# John 7:1-24 – Resentment of Righteousness

As we saw last week, the Jews were offended when Jesus said He is the bread of Life. They found many ways to be offended by His statement, accusations of denying Moses, accusations about being cannibalistic, and ultimately accusations of heresy in that He made Himself equal to God. After months of traveling and teaching, Jesus had to be getting tired and was probably ready to have a break. As He heads home He is also looking forward to the upcoming holiday, the Festival of Tabernacles.

This is the last of the 7 major Jewish holidays to be celebrated each year. Each of these feasts represented major events in the Jewish history but also have application to the Christian church. Passover signified Salvation, the Feast of Unleavened Bread represented sanctification, Feast of First-fruits indicated resurrection, Feast of Weeks stood for the creation of the covenant, Feast of Trumpets exemplified judgment, the Day of Atonement depicted reconciliation and finally the Feast of Tabernacles signified God’s presence with His people.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Holiday** | **Date** | **OT Meaning** | **Christian Equivalent** | **Date in 2021** |
| Passover | Nisan 14 at Twilight | Salvation of Israel from Egypt | Good Friday | March 27 |
| Feast of Unleavened Bread | Nisan 15-21 | Purifying Israel in the Wilderness | Sanctification in a Christian life. | March 28-April 3 |
| Feast of First Fruits | The day after Passover Sabbath | The Beginning of Harvest | The Resurrection, Christ our First Fruits (1 Corinthians 15:21–23) | April 4 |
| Feast of Weeks | Sivan 10 (50 days after Passover) | The completion of Harvest | Pentecost / Founding of the Church | May 23 |
| Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah – Jewish New Year) | Elul 1 | Gathering of the people to rest. | The Rapture | September 7 |
| Day of Atonement | Elul 10 | Mourning over sin | Judgment of God in great tribulation? | September 16 |
| Feast of Tabernacles | Elul 15 | Dwelling with God | New Heaven and New Earth | September 21 |

It was a holy obligation for all male adult Jews to return to Jerusalem as a representative of their family for Passover, the Feast of Weeks and for the Feast of Trumpets. But Jesus has a problem, the Jews are offended and seeking to kill Him. Yet the Jews are not the only ones who doubt His status as God. From John 7:1-24, we learn how Doubts Create Hostility, the motive for Hatred from the World, that Truth Offends and that regardless of circumstances, we must seek Right Judgement

## Doubts Create Hostility John 7:1-5

1. After this, Jesus went around in Galilee, purposely staying away from Judea because the Jews there were waiting to take his life. **2** But when the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles was near, **3** Jesus’ brothers said to him, "You ought to leave here and go to Judea, so that your disciples may see the miracles you do. **4** No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world." **5** For even his own brothers did not believe in him.

Critics will jump on this and say something like, “Jesus was afraid so He stayed out of Judea.” But that is not why Jesus stayed away. He stayed away because the timing was not yet right to fulfill the plan that He had for the salvation of the earth. This is not an action of fear, but of control. He was not hiding from those who needed Him, but wisely avoiding confrontation with those who hated Him. Since this was a holiday of holy obligation, however, He knew He would be heading back to Judea because Jerusalem is in the middle of Judea.

On a side note, John 1:14 says the Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. The word translated “made His dwelling” is σκηνόω, the verbal Greek form of the Hebrew word “מִשׁכָּן” mishkan, or Tabernacle. So John 1:14 says the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us.

Now it seems that at least some of His brothers, who should have supported Him, began to mock Him. “You ought to leave here and go to Judea, so that your disciples may see the miracles you do.” Mark 3:20-21 indicates that Jesus family thought He was crazy. They didn’t believe in Him and yet they were prodding Him to go to Jerusalem, so much for brotherly love. In many ways, this is another chorus of “If you are God, prove it by doing what I want you to do.” When He should have had the support of family standing together against those who were out to get Him, Jesus was ridiculed.

