

## John Ch 7:25-53

“An Invitation Unto Salvation”

You know as I think about the overall disposition of this chapter, how it lays itself out and resolves into what I would consider to be a fair amount of open hostility towards our Lord; I find myself refreshed in my love for Jesus. Because who but our Lord has a heart that is full of such love, such kindness and such compassion for the souls of man? That even in the midst of disbelief, and debate, and division over who He is, the tension mounting more and more concerning His person, with open animosity *towards* Him, and spiteful criticism *directed at* Him could stand up in the midst of this convocation, and give a no holds barred invitation to Salvation to anyone who would but come *to* Him and believe *upon* Him. People are wanting to end *Him*, yet He's giving an invitation of life to *them*, they're *ridiculing* Him, yet He's *reaching out* to them, they're *assailing* Him, yet He's *compelling* them to come to Him and drink from the waters of life that they might never thirst again.

What an incredible contrast between the heart of man, and the heart of God. and Unfortunately this chapter paints a picture for us that's all too common even in the world today. It's a picture of God reaching out to man in the person of Jesus Christ offering everlasting life to all who will but come *to* Him and place their trust, and their faith *in* Him, believing *upon* Him and the finished work of the cross. Trusting that the shedding of His blood is the sufficient payment for our sin, and that He is the bridge builder between a holy and righteous God, and a corrupt and sinful people. and This ch shows us the sad state of man in how that even though God is reaching out to man in the person of Jesus Christ, man so often scoffs at the very Savior that's been sent to rescue him and rejects God's offer of eternal life that's found only in Jesus Christ Jesus said, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”* John 14:6

Aren't you glad that Jesus is willing to stand in the face of such ridicule, such rejection, such criticism and condemnation by man, and give such open arms invitation to salvation for any who will come to Him? Because if it weren't for that humility, that ability, and willingness to stand up in the face of open animosity, rejection and ridicule, none of us would be here today. Because we've all been on the other side, we've all been in that position of disbelief, or debate, perhaps have criticized Jesus, or ridiculed Him, made fun of Him or assailed and assaulted Him verbally at some point in our lives. But yet in the midst of your rejecting Him, He reached out to you and said, “If you're thirsting for more than what this world has to offer, you can come to Me and drink, and I'll quench the inner depths of your soul.”

Think about it, He could've very easily, and quite understandably and justifiably said, "Look, I've humbled Myself in even stepping down out of Heaven, taking on this fleshly tent and becoming a Man, and I've come to give you life, but if this is the way you're going to treat Me, if this is what you call gratitude, than forget it. I'm going home." and He could've ascended into Heaven leaving all of mankind forever condemned, but He didn't do that. He was aware of the heart of man, and the type of world He was stepping into, how helpless we were to save ourselves and yet how unwilling so many would be to receive Him and yet in His love for us, regardless of man's lack of love for Him, He came and laid down His life for us that He might reach out to you, even if you choose to reject Him. *"For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."* Rom 5:6-8

Remember when Jesus said, "If you only do good for those who'll do good for you, zippidy dooda, what credit is that to you, even a wicked man will do that." *"But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful."* Luke 6:35-36 and What greater display of love for one's enemies, and kindness and mercy towards the unthankful and evil could there possibly be than the cross of Jesus Christ

Well, we find ourselves in the midst of this debate here in ch 7 regarding who exactly is Jesus. As I stated before this Ch revolves around the Feast of Tabernacles, and it includes 3 time periods. A time just before the feast, a time during the midst of the feast, and then a time just after the feast, and it divides into 3 sections accordingly. Disbelief, debate, and division, now last time we discussed the disbelief Jesus' brothers. and We entered into the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of this ch, "Debate." and The debate was raging over 2 things, #1 His Character, (is He good, or a fraud, liar or Lord, deity or deceiver) and #2 His Credentials, how can He teach with such insight, understanding and authority having never been to bible school, what gives Him the right to say the things He's saying?

Jesus sought to explain to them that it wasn't about what He had to say, because He wasn't saying anything. All He was doing was reiterating that which He heard from the Father, He spent time with the Father, and consequently had the mind of the Father, and so He would speak the words that were from the Father. and The lesson there for you and me is that we're to be spending time with Christ, the bible says that as believers we've been given the mind of Christ, and so we're to communicate to others the heart of Christ.

