

***“Who is Jesus?”***

**John 7:1-13**

**Sermon Date: September 8th, 2019**

**Reflections on Sunday’s Sermon**

**Prayer**

As you begin your study this week, spend some time thanking the Lord for your Home Group and for the opportunity to begin meeting together again. Pray that the Lord would continue to grow you and the members of your group in your love of Him, His Word, and one another as you study the book of John together. As you pray, make the following words your own before the Lord (prayer taken from At the Throne of Grace: A Book of Prayers by John MacArthur).

*“Father, may our lives and our fellowship be marked by*

*works of faith, labors of love, and steadfastness of hope.*

*By Your grace, we are holy people, beloved and chosen by You, and when the gospel came to us,*

 *it came not only in word but also in power, in the Holy Spirit, and with full conviction…*

*You are the One who awakened us to receive Your Word –*

 *not as the word of men but for what it really is: the Word of God…*

*Open our eyes to see more of Your truth; open our hearts to believe it more earnestly;*

 *and open our mouths to declare it more faithfully.*

*May we be imitators of our Lord Jesus Christ and godly examples to one another.*

*Help us grow into full maturity and Christ-likeness.*

*We know that the necessary nourishment for that kind of growth is found only in Your Word…*

*May we therefore search the Scriptures diligently and with singleness of heart,*

 *for in them we know we have eternal life.*

*They point us to Christ. They unveil His glory. They reflect His holy character…*

*By them You speak to us from heaven. In them we hear the voice of the Spirit speaking plainly.*

*Give us attentive hearts. Cause us to hear Your truth with all humility and obedience.*

*Open our eyes to see with clarity, and open our ears to hear with understanding…*

*We bless You that Your holy Word las been translated*

*into our own language to show us the way of life.*

*May we never take that privilege for granted.*

*May we never neglect the rich counsel available to us on those pages.*

*May we drink deeply of its truth and feed our famished souls with its nourishment…*

*We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.”*

**Scripture**

**John 7:1–13 – (English Standard Version)**

***1*** *After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He would not go about in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him.* ***2*** *Now the Jews’ Feast of Booths was at hand.* ***3*** *So his brothers said to him, “Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing.* ***4*** *For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world.”* ***5*** *For not even his brothers believed in him.* ***6*** *Jesus said to them, “My time has not yet come, but your time is always here.* ***7*** *The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil.* ***8*** *You go up to the feast. I am not going up to this feast, for my time has not yet fully come.”* ***9*** *After saying this, he remained in Galilee.*

***10*** *But after his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up, not publicly but in private.* ***11*** *The Jews were looking for him at the feast, and saying, “Where is he?”* ***12*** *And there was much muttering about him among the people. While some said, “He is a good man,” others said, “No, he is leading the people astray.”* ***13*** *Yet for fear of the Jews no one spoke openly of him.*

**Handling the Word**

1. Before you get to our text this week, take some time to read through the passages we covered last year in the gospel of John (Chapters 1-6). Try to recall some of what you learned in those passages and write down any common themes and/or truths to which John has drawn our attention.
2. Our passage this week takes place when the “Feast of Booths was at hand” (v. 2). Using Leviticus 23:34-44 and the information provided below (as well as any other resources you have available to you), make a few notes about the significance of this feast and what it involved for those who celebrated it.

*“Instituted in the Old Testament, [the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles] was associated with the ingathering of harvest. The feast ran for seven days and was reputedly the most popular of all the annual festivals. It commemorated the provision of God for his people in the wilderness, and the celebrants were required to recall that historical period by living during the feast in temporary structures of leaves and branches. A special feature was the water-drawing and lamp-lighting rite, which was performed each day in the temple and upon which, as we shall see, Jesus drew in his teaching. During the festival the people gave thanks for the rainfall which nourished the harvest, but also looked forward to that coming day when God’s Spirit would be poured out at the coming of the kingdom of God.” Bruce Milne (taken from The Message of John)*