## Hatred from the World John 7:6-13

**6** Therefore Jesus told them, "The right time for me has not yet come; for you any time is right. **7** The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify that what it does is evil. **8** You go to the Feast. I am not yet going up to this Feast, because for me the right time has not yet come." **9** Having said this, he stayed in Galilee. **10** However, after his brothers had left for the Feast, he went also, not publicly, but in secret. **11** Now at the Feast the Jews were watching for him and asking, "Where is that man?" **12** Among the crowds there was widespread whispering about him. Some said, "He is a good man." Others replied, "No, he deceives the people." **13** But no one would say anything publicly about him for fear of the Jews.

Jesus addresses them directly. Direct, but calm, confrontation is far more effective than an emotional outburst or beating around the bush, and here Jesus demonstrates by telling them why He has not recently made Himself public in Judea. The timing is not right…there is more for Him to do before His hour comes. Jesus was not surprised by His death, even here several months before His death, He knows when the time will and will not be right.

Jesus then begins to explain why He was hated by the world around Him, and why He is hated today. Jesus’ very existence testifies to the evil done in the world. When people reject Jesus, I don’t think it is usually because they don’t believe He can save them as much as it is about them not wanting to admit that they are not good people. The light of Jesus exposes what is in people’s hearts. As John 3:19 says that men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.

Jesus then goes to the feast and fulfills the obligations of God’s law. At the feast He hears people talking. There was no TV or photographs, so He could be standing in a crowd and they would not know who He is. Some said, “He is a good man.” Others said He was a deceiver. Both groups were wrong. He was more than a man and He deceived no one.

## Truth Offends John 7:14-19a

**14** Not until halfway through the Feast did Jesus go up to the temple courts and begin to teach. **15** The Jews were amazed and asked, "How did this man get such learning without having studied?" **16** Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. **17** If anyone chooses to do God’s will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own. **18** He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him. **19** Has not Moses given you the law? Yet not one of you keeps the law. "

There is no doubt that sitting under the teaching of Jesus would be amazing, but that is not what amazed them. What amazed them is that Jesus had the gall to teach without having been taught by one of their recognized teachers. To this day, it is not considered proper for an orthodox Rabbi to teach in His own authority, instead, they are expected to refer to what their teachers have said. The rabbi might say, Rabbi ben Joezer said this and Rabbi Gamaliel said that. Sometimes they are quoting the other Rabbis out of context to prove a whole new point, but if they don’t attribute their teaching to someone else, it is considered prideful. Jesus offended them by teaching (as we saw in John 5) in His own name.

Now Jesus points out that He learned from God the Father. If teaching with your own authority was bad, this was worse. Only the prophets could speak for God and the prophets had been silent for about 400 years. Jesus then gives the test to determine if He is speaking truth or not. Choose to do God’s will and you will find out whether Jesus is speaking on His own or is from God. Jesus does not say that you can be saved by doing works. He says that if you DECIDE to follow God’s will, then you will know if Jesus is true.

I grew up listening to missionary stories. Often the missionary would come to a tribe that had never heard the gospel and be greeted by a friendly person. For instance, a story in Christianity Today (https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2019/may/brazil-amazon-remote-tribe-missionaries-paumari.html ) said,

We all climbed up to the hut and sat ceremoniously on the […] floor[…]. The old lady [conversed] as if she knew me: “You came a long way. Are you tired? Have you eaten? There is fried fish,” etc. […] We felt like we were home.

After a good hour of conversation about the trip and our general well being, she asked who we were related to or what we were there to do, questions that are impolite to ask at the moment of arrival.

“We are missionaries,” I said in my broken Paumarí. “We want to help you to know Jesus, the Son of God, and if you want, we can also help to set up a school to teach everyone to read.” The lady looked at me with a puzzled expression and started shouting for her grandson, Danilo. “Come over, Danilo. The missionaries have arrived. Take them to their home.”

“Our home?” I asked. She pointed to an empty tall hut nearby. “Danilo and I built this hut two summers ago, preparing for your arrival. We heard […] about the Creator God [who] wants to help us. I said, ‘If that is true, he will send us his people.’ So we built the hut for you.”

They decided to follow God and then He sent missionaries to reveal Jesus. A preacher once said, put your “yes” on the altar and then wait for God to ask the question. The Jewish leaders did not recognize Jesus because they were not committed to following God. Jesus said, “Has not Moses given you the law? Yet not one of you keeps the law.” If they had tried to understand the Law of God, they would have recognized Jesus.

