

WEEK 17

Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles

John 7 V1

Friends, Jesus knew He was going to die, that was why He was born, He was not afraid. He was on God's timetable and His death was under His control and it would happen when He said so. So he stayed in Galilee for the next 12 months, and when the time came that God had foreordained, He would willingly give His life.

Friend do you know that your days on this earth are numbered? The bible says; man/woman knows not his time, that is the time of his death. We also see that we are to keep in mind that we are finite; teach us to number our days aright that we may present a heart of wisdom that is, realize the death rate is one per birth and use our time wisely. I am comforted by the fact that I cannot die one minute before God determines but also, I cannot live one minute past when He determines. PS 139 says; all the days of my life were written in His book before any of them came to be. I am entirely in His Hands.

According to the other gospel accounts, Jesus ministered actively throughout the region of Galilee during this time with Capernaum His home base.

John 7:2

The Jewish Feast of Tabernacles, or Succoth was commanded by God and occurred about 6 months after Passover. This feast commemorated the days when the Israelites wandered in the wilderness and lived in tents. Leviticus 23:43. It also marked the autumn harvest. At this time Jewish people went to Jerusalem and built booths in which they would live for a week while enjoying the festival. These simple dwelling helped the people remember the days in the wilderness.

John 7:3 In other words, this is no place for you.

The names of Jesus brothers are listed in Matt 13:55.

John 7:4-5 It's difficult to understand how these brothers could have grown up with Jesus and not have noted how different He was from

them. Jesus was no doubt the perfect Son and perhaps there was jealousy. It's impossible to imagine that Mary and Joseph didn't repeat over and over the miraculous nature of His birth and all the events of that time.

Whether the brothers were mocking Him or advising Him or just what was going on we cannot know their motive but because of their unbelief, they missed the point. His life was unusual. At least two of His brothers did come to believe in Him, James wrote the NT book that bears His name and later His brother Jude wrote the NT book of Jude. James was the first Christian martyr.

Jesus experienced rejection and mocking at home, He said that faith in Him would divide families. Friends, if those you love belittle your faith, whether family or friend, recall Jesus example to us. Remember when you lack the approval you may seek, if you have believed in Jesus, you have God's approval.

John 7:6 Apparently God had not yet revealed to Jesus the time when He was to go to Jerusalem. He did go but on God's timetable. Jesus time belonged to the Father; His brothers' time was their own, as they had not committed themselves to God's service.

Friend, do you use your time wisely? You will give an account someday for how you invested the life God gave you. If you say you God hasn't told you what to do, my question is "have you followed all the guidelines given in God's Word about the use of time? (for example Ephesians 5:15-17, Philippians 4:4-9 or Colossians 4:2,5-6) If you are a follower of Jesus you can expect to be rejected/hated even because the world hated Jesus. More and more Christians are considered narrow, intolerant and prudish.

John 7:8 In other words, "the Father has not told me to go yet".

John 7:9 He stayed until He was directed to leave

John 7:10-11 He did not go up to Jerusalem for the purpose of showing off or "showing Himself to be the Christ" as His brothers had wanted Him to do.

John 7:12 This word “murmuring” means an undercurrent of contempt or dislike. He was now facing enough opposition that there was trouble for His followers and for Him if He was too public. John 7:13 The Jewish leaders had a great deal of power over the people and they had apparently threatened anyone who might publicly support Jesus. They had the power to excommunicate people from the synagogue in retribution for believing in Jesus. This was a severe punishment affecting their religious life, their personal life and their business or professional life. The people may have believed in Him but were afraid to say so.

Are you afraid to speak up for Jesus?

John 7:14-15

Halfway through the festival Jesus began publically preaching and the leaders were amazed that He could teach the scriptures when He had not been trained as a rabbi. He spoke with authority even though He did not have any degrees or certifications.

John 7:16-18 Those who knew God and wanted His will would know whether Jesus’ teaching was from God. In other words, if you love and seek the truth, God will reveal it to you. Another way of saying this is; the key to knowledge is to practice honestly what we know, and if we use the light we have, we shall soon find more light coming into our minds.

If you keep the plain things of scripture the main things, you will not be mistaken and you will be taught by God Who loves to reveal Himself to His children when they search for Him.

Jesus was not seeking fame for Himself; He was seeking to honor God. He was determined to bring the message of salvation and thus glorify God.

John 7:19 I have mentioned on previous programs that the Jewish leaders had heaped additions onto the Law of Moses (given by God). They kept their own rules meticulously but they ignored God’s Law. If you remember, they were furious about Jesus healing the man on the Sabbath but they were planning on breaking God’s commandment

“Thou shall not kill”. They didn’t see the irony; they were so blinded by hatred.

Men are often more zealous for keeping man made rules than God’s commands. Perhaps this is because it is easier to “do” works than it is to keep God’s law because God’s law is about the heart and motives. It’s about who we are rather than what we do.

John 7:20 The crowd probably had heard there was a plot to kill Jesus but were not very well informed about it. Some had accused Him of being demon possessed before, which Mark recorded, this way they could admit He had power but they defined it as evil. Of course, it is blasphemy to thus accuse Jesus.

John 7:21 He is probably referring to John 5:1-15 the healing of the paralyzed man on the Sabbath.

John 7:22-23 According to the Law of Moses (God given) a Jewish male infant was circumcised on the 8th day after birth. If this fell on the Sabbath they circumcised the child on that day, even though they said it was considered work. By healing a whole person Jesus demonstrated that his creative power was equal to God and superior to Moses.

The religious leaders allowed themselves to break their law but not Jesus.

John 2:24 This does not contradict Matthew 7:1 where Jesus was talking about being judgmental, self-righteous, and condemning. This teaching condemns false judgment based on outward appearance.

John 7:25-27 Apparently they had heard the religious rulers wanted to kill Jesus and since He was not hiding but speaking openly they were wondering out loud if the rulers had changed their minds.

The people thought they knew where He came from and as I pointed out last week, it would have been easy to find out. There was a popular tradition, which is found nowhere in Scripture, that the Messiah would just suddenly appear. It was just as wrong as the idea He would be a political leader. They didn’t know their scriptures,

which clearly told in Micah 5:2 in 710 BC that Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.

John 7:28 This could be the question; “so you think you know Me and where I came from”. They may have known He grew up in Galilee. The people did not know Jesus because they did not know the One Who sent Him, and they did not know the clear revelation of God.

John 7:30 This is the first attempt to restrain Jesus. He could not be detained because this was not God’s timing.

John 7:31 Now people were beginning to take sides. Some did believe Him to be their Messiah and intended to follow Him; He had produced convincing evidence.

Do you think neutrality is a sign of objectivity and maturity? It may be popular to maintain a neutral position about Christ but it is very dangerous. Jesus never permitted people to be neutral toward Him, He demanded a choice between belief and unbelief. Notice, it is a choice. I have had people say that they wish they could believe but they just cannot, what they are saying is that they “will” not. Friend if you are undecided about Jesus, then you are in opposition to Him.