**Understanding and Applying**

1. Since the Feast of Booths was at hand (v. 2), and since every Jewish male would have been expected to make their way to Judea for the festivities, it is no surprise that Jesus’ brothers wanted to talk to Him about going and participating (verses 3-4). However, His brothers were not merely concerned with Jesus being in attendance—they felt as though this important and popular celebration provided an opportunity for Jesus to “show himself to the world” (v. 4). Their argument was that if Jesus wanted to be known, if He wanted to prove Himself and gain popularity, then He needed to perform a spectacular sign or miracle where it would be observed by the masses. What was wrong with their line of thinking? Why can a strong desire for things like the miraculous, the spectacular, and the popular, serve as a hindrance to true and genuine faith?
2. Whatever their motivation was for encouraging Jesus to go to Judea for the feast, we know that it wasn’t because His brothers truly believed He was the promised Messiah (v. 5). What is your reaction when you consider that some of those who were closest to Jesus, who grew up with Him, and who lived under the same roof with Him, did not initially believe in Him as Lord? Why is it helpful to be reminded that familiarity with Jesus does not necessarily equate to faith in Jesus?
3. Although Jesus’ brothers might have wanted Him to perform some kind of show stopping miracle at the Feast of Booths, Jesus wasn’t interested in accommodating the agendas and timetables of man. He was purely interested in operating according to His Father’s plan and timing (verses 6, 8 – also refer to Romans 5:6, Galatians 4:4, and 1 Timothy 2:6). God’s plan and timing is always good and perfect, even when it doesn’t match our expectations and desires. Do you find it difficult to trust the Lord to work according to His agenda and timetable in all areas of your life? Why or why not? What does it look like when we embrace the Lord’s plan and timing in all things rather than our own?
4. The timing was not right for Jesus to go with His brothers to the feast in a public way because some of the Jews hated Him and were seeking to kill Him before His time had fully come (verses 1 and 6). In verse 7, Jesus explains that they hated Him because He testified that their “works are evil.” As *J.C. Ryle* wrote, *“it was not even his claim to be received as the Messiah which men disliked so much, as his witness against the wickedness of their lives. In short, they could have tolerated his opinions if he would only have spared their sins.”* Why will people tolerate Jesus’ teachings so long as it doesn’t address the sin in their lives (John 3:19-20)? How do you respond when the words of Jesus expose your sin or contradict the desires you have for your life?

1. According to *John Calvin*, the hatred these people had for Jesus shows us that *“the Gospel cannot be faithfully preached without summoning the whole world, as guilty, to the judgment seat of God, that flesh and blood may thus be crushed and reduced to nothing.”* Even if we are hated for it, why must we inform people of their guilty standing before the judgment seat of God?
2. According to verses 11 and 12, Jesus was the talk of the feast as “the Jews were looking for him” and there was “much muttering about him among the people.” While there was a lot of talk about Jesus, there was also a lot of confusion about who He really was. Some said He was “a good man,” and others said He was “leading the people astray” (v. 12). Although Jesus is still talked about much in our day, there remains great confusion about who He really is. What are some of the inaccurate, or incomplete, things you have heard people say about who Jesus is? Are you bothered by the reality that so many people around you know the name of Jesus and may even be talking about Jesus, but have no idea who He really is? Why or why not?
3. If you found yourself in a situation where people were conversing about Jesus and you had the opportunity to speak, who would you say that Jesus is? Why must our answer to that question be solely based upon what the words of Scripture say about Him?
4. What has been encouraging to your soul during your time studying this passage? What verse or concept increases your love of Christ and your desire to know Him intimately?

*“I think doctrine, truth, and biblical ethics are vitally important. But Christianity is all about Jesus. We have to understand the real Jesus, the Jesus whom we know through the pages of Scripture…We need the real Jesus.”*

*R.C. Sproul*