



Portrait of Christ

Sketches in the Gospel of John

Inductive Discovery Lesson 8
John 7:1-53

Jesus: Living Water

Jerusalem was buzzing with excitement!

Each year during the autumn season, Jews from all over Palestine came to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. It was a time of thanksgiving and celebration to remember God's faithfulness to Israel in the wilderness. Families spent the holiday in makeshift shelters they built themselves in observance of their ancestors living in the desert.

For eight days the temple was kept ablaze with candles to represent the guiding pillar of fire. Each morning, in an elaborate ceremony, priests would carry a golden pitcher to the Pool of Siloam, draw out some water and bring it back to the temple. The people would fall in behind the priests as they moved through the streets, waving palm branches and singing. The joyful procession would then return to the temple. The priest would raise the gold pitcher high so all could see as he cried out from Isaiah: *"With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation."* Then he would pour water onto the altar, symbolic of God giving water out of the rock for His thirsty people. Who could watch and not be stirred?

But this year, the festive atmosphere was swirling with controversy. Jesus was being whispered through the crowd. *Where is He? What do you think of Him?* Questions and opinions were tossed around, but no one spoke openly about Him. Then, at the height of the festival, Jesus came into the temple and began to teach. The sanctimonious leaders were astonished. *Who does this man think He is?* The dispute simmered into a raging boil on the last day, when Jesus made a bold declaration.

The festival week that brought people together was almost over. Booths would be dismantled, belongings packed and families would go home. Life would go back to routine, but for now they longed just to raise their branches again, chant their psalms, and drain every last drop of joy they could find.

As the people crowded into the temple courtyard for the closing ceremony, Jesus was among them. At first He went unnoticed, but all the while He was taking it in. Then Jesus stood up and cried out. Yes, the Lord shouted. The crowd had come to participate in rituals but Jesus offered them an opportunity to experience the real thing.

"If any man is thirsty, let him come to **Me** and drink."

Working Text for John 7:1-53
New King James Version (NKJ)

1 After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him. **2** Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. **3** His brothers therefore said to Him, "Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. **4** For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world." **5** For even His brothers did not believe in Him. **6** Then Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. **7** The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil. **8** You go up to this feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, for My time has not yet fully come." **9** When He had said these things to them, He remained in Galilee.

10 But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. **11** Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, "Where is He?" **12** And there was much complaining among the people concerning Him. Some said, "He is good"; others said, "No, on the contrary, He deceives the people." **13** However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews.

14 Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught. **15** And the Jews marveled, saying, "How does this Man know letters, having never studied?" **16** Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. **17** If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. **18** He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him.

19 Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?" **20** The people answered and said, "You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?" **21** Jesus answered and said to them, "I did one work, and you all marvel. **22** Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. **23** If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, so that the law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath? **24** Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."

25 Now some of them from Jerusalem said, "Is this not He whom they seek to kill?" **26** But look! He speaks boldly, and they say nothing to Him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is truly the Christ? **27** However, we know where this Man is from; but when the Christ comes, no one knows where He is from." **28** Then Jesus cried out, as He taught in the temple, saying, "You both know Me, and you know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent

Me is true, whom you do not know. **29** But I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me.”
30 Therefore they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. **31** And many of the people believed in Him, and said, “When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this Man has done?”

32 The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things concerning Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him. **33** Then Jesus said to them, “I shall be with you a little while longer, and then I go to Him who sent Me. **34** You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come.” **35** Then the Jews said among themselves, “Where does He intend to go that we shall not find Him? Does He intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? **36** What is this thing that He said, ‘You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come’?”

37 On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. **38** He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” **39** But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

40 Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, “Truly this is the Prophet.” **41** Others said, “This is the Christ.” But some said, “Will the Christ come out of Galilee? **42** Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?” **43** So there was a division among the people because of Him. **44** Now some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him.

45 Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, “Why have you not brought Him?” **46** The officers answered, “No man ever spoke like this Man!” **47** Then the Pharisees answered them, “Are you also deceived? **48** Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him? **49** But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed.” **50** Nicodemus (he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them) said to them, **51** “Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?” **52** They answered and said to him, “Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee.” **53** And everyone went to his own house.



INTERPRETATION — *What does it mean?*

Look for a spiritual lesson. Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: “Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid?” **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

APPLICATION — *How does it apply to me?*

We don’t study the Bible just to gather information—we want to spiritually grow. Our heart needs to be open to change. The only way to move truth off the pages of your Bible and into your life is to **put it into action.**

To apply a spiritual lesson, we must examine ourselves and take deliberate steps to do something with what we have learned. Ask yourself: Is this a new insight for me, or does it reinforce what I already know? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? What changes does it require? Think of how the lesson relates to you and what specific course of action you will take. **Write your application in the form of a question to make it personal.**

John 7:1-24

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

John 7:25-39

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

John 7:40-53

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

Summary

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the chapter is about. _____

Give a simple title to the chapter to help you remember what it says.



Take A Closer Look

**Jesus stood and cried out, saying,
“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.”**

John 7:37b-38 NKJ

Memorize God’s Word

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize from and re-write the verse here.

Meditate on God’s Word

While you memorize this verse, let it work into your heart and mind. Scripture meditation is like a good cup of tea—the longer it steeps, the richer the flavor. So give yourself permission to slowly savor God’s Word! Use the questions below (like a tea bag) to keep dipping into this verse.

(Challenge alert: You won’t always see an obvious answer directly from the verse.)

Look up. What does this verse show you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, or His promises.)

Look around. What does this teach you about life or people in general?

Look within. What does this teach you about yourself?

Look ahead. Does this verse give you reason to hope? Briefly share your thoughts.

Look alive! Given the opportunity, how would you express the truth found in this verse to someone who needs to hear it?

Make God's Word Your Prayer

As you memorize and meditate on this verse, pray it back to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit examine your heart, increase your understanding, and help you to pray. Ask Him for faith and strength to *act* on the truth of God's Word.



God's Word Bearing Fruit

For you personally, what has been the most important lesson from this chapter?
How will you put what you have learned into practice?

Something to Think About . . .

We are to be centers through which Jesus can flow, as rivers of living water in blessing to everyone.

Oswald Chambers

Message Notes:

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