Now there are also 3 primary groups of people in this ch outside of Jesus Himself, and they are the people who are in the region from out of town just there for the feast, those who are

actually from Jerusalem, and then also the religious leaders. Now we see His brothers, and some officers and all, but primarily those are the groups in focus, the ones that are from out of town, the locals, and the religious leaders. and As I said there is hostility being directed towards Jesus at this point from the religious leaders, but the out of towners aren't yet aware of that, however the locals are very much aware of that and so as He's there teaching in the temple (which is where we left off last time) we read in vs 25.

#### Vs25-26

“Hey, have these guys changed their minds, surely not!” Is kind of the vibe that they're sending out here, but obviously what I want to point out to you is that (what), “He speaks boldly.” In the 40<sup>th</sup> Ps we read, *“I have proclaimed the good news of righteousness In the great assembly; Indeed, I do not restrain my lips, O LORD, You Yourself know. I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart; I have declared Your faithfulness and Your salvation; I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and Your truth From the great assembly.”* Ps 40:9-10 How often we're tempted to restrain our lips, or hide God's righteousness, or somehow conceal His lovingkindness to people due to our intimidation. Paul often prayed, or requested prayer that he might open his mouth with boldness to make known the mystery of the gospel regardless of what circumstance he may've found himself in, or what kind of negative pressures he may be up against. and That's what we're seeing here in the Lord, He knew the situation around Him was volatile, that He was surrounded by negativity, but He spoke boldly the truth of the word of God to the people, He didn't back down due to fear or intimidation. The bible says, *“God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”* 2 Tim 1:7 Notice it doesn't say that He spoke, “Rudely,” but rather, “Boldly,” there's a difference. We haven't been given a spirit of rudeness, but of power, and God help us not to back down in a certain situation because of fear, or intimidation, but that we would speak the principals and precepts of God's Word boldly into a situation or opportunity when need be.

#### Vs27

You see, “Surely the leaders haven't changed their minds because we know where this guy is from, but know one is going to know the history of the Christ.” They had this thought that the Christ would appear suddenly and magnanimously, and just be sort of this mystery man that no one knew anything about. and Obviously there's plenty of scripture to combat that, but there's few from which they grafted that opinion, the primary one being Isa 53:8 which says, *“And who will declare His generation?”* and They took that to mean that His heritage, would be a mystery, no one would really know His folks, or where He came from. and These people thought they knew where He was from, in ch 6 they argued that He was Joseph's boy, and Mary's Son, but the reality is that they were only ½ right, He was Mary's Son, but not Joseph's, He was the Son of God.

#### Vs28-29

In other words, “You may have a bit of a line on Me physically, but you’re clueless concerning Me spiritually, and the reality of who I am and where I’m from.” Some people see in this a bit of sarcasm, or even a question rather than a statement so that Jesus is saying, “Do you really know who I am and where I’m from?” (Kind of a thing) But there’s 2 things I want you to see here quickly. and They are #1 this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> time we’ve seen it mentioned that Jesus was *teaching* in the Temple. In vs 14, “He taught”, and again here in vs 28, “He taught,” Jesus was all about the teaching of the Word of God. and If He seen it as a need to instruct the people as to the reality of the heart of God as by the Word of God, than it seems essential that we need to give heed to the teaching of God’s Word in our lives today as well. If Jesus taught the word of God, than to me it seems obvious then that *we need* to be taught the Word of God.

But then #2 Did you catch His mention of deity again? He didn’t claim to be *of* this world, but rather sent *to* this world. Which means He existed before being born into this world, He’s making a claim as to His eternal nature here, and they caught it, considered it blasphemy.

Vs30

You see here it is again, they wanted to kill Him right then because of His claim to deity but no one touched Him. Why? Because His hour had not yet come, what hour? The hour in which He would lay down His life for the sins of the world, now there’s coming a time about 6 months from this point where Jesus will say, “*Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You.*” John 17:1 and Again the reference is regarding the hour of the cross whereby Jesus will give His life that as many as would call upon His name might have everlasting life. But until that time comes, no one’s going to touch Him. Jesus said, “*No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.*” John 10:18 He went to the cross of His own volition, and you can rest assured that until the Father is finished with you, and accomplished His preordained purposes through you that nothing will happen to you either. Now again we’re not to tempt the Lord and do foolish things or we’ll reap what we sow, but the point here is that as long as the Father’s hand is on you, no one else will lay hands on you. and Again that’s not to say you won’t endure persecution or tribulation, you’re promised that those things will visit you as a Christian, no student is above His master and as they persecuted Jesus they’ll persecute you. But as long as you’re leading your life in submission to the Lord and His desires for you, no one will take your life until He’s finished with it. and When He’s finished, you might meet Him via a car crash, being shot, hear failure or any # of things, but as long as God has your life, nothing else will take it from you, until the appointed hour.