## Right Judgment John 7:19b-24

[Jesus continued…] “Why are you trying to kill me?” **20** "You are demon-possessed," the crowd answered. "Who is trying to kill you?" **21** Jesus said to them, "I did one miracle, and you are all astonished. **22** Yet, because Moses gave you circumcision (though actually it did not come from Moses, but from the patriarchs), you circumcise a child on the Sabbath. **23** Now if a child can be circumcised on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing the whole man on the Sabbath? **24** Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment."” (Joh 7:1-24 NIVUS)

When you confront someone who is attacking you, they are likely to deny the attack. Jesus told them that the Jews were trying to kill Him and the crowds ridiculed Him. It is like todays political arena where someone raising an unpopular truth is accused of believing conspiracy theories.

Jesus then points to the crowd’s hypocrisy, they were amazed by a miracle. Just as earlier they weren’t amazed by the quality of His teaching, here they weren’t amazed by the miracle but by his audacity to perform a miracle on the Sabbath, telling the man at Bethsaida to take up his bed and walk. So He demonstrates their hypocrisy in that they are willing to circumcise on the Sabbath to keep their rules, but unwilling to let a person be healed by God on the same day.

Perhaps the big message for today is the last line. “Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment.” I will never tell you who to vote for, but I will tell you not to vote for wrong reasons. In today’s political arena, I see people on both sides of the aisle making appearance judgements instead of righteous judgments. I have heard both supporters of both major Presidential candidates saying, “don’t vote for the other guy because he uses too much foul language,” or “vote for my candidate because He isn’t crazy like the other guy.” I’m not here to tell you how to vote, but I can say God is not pleased when we look only at the outward appearances. If the Prophet Samuel had only looked at appearances, David would never have been king of Israel:

But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7

We cannot know exactly what is in a person’s heart, but we can examine their actions and promises. We can determine if it is better to promise the right thing and fail or to promise the wrong thing and succeed. We can see if our choices align with God’s revealed scripture.

Examine your heart:

1. Go back to the villager building a home for God’s messengers. Have you built a home for God? Have you invited Him in?
2. Are you embracing the truth, or being attracted by appearances?

# John 7:1-24 – Resentment of Righteousness

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Holiday** | **Date(2021 date)** | **OT Meaning** | **Possible Christian Equivalent** |
| Passover | Nisan 14 at Twilight (March 27) | Salvation from Egypt | Good Friday |
| Feast of Unleavened Bread | Nisan 15-21(March 28-April 3) | Purification in the Wilderness | Sanctification in a Christian life. |
| Feast of First Fruits | The day after Passover Sabbath(April 4) | The Beginning of Harvest | Christ our First Fruits (1 Cor. 15:21–23) |
| Feast of Weeks | 50 days after Passover (May 23) | Completion of Harvest | Founding of the Church |
| Feast of Trumpets | Elul 1(September 7) | Gathering to rest. | The Rapture |
| Day of Atonement | Elul 10(September 16) | Mourning over sin | Judgment of God in great tribulation? |
| Feast of Tabernacles | Elul 15(September 21) | Dwelling with God | New Heaven and New Earth |

## Doubts \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Hostility John 7:1-5

The Word became flesh and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ among us. John 1:14

Jesus family thought He was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Mark 3:20-21

## Hatred from the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ John 7:6-13

Jesus was not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by His death.

Jesus’ existence \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to the evil done in the world.

Men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. John 3:19

## Truth \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ John 7:14-19a

Jesus offended them by teaching in \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ name.

Ιf you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to follow God’s will, you will know if Jesus is true.

If they \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to understand the Law of God, they would recognize Jesus.

## Right \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ John 7:19b-24

When you confront someone who is attacking you, they are likely to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the attack.

Τhey were amazed by his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to perform a miracle on the Sabbath.

God is not pleased when we look only at the outward \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

1. Have you built a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for God? Have you invited Him in?
2. Are you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the truth, or being attracted by appearances?