

**Ziplining at Just the Right Time**  
**John 7:1-18**  
Who Is This Jesus Series: Week 3  
July 19, 2015

Welcome/intro/vision

If you're just joining us we're doing a short series here in July looking at the person and work of Jesus in one of the biographies written by one of his closest followers

And one of the things we've said about Jesus is that he's the single most polarizing figure in all of history:

nobody's had more followers who literally worshipped at his feet  
and nobody's had more haters who literally HATE I mean HATE him than Jesus has

Given that Jesus is more polarizing than Miley Cyrus, the Twilight teen vampire books, Rush Limbaugh, Barney, and anyone else on the planet combined

Each of us owes it to ourselves to at least look into this man and see what all the fuss is about.

So that's what we're taking a couple weeks here in July to do

And we're looking at him in the biography in the Bible called John  
because about 2 years ago we started this really long book and we've been doing it in 4-8 week chunks every so often ever since

And last week Steve gave a great message from John chapter 6 where we looked at a crowd who had followed Jesus for a little while

but then they came up against some hard and confusing teaching that Jesus really challenged them with

And in the end, most of them ditched Jesus.

And Steve outlined how pain, confusion, and busyness are all reasons why some of us are tempted at various points to ditch Jesus

A great crowd of people DITCH JESUS and they don't just leave him, they leave him and they start to turn against him

That whole event becomes a turning point in the story of Jesus, because after this there's this escalating conflict with the crowds and the religious leaders of Jesus' day

The other day I did something that probably none of you have ever done because you're all perfect and perfectly wise parents:

I got sucked into a stupid argument with one of my kids where the person deciding what the tone and tenor of the conflict was going to be was the one without the fully formed brain!

And what happened just a few minutes later was the same child who I had just allowed to drag us both into a stupid argument  
shortly afterwards did something that was a much smaller infraction

But because I was still over-amped and frustrated over our previous interaction, I was on a hair-trigger and I over-reacted to that much more minor infraction

Like I said, I'm sure this is all foreign to all of you, but perhaps you can strain your imagination and try to understand a situation where that might could happen

Jesus in the interaction we looked at last week challenged people and pushed people to the point where many of them left

And now, on the other side of that, the religious leaders especially are on a hair-trigger, looking for a way to deliver the final and ultimate solution to their problem with Jesus

As we open up to John chapter 7, it says this:

***After this, Jesus went around in Galilee. He did not want to go about in Judea because the Jewish leaders there were looking for a way to kill him.***

A number of years ago when I was working with college students we had a situation where we unfortunately had to ask a leader to step down from his leadership position because of some issues in his life

And this decision in our community was a point of significant controversy and conflict

And for several weeks after this there were several folks who were really upset with me and all I really wanted to do was hide

Have you ever felt like you had to or just really, really wanted to hide from a person or a group of people because of conflict or because they were just un-safe?

On the other side of the events that we just read about in John chapter 6, things for Jesus get dramatically more intense

Jesus has to stay in Galilee up in the northern part of Israel-- Galilee was mostly small towns and poor

and he avoids Judea down in the south where the political, cultural, religious and financial power was

because his haters were about as amped as they could possibly get—they were ready to kill Jesus

This is the first time in John's account of Jesus' life where the religious leaders start to want to kill Jesus

And this threat or possibility hangs in the air for the rest of the Jesus story until ultimately they get their wish

But as we'll see in just a minute, Jesus knows that when the time is right, and at this point in the Jesus story it's still a ways off, he'll give himself over to that wish and the desire of his enemies

he'll go back down to Judea, into Jerusalem, for one last run and into the events that will change world history forever.

But for now, there's work to do and more conflict for Jesus to deal with, this time at a slightly more personal level

***<sup>2</sup> But when the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles was near, <sup>3</sup> Jesus' brothers said to him, "Leave Galilee and go to Judea, so that your disciples there may see the works you do. <sup>4</sup> No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world." <sup>5</sup> For even his own brothers did not believe in him.***

How many of you have siblings? Me too—and the way that John writes this makes me wonder if he was an only child

Because if John had any brothers or sisters he would know that it's like the JOB of a sibling to be critical and unbelieving!

In fact, one of my favorite speakers Andy Stanley says that one of the reasons why he's convinced that Jesus is the Son of God and the Savior of the world

is because eventually at least ONE of Jesus' brothers, James, becomes a Christian

And he not only becomes a Christian but he becomes one of the pillars of the early church!