Vs31

They expected that a part of the Messiah's ministry would be the working of miracles. Isaiah 35 spoke of the lame leaping for joy, the ears of the deaf being unstopped, and the eyes of the blind being opened. and Jesus would regularly point to His signs as proof of the fact that He was the Messiah, and these people seen all kinds of things, and so they're saying, "Look, this guy is a miracle worker, will the Messiah do more than this, what else does He have to do?" and So it's a superficial faith based upon what He did vs who He is, but the point is that there's this debate going on as who He is, and people are making there resolve regarding the person of Jesus Christ Something that we all have to do, and to make no choice is to make your choice and that choice is to stand against Jesus because you've opted not to stand for Him. We all have to make our resolve concerning the person of Jesus Christ who is He? Investigate the facts and consider it well, make a righteous judgment, all eternity weighs in the balance.

Vs32-36

"Is this guy going to be some sort of missionary or something? Where's He going to go that we can't come?" Their carnal minds not discerning spiritual matters, Jesus tells them they've only got a little while longer to make up their minds as to who He is, (6-7 months or so), then He'd return to Him who sent Him. Of course that's a reference to the ascension that would take place some 40 days after the resurrection.

Vs 34 rings out another sad truth regarding the finality of one's fate who refuses to come to Christ while on the earth, if you won't come to Him during this life, then you can't be with Him after this life. It amazes me how often people live anything but godly, but then when they die, it's like everyone likes to think we all go to heaven and live happily ever after. and I'm not trying to say that people can't give their hearts to Christ in those final moments, but what I am saying is that if you reject Jesus on this side of eternity, then the bible is clear, He'll reject you on that side of eternity. and Jesus is saying here that because they wouldn't come to Him now, they won't be able to be with Him then. and You guys that's the cold hard fact, it's that whole, *"How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!"* Matt 23:37 (Type thing), They were missing the day of their visitation, the day that made for their salvation, the point being receive Jesus Christ while you still have the choice, because once you leave the planet having rejected Him, it's final. Then you can't go where He is, what a contrast with what Jesus is saying to those who are rejecting Him as compared to what He said to those who accepted Him. He tells those who're rejecting Him that they can't come where He is, but to His disciples He said, *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."* John 14:1-3

Now this next portion takes us into the last day of the feast. and The details of the rituals that took place I've found to be somewhat blurred, commentators vary on the specifics, but we know that the temple area would be illumined by these large candles to remind them of the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night that led the children of Israel throughout the 40 yrs. and Then also (and this is where it get fuzzy at least for me) because there are those who said this happened everyday, others who said it happened everyday but the last day, still others who said it happened *only* on the last day. Regardless of the details, the fact remains that another ritual that would take place during the feast of tabernacles is that the priests would make this processional down to the pool of Siloam, (Siloam means "sent"). So they would make their way to that which was "sent" and they would fill a golden vessel full of water, and they would carry it back to the area around the altar and there they would pour it out amidst various Hallel Psalms and scripture readings, and this served to remind them of the water that God provided for them miraculously from the Rock during the wilderness wanderings as well.

The bible tells us that that Rock was Christ, so all these details of their rituals were rich in symbolism which pointed to Christ who was right there with them. and So see the scene here, it's the last day of the feast, and be it this ritual just taking place, or Jesus waiting for the moment that the ritual would normally take place but it wasn't that day or whatever. Right at the appropriate time, perhaps the water was just poured out and in the midst of 10's of thousands of people in a moment of solemn silence, vs 37.

Vs37-38

You could've heard a pin drop, even in the midst of such opposition Jesus stands up and gives an invitation unto salvation to anyone who will but come *to* Him and believe *in* Him. and We spoke about this with the woman at the well, that deep desire that's with in the heart of man to know God, and have a meaningful relationship with God. But people seek to water their souls with the things of this world only to wind up thirsting for more, only Jesus Christ truly satisfies. Drink of the wells internet pornography or some sexual experience, and you'll thirst again, it'll never be enough, "*Hell and Destruction are never full; So the eyes of man are never satisfied.*" Prov 27:20 It's never enough, drink from the wells of a bigger better career, you'll thirst again, the wells of success are too shallow it's never quite enough, more material goods, this hobby or that, whatever it is, if it's of this world it won't satisfy, it won't quench your thirst.

