

The Gospel of John 7:1-36

I Life Under the Persecution of Religion – Religion’s Plot & Feast, Man’s Unbelief & Time Limitation (7:1-9)

A. The Feast of Tabernacles

1. The Feast of the Passover, being the first feast of the year (**Lev.23:5**), implies the beginning of man’s life (cf. **Exo.12:2-3, 6**), which involves man’s seeking for satisfaction and results in man’s hunger. The Feast of Tabernacles, being the last feast of the year (**Lev.23:34**), implies the completion and success of man’s life (cf. **Exo.23:16**), which will end and will result in man’s thirst. In the scene of the Feast of the Passover [**ch.6**], the Lord presented Himself as the bread of life, which satisfies man’s hunger. In the scene of the Feast of Tabernacles, the Lord promised that He would flow forth the living water [**ch.7**], which quenches man’s thirst
2. God ordained the Feast of Tabernacles so that the children of Israel would remember how their fathers, while wandering in the wilderness, had lived in tents (**Lev. 23:39-43**), expecting to enter into the rest of the good land. On the other hand, the feast of Tabernacles is a reminder that today people are yet in the wilderness and need to enter into the rest of the New Jerusalem, which is the eternal tabernacle (**Rev.21:2-3**). Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob also lived in tents and looked forward to this eternal tabernacle (**Heb. 11:9-10**), in which there will be a river of water of life proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb to quench man’s thirst (**Rev. 22:1,17**). At the end of such a feast, which had such a background, Christ cried out the promise of the rivers of living water, which will satisfy man’s expectation for eternity (**vv.37-39**).

- B. The Lord said to His brothers, “My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready” (7:6). Although the Lord is the eternal, infinite, unlimited God (Rom. 9:5), He lived on earth as a man, limited even in the matter of time. The Lord was willing to lose His freedom, to be bound in the matter of time, and to do the will of the Father so that He could minister the living water of life to us.

II Life Under the Persecution of Religion – Life Seeking of God’s Glory. (7:10-24)

- A. The Lord is the Almighty God (**Isa.9:6**), but as a man under persecution He was limited in His activity (**John 7:10**). He would not act freely. Although the Lord is the omniscient God, He, as a lowly man, appeared to be illiterate. “The Jews therefore marveled and said, How does this man know letters, without having ever studied?” (**7:15**) Although the Lord had little education, He knew everything. He not only knew letters; He knew the minds, hearts, and spirits of men. The Lord would not seek His own glory, but the glory of God (**7:17-18**). Here [**vv.16-18**] we see that the Lord did not seek His own glory, in that He did not speak from Himself. Rather, He sought the glory of the One who sent Him.
- B. The Lord’s being a person who sought God’s glory for God’s satisfaction did not depend on what He did or on His works; it depended instead on the fact that He was of God, that He was sent by God, that He came from God, and that He spoke God. This chapter does not record any work done by the Lord Jesus. This chapter reveals that He was a person restricted by God, that He was of God, that He was sent by God and came from God. When the Lord spoke God’s word, God was expressed through His speaking. God came forth from Him through His words.

III Life Under the Persecution of Religion – God the Father-Life’s Source & Origin (7:25-36)

- A. The Lord’s source and origin are God the Father (**7:25-36; 13:3**). Although His source was God the Father, He came as a man from Nazareth of Galilee (**7:27, 42, 52; 1:45-46**). He told people that His source was God the Father, but He came from Nazareth. There is a vital principle here: with everything concerning the Lord, the outward appearance will never look good, but the inward content will be marvelous. Do not be troubled by the outward appearance. The people who looked at Jesus outwardly saw Him as just a Nazarene. He had no form, comeliness, beauty, or attraction. But within, He is the very God.
- B. It is crucial for us to see that Christ has annulled everything and that only He Himself avails for our feeding and satisfaction. First Christ was the fountain, and now as the life-giving Spirit He is the river. In order for the fountain to flow, it has to be opened through Christ’s death. Christ was “cut” on the cross so that the fountain could become the life-giving Spirit as the flowing river to satisfy us. (**19:34, 20:22; 1Cor.15:45b**)