

# John 7:10-53: Overview and Discussion Questions

Jesus teachings about Himself and God's redemptive plan for the world divided many. A common theme in this chapter is that whenever Jesus teaches about Himself and His relationship with the Father, there are people who oppose him and people who acknowledge Him as the Christ. One thing is clear, however. **No one could afford to be on the fence. Jesus' claims about Himself are absolute. He is either the Son of God and Promised Messiah or He is not.** While Jesus gives us the choice to either accept or reject Him, **He does not offer a comfortable in-between option. We *must* make a choice to either accept or reject His authority. And our choices have consequences. We can either choose Him and live with the hope of everlasting life or reject Him and live with the bleak prospect of eternal condemnation and separation from God.**

Jesus returned to Jerusalem in secret, after His brothers had already left from Galilee. And He began preaching in the Temple during the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:2), also known as Sukkot. This was a festival mandated by God in Leviticus 23:33-44 and still celebrated by the Jewish people today. It commemorates God's provision of shelter during their time of wandering in the desert. In Biblical times, while the Temple still existed, Jews were required to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to celebrate the festival. They would then construct makeshift lodgings called *sukkah* that symbolized the tents that their ancestors had lived in before entering the Promised Land. The festival lasted for seven days and was treated as a week-long Sabbath. It was also a time for Jewish pilgrims to show hospitality towards their non-Jewish neighbours, inviting them into the *sukkah* to share a meal or to host them for the duration of the festival. While John does not explicitly state what Jesus taught in the Temple, perhaps Jesus was teaching

pilgrims about the real meaning and significance behind Sukkot. All the Old Testament traditions and practices pointed to Christ and His Heavenly Kingdom. What was a temporary reality during Sukkot would become an eternal reality in Christ's Kingdom. **Jesus had come to proclaim healing, restoration, and redemption for both Jews and Gentiles and that all would acknowledge the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as the One who offers eternal provision through His Son.**

The Jewish leaders continued to oppose Jesus. And Jesus continued to expose their hypocrisy and spiritual blindness. While the Jewish leaders clung to their man-made traditions and doctrines, and in their pride saw themselves as the gatekeepers of God's law, Jesus established that only God is source of all doctrine (v. 16-19). He is the measure by which all doctrine and teaching is tested as true or false. When we look to human beings and established traditions as sources of truth, we fail to acknowledge Jesus' authority as the Son of God and the authority of His Word. As believers, we also have the Holy Spirit, who helps us to discern truth from falsehood. Do not accept something as true because a wise person, priest, pastor, or theologian has said it. Rather, as believers we must be in line with the Holy Spirit's prompting and ask ourselves, "Does this align with the entirety of God's Word in its context? Does this align with the life, actions, and teachings of Jesus?" The Jewish leaders looked to their doctrines and traditions and failed to see God standing right before them. This was what led to spiritual confusion. However, Jesus' invitation to us as believers is very simple and clear. Look to Him and we shall know the heart of God.<sup>3</sup>

**Read the passage prayerfully a few times over and then answer the questions: [John 7:10-53](#)**

**Questions:**

1. What objections did the Jewish leaders, and some members

- of the crowd, have towards Jesus and His Teaching? How did Jesus respond to them? ([v. 10-53](#))
2. What did Jesus mean when He spoke to the Pharisees in v. 32-36? What strikes you about the Pharisees' response, especially considering the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot)? ([v. 32-36, cf. Matthew 16:21-23, Mark 9:30-32, Luke 18: 31-34, Leviticus 23:33-44, Deuteronomy 16:13-15](#))
  3. What is the role and importance of the Holy Spirit? ([v. 37-39, cf. John 14:26, John 16:13, Acts 2, Galatians 5:22-23, 1 Corinthians 6:11](#))

### **Application:**

1. Doctrines of God versus doctrines of men – how have you understood or processed the concept of doctrines in your faith life?
2. Jesus says in this passage, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, **out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.**" How do you measure the flow of these living waters in your life? Is it a challenge statement or is it a comfort statement?

### **Conclusion & Heart Prayer:**

Lord, what are You saying to me? And what are You calling me to do about it?