to them, I know the Father for I am from Him and He has sent Me?

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

Now we have the "hora" again, and this is referring to that precise hour that God had established for the offering of the sacrifice of His Son for sins.

And many of the people believed on him, and said, When the Messiah comes, will he do more miracles than these which this man has done (7:31)?

Look at all of the miracles. Will the Messiah do more miracles than these?

The Pharisees heard that the people were murmuring such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to arrest him. Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I shall go unto him that sent me (7:32,33).

Going to be with you for just a little while more. And then I'm going to go back to Him who sent Me.

You will seek me, and you will not find me: and where I am, you cannot come (7:34).

I'm going. "You're going to seek Me, you won't find Me." This He is saying to the people. To His disciples, you remember in the fourteenth chapter, He said, "Let not your hearts be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I'm going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:1-3).

To these people He's saying, Where I'm going you can't come. To His disciples, He said, Where I'm going, I'm going to come and get you. I'll prepare a place for you and then I'll come and get you and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

So the Jews said among themselves, Where's he going, that we can't find him? will he go to the dispersed among the Gentiles (7:35),

Is He going to head out from here, maybe go to Greece? And to the dispersed Jews that are in Rome and is He going to go out to the nations to preach to the dispersed?

What does He mean, Where I'm going, you cannot come (7:36)?

And then in the last day, that great day of the feast (7:37),

This would be the eighth day, the day of the holy convocation, the sabbath day,

Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink (7:37).

He's talking about the deep spiritual thirst, universal thirst in the heart of every man for a meaningful relationship with God. Down deep inside we need God. Our lives cannot be whole or complete without God.

Man exists on three levels: body, soul and spirit. He is an inferior trinity. Made in the image of God who is a superior trinity: Father, Son and Spirit. Man was created a spirit being. Living in a body, fleshly body, possessing a consciousness. The consciousness was under the control of the spirit. And thus, man lived in conscious communion and fellowship with God because the spirit was uppermost; spirit, soul, body. The body was subject unto the spirit. Man did not live controlled or dominated by the flesh but controlled and dominated by the spirit and thus lived in fellowship with God.

It was through the fall when man obeying the body appetites, eating of the forbidden fruit, because of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life. For that fruit was delicious, it was beautiful to look upon. And it was desired to make him as wise as God. And yielding to the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye, man became dominated by the flesh. The spirit died. God said, "In the day you eat it, you'll surely die" (Genesis 2:17). His spirit died, he lost that consciousness of God's presence. As his body was now mastered by his fleshly desires. And he began to live and walk after the flesh. Dead in his trespasses and sins. Alienated from God. Without God and without hope and without Christ in this world.

The mind of man now dominated by the fleshly desires and the fleshly needs. This is the state of common man today. He lives for the flesh and to fulfill the desires of the flesh and of his mind. He is controlled by Satan, alienated from God. Not subject to the laws of God because the flesh rules.

As the result, he is dead to God and the things of God and alienated from fellowship. But down deep inside, man needs God and longs for God. David said, "As the deer pants after the water brooks, so pant

my soul after Thee, O God” (Psalm 42:1). I thirst for the living God and such is true of every man. There is that thirst for God.

Man is trying to satisfy that thirst with physical things. Madison Avenue recognizes that and they are selling people a bill of goods with the subtle promise that, Hey, this is what you need to really be happy. This will satisfy you. This will bring you that fulfillment that you’re longing for and looking for. And they’re constantly holding up little bubbles. And men are trading eternal life for glass beads.

Man tries to fill that spiritual thirst for God with emotional experiences. Pleasuremania. Where a person goes their emotions wrung out for a couple of hours at a football game or a baseball game or a basketball game. But all of these things at best only give a temporary kind of respite from the thirst. He’s not aware of it for the moment that he’s engaged in the activity but quickly the activity is over, quickly the thrill of a new possession fades and the thirst is still there. The thirst goes on. Because only God can satisfy that deep inner need in each of our lives for God. There’s no substitute for a relationship with God.