Jesus boldly makes the claim that the secret to a contented soul is found only in Him, in Matt's gospel we read it like this, "*Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*" Matt 11:28 and The point is that the reason why every time you pursue something thinking that when you finally obtain *that* then you'll be satisfied, you only find yourself more empty or disillusioned is because you're pursuing the wrong thing, it's a God shaped void that's with in the heart of every man and only Jesus Christ can fill it, everything else only serves to make matters worse, or more desperate.

But here Jesus says not only will you be satisfied in Him, and be blessed by Him, not only will you find the thirst of your dry, and dehydrated soul quenched in Him, but your life

will serve as a reservoir that He'll fill to the point of overflowing so that your life becomes a blessing through which He can pour Himself into the lives of those around you as well. He not only wants to be good *to* you, He wants to be good *through* you. He wants to fill you to overflowing, torrents of living waters just spilling out, gushing out of the overflow of your heart into the lives of others around you who need the living waters of Jesus Christ in their lives as well. So not only Spirit filled, but Spirit overflowing.

Vs39

and Of course there are a number of OT references to God pouring out His Holy Spirit like water upon the dry ground of the human heart. Is 44:3-4, 55:1 and 58:11 to name a few. But John tells us here that He's in specific reference to the Day of Pentecost when God would pour out His Holy Spirit upon the church like a flood. and My prayer for you is that you find the Holy Spirit of God flowing through you like a flood just spilling out from you like a torrent of living waters and God is just using your life to make Himself real to those around you by the working of the Spirit in you, and through you.

Vs40-42

You see here they are again unwilling to search the matter out, because they were right on 2 counts, and wrong on 1. Yes, Jesus was the prophet, and yes Jesus was the Christ, but they weren't familiar with His roots, Jesus was of the seed of David, and was born in the city of Bethlehem. Which just happens to mean "House of bread" for those of you who want to correlate that with John Ch 6.

Vs43

The last breakdown in this ch "Division," Christ the divider, Jesus was always, and still is dividing the people. Because He draws a very distinct line, and you either believe or you don't, there are no gray areas when it comes to faith in Christ. Jesus Himself said, *"Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division. For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."* Luke 12:51-53 In other words Jesus creates division because you're either for Him or against Him, and if one person in the family is for Him and another is against Him, there's division. That's why we have to love Him supremely, because it costs us something to serve the Lord, and to give our lives to Him, and if we don't love Him more than any thing or anyone else, we won't be willing to count the cost, we won't go the distance. So if you're in divided company because you love the Lord, be encouraged, Jesus by His very nature creates division. Light and dark, good and evil, love and hate, they just don't mingle.

Jesus knew it would be difficult, so He encourages us, *"Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life."* Matt 19:29

Vs44-46

They went to arrest Him, but wound up arrested by Him. There was just something so piercingly real about the way He spoke that they were just rivoted.

Vs47-49

As if they're the standard, the blind leading the blind, blinded by their own foolish intellect and religious pride, searching the scriptures that they might have life, but the scriptures testify of Jesus, and they're unwilling to come to Him that they might have life. Don't make the same mistake.

Vs50-53

So Nick stands up to them, says He deserves a fair trial because that's what the Law demands, and they just lump him in with the uneducated people and try to humiliate him to. But all they did was demonstrate their own ignorance because the fact is a prophet did arise out of Galilee. His name; Jonah, the very one whom Jesus would point to regarding the veracity of His own ministry saying that even as Jonah was 3 days and 3 nights in the belly of the great fish, even so the Son of Man would be 3 days and 3 nights in the heart of the earth. and He spoke of Jonah in regards to His own death and resurrection and sighted those things as proof positive of the fact that He is the Savior of the world. How does He save? By laying down His life for you and me that we might come to Him by faith, and believe upon Him, and as we come to Him and believe in Him, He fills us with His presence as by His Holy Spirit, and as the scripture has said, out of your heart will flow torrents of living, life changing waters.

Let me just encourage you today, that if you don't know Jesus Christ Don't pass up His personal invitation to you of salvation, if you're thirsting for more than what this life has to offer, then come to Jesus Christ I don't care where you are, what you've done, how old or young you are, if you're in Christ you're a new creation, and as far as the east is from the west, that's how far He'll remove your sin from you. It's a step of faith, but it's dividing time, to stand for or against Jesus Christ He loves you so much, and is willing to receive you, if you're willing to receive Him.