

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

John 7:1-52



SYNOPSIS

John provides an account of Jesus's appearance at this eight-day autumn feast to highlight that Jesus is the Messiah and that eternal life is available now to those who believe in his name.



kairos
church



OUTLINE

1

CHIASM

A chiasm is a literary device that uses an ABCBA structure, where the middle is the point of emphasis. John writes chapter 7 as a chiasm to emphasize Jesus's words at the Feast of Tabernacles: "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them." (vv 37-38)

2

HISTORY OF THE FEAST

Lev 23:33-43 legislated the feast to 1) remind Israel of their nomadic life after their exodus from Egypt, and 2) to celebrate the harvest. The context of the feast in John 7 was highly politicized: the Essenes withdrew, the zealots fought, the Pharisees strived, and the Sadducees corrupted. Into this political powder keg, Jesus enters and claims to be king.

3

THE WATER POURING CEREMONY

On each day of the feast, a priest would retrieve water from the pool of Siloam. Amid celebration and shouts of "Hosanna", the priest would bring the water back and reverently pour it into a basin next to the altar. This reminded Israel of how God provided water in the past and would provide his spirit in the future. On the last day of the feast, the priest would not bring water back, and the jubilant crowd would be silent as everyone remembered to pray to God for water and the next harvest. It was possibly in this moment that Jesus shouts his offer of living water.

Jesus got the crowd's attention, and his offer was clear. Are we aware of our own thirst? Is anything keeping us from coming to him? Do we find Jesus trustworthy?

P. Peter provided an outline for how to pray in response to Jesus's invitation.

- **Pause** - Pause to be still, breathe slowly, and center your scattered senses on the presence of the Lord.
- **Reflect** - Reflect on the message and pay attention to the particular word or idea that the Holy Spirit is highlighting for you today.
- **Ask** - In what areas of your life have you quenched God's Spirit? Ask God to help you trust in him and yield to his ways.
- **Yield** - "Lord, I don't want to arrogantly think that I can live a flourishing life on my own. I yield my ways to you so that I may live according to your will."

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

How does Jesus disrupt your worldview (including ideologies, attitudes, perspectives)?

2

Are you thirsty? What do you thirst for?

3

How do you feel about Jesus taking the wheel? What forms your attitude?

4

What are some things God is calling you to trust him with?

5

What would it look like for you to come to Jesus and drink? To have rivers of living water flow from within you?



BIG IDEA

In moments of silence/stillness, hear Jesus's voice highlighting your need for him. May we respond by coming to him and receiving the Spirit so deeply that Life fills us and flows out from us to a dying world that needs resurrection power.

This offer is available to whoever believes in Jesus. Do you believe in Jesus? Can you trust him enough to come to him?