And Jesus, talking to them concerning this deep spiritual thirst, that thirst for God, that need for God, says to them, “Come to me and drink.” Jesus is here claiming to be God once again. You need God, you’re thirsting for God, come to Me. I can satisfy that need for God. I can satisfy that thirst for God that is deep down inside your being. Come to Me and drink for,

He that believeth on me [Jesus said], as the scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water (7:38).

Jesus perhaps is referring to Isaiah 44:3, “For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.” Or perhaps Isaiah 58:11, “And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.” “He that believeth on me, as the scripture sayeth, out of his innermost being there will flow rivers of living water.”

Thirsty for God? God will not only satisfy that thirst. He’ll not only fill that emptiness but He’ll overflow it. The life of the Spirit is an overflowing life. Man who is going around constantly with his clamant cry and thirst not only finds full satisfaction in Jesus Christ but finds that there is a surplus. It overflows. It’s like a well of living water, He said to the woman of Samaria, that is springing up within. And you’ll never thirst again. Satisfaction. Complete satisfaction in Jesus Christ.

Again, radical claims. He’s a good man or He’s deceiving the people. John wrote the gospel some fifty years after this event. Writing now with the years of experience, though at the moment he did not understand what Jesus was referring to. Once the Holy Spirit was given, which Jesus had promised to the disciples, then John realized, He was talking about the Holy Spirit. It was through the receiving of the Holy Spirit, through his baptism of the Spirit, through this coming upon or the overflowing of the Spirit that John realized He was talking about the Holy Spirit.

What was He saying concerning it? It would be like a river of living water flowing forth, gushing forth out of your life.

(This spake he of the Spirit, which was not yet; because Jesus was not yet glorified.) Many people therefore, when they heard these things, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet (7:39,40).

That is, the prophet that Moses had predicted. “And there shall arise another prophet like unto myself; and to Him you shall give heed” (Deuteronomy 18:15), one of the prophecies concerning the Messiah given by Moses. And when they heard Jesus say this, they were some of them said, This is the Prophet. They had this question before, Could this be the very Christ or the Messiah? This is the Prophet.

Others said, This is the Messiah. But some said, Shall the Messiah come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said, That the Messiah will come from the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? So there was a division among the people because of him (7:41-43).

Notice those who took the anti side, those who said He deceives the people were basing their statement upon incomplete and false information. Jesus was of the seed of David. Both Mary and Joseph were descendants of David. He was of the seed of David and He was born in Bethlehem. They didn’t know that. They didn’t have full information and they were making judgment upon incomplete information which is a mistake that a lot of people make.

There are a lot of people today who are making judgments concerning Jesus Christ on false

information or incomplete information. Isn't it tragic that a person is making a judgment concerning Jesus Christ that is going to determine that person's eternal welfare and yet they don't have enough sense to study the thing out and see if these things be so. Jesus said, "You do search the scriptures; because in them you think you have life: but they are they which testify of Me. And you won't come to Me, that you might have life" (John 5:39,40). But there are people today that aren't even searching the scriptures to see if these things be so.

When Paul went to Berea and preached the gospel to them, they were more noble than those of Thessalonica because they went and they searched the scriptures to see if what Paul was saying is true. They found out it was. Certainly it is not wise to make a judgment until you have all of the facts available to you. Yet so many people are guilty, as were these people, thinking they knew the facts. We knew this man from whence He is. They don't know Him. We know him from whence; no, you don't know Him. You think you know because you saw Him growing up in Nazareth. You assume He was born in Nazareth. You assume that He's from maybe the tribe of Naphtali or Manasseh, or one of those in the northern area. But no, He is of the tribe of Judah. He is a descendant of David and He was born in Bethlehem. And so division among the people because of Him, and that's always true.

Jesus said, Don't think that I've come to bring peace. I've come to bring a sword. I'm going to divide families. There will be a mother divided against her daughter and a son against the father because the division comes in believing or not believing in Jesus. And oftentimes it brings division within families. And of course, He's talking to the Jews and when a Jewish person would accept Jesus, it would bring a great division within the family to the extent that oftentimes, the family would completely ostracize the member of the family who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah. They would even hold funeral services and consider them as dead and have nothing to do with them. There was a division. There's always a division.

And tonight there is a division. There are those of you that believe that He was a deceiver and those of us who believe that He was more than a good man, He was the Son of God who was sent by God to save us from our sins. And we believe on Him and we have received the gift of the Holy Spirit. And we enjoy this blessed overflowing life that comes from Him and believing in Him.

Some of them would have arrested him; but no man laid hands on him (7:44). Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees (7:45);

That is, the officers that were sent out to arrest Jesus. They came back empty handed. *and they said unto them, Why have you not brought him (7:45)?*

Why didn't you arrest Him?

The officers answered, Never a man spake like this man (7:46).

They were entranced with the words of Jesus. He speaks not as the scribes and the Pharisees. He speaks with authority. Never has a man spoken like this man.

Then answered the Pharisees and they said, Are you also deceived (7:47)?

They were saying He deceives the people. "Are you also deceived?"

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

Oh yes, yes, some of them have. We are told that many of the rulers and the priests believed on Him but they did it secretly because they didn't want to lose their position in the council. And one of them who was sitting there had come to Jesus by night and said to Him, "We know that You are a teacher who is come from God: because no man can do the things that You do, unless God is with Him" (John 3:2). And Jesus taught him the way to be born again by believing in Jesus. Nicodemus. And so they said, "Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed on Him?"

But this people who do not know the law are cursed (7:49).

Looking down upon the people from a religious throne. This is what Jesus came to abolish. The establishment of spiritual hierarchy. Jesus came to open the door for every one of us to be able to come to God directly. He is the mediator, He is the go-between. He alone is the go-between between you and God. No one else. "No man can come to the Father but by Him" (John 14:6). "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5). I can't go on your behalf. You have just as much right as access to the Father as I do. I go to Him through Jesus Christ. You must come to Him through Jesus Christ and through Jesus Christ, we both have equal access unto the Father. These religious people looked down. There is a religious snobbery here. And they say concerning those that aren't a part of their little elite group that they were cursed. They don't know the law.

Nicodemus said unto them, (the one that came to Jesus by night, who was one of the religious leaders,) Does our law judge any man, before it hears him, and knows what he is doing (7:50,51)?

He's bringing up a point of law here. They were guilty of violating the law. You could not judge a man until he had first had his say. They have made judgments of Him. They had not given Him an opportunity to answer their issues or their questions. And thus Nicodemus is bringing up a point of order, point of law. "Does our law judge a man, before it hears him, or knows what he is doing?"

They answered and said unto him, Are you also of Galilee (7:52)?

It was a very cutting kind of a thing.

Search, and look: for out of Galilee arises no prophet (7:52).

That's not correct, either. But that was their statement.

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

Meeting broke up divided.

Now we move into chapter eight and that's for next week. We encourage you to study it this week. A lot of interesting things and we see the controversy really developing between Jesus and the Jews, as we move on into chapter eight.

We pray that the Lord will be with you, bless and keep you in His love, draw you close to Himself. If you are here tonight and you have not received Jesus as your Savior, but you're aware that something's missing in your life. You've been trying to fill that void with maybe physical things or emotional experiences and there's still an emptiness. I would highly recommend that as Jesus said, Just come to Him. For He, He said, who believes in Me, as the scripture says, out of his innermost being, there will flow rivers of living water. You can know what it is to have an overflowing cup. He is either a good man, the Son of God, or a deceiver. He can't be both. You are either a believer or a non-believer, you can't be both. But to believe in Him is to have eternal life. I would encourage that.