What would your brother or sister have to do to convince YOU that they were actually sent by God to be the savior of the world?

This Festival of the Tabernacles is about 6 months after the celebration of Passover that was the setting for the last interaction where a bunch of Jesus' disciples just left

him—so it's been about 6 months between the events at the end of John 6 and where we are now

And Jesus' brothers who are skeptical anyway pick up on Jesus' hanging around in Galilee and they know that his poll numbers have dipped to a new low

And so they kind of goad him a bit here—hey, if you're so powerful and if you want to be a big star, why don't you go down to the festival in Jerusalem and make a big splash!

Quit hanging around here in the middle of nowhere and put yourself on center-stage if you want to be a public figure

Prove yourself to the people in Jerusalem and maybe your poll numbers can rebound!

Let me ask you something, ever have someone ELSE tell you that you just messed something up in a big, big way and that you'd better get back out there and prove yourself to them?

Ever have a parent or a boss that was always pressing you to do more and more? Maybe you haven't had that experience but chances are someone you know has.

Or maybe for you it's more this voice in your own head that pushes you.

Maybe you just internally have this really incessant voice that tells you at every turn this is a test and you'd better pass it

It's like in every situation you're on trial and you better perform your best

Or maybe you had someone around you be disappointed in you or you did something that's unpopular with the people around you

And this voice in your head tells you that you need to find a way to make it up to them somehow or need to re-build your image in their eyes somehow?

Ever be in a low place emotionally, feeling vulnerable or disappointed or lonely  
or feeling like you made the right decision but lots of people around you are questioning it and you're feeling a little emotionally vulnerable or shaky  
and then someone comes alongside you and says: "You need to go and justify your existence after what just happened?"

You know what, sometimes they're absolutely right.

Sometimes you need to hear from someone else that you've made a mistake and that it needs to be righted somehow

You didn't try real hard in Algebra last quarter and your parents are telling you that you need to get back in the game and do the work that you're capable of doing—that's appropriate accountability

But sometimes those voices demanding that we prove ourselves or that we make up for something that we just did are simply wrong

Or maybe they're right that something needs to be changed or dealt with but HOW they're expecting you or wanting you to do something about it is totally wrong.

And sometimes in our own anxiety or rush to please people or to try to make up for something we did wrong

we hurry into a frantic attempt at changing someone's opinion of us and we only complicate a hard situation with a bad decision

My friends, do not complicate a hard situation with a bad decision.

And do not let other people's voices or your own voices in your own head swirling around the tensions of previous failures or previous disappointments

drive you to making a hurried or bad decision.

In this case, Jesus did the right thing at the end of John 6 and it cost him followers.

And Jesus is human, later on he weeps over the fact that Jerusalem rejects him, I think he felt the sting of the loss of his followers, even if he has confidence that he's doing the right thing

But Jesus' brothers do not at this moment believe him. And they interpret what's happened to him six months ago as a whole bunch of people leaving him as failure.

And they see him hanging out in small villages in Galilee while all the real action is down south in Judea—they think he's hiding, scared, maybe even moping around Galilee

And in the midst of what could actually be one of the lowest points for Jesus emotionally in his ministry

his brothers challenge him to prove himself, to justify himself

to do something spectacular to make up for what to them looks like a big mistake that he had just made in running off a bunch of people 6 months earlier

Can you imagine that this might have at some level been hurtful—kicking a guy while he's down kind of experience?

And at the same time, can you imagine that at some level this challenge might have pushed Jesus to in some ways want to “power up” and say “Oh yeah, you want a show, I’ll give you a show?”

Let me ask you, when you give in to the voices that demand that you prove yourself in the wrong way or at the wrong time, does it ever, ever, ever turn out right?

Jesus knows that to attempt to prove himself and show himself to the whole world in the spectacular way like his brothers want him to  
would only take a hard situation and complicate it with a bad decision

And so this is what he says to their challenge:

***‘Therefore Jesus told them, “My time is not yet here; for you any time will do. 7 The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify that its works are evil. 8 You go to the festival. I am not<sup>10</sup> going up to this festival, because my time has not yet fully come.”9 After he had said this, he stayed in Galilee.***

A number of years ago, my wife Kelly was talking with some friends of ours who also have kids a little older than us

And they shared that when their kids turned 10 they did something really cool with them for their birthday.

The kid got to pick a special trip of some sort—something within reason that they really enjoyed doing  
and just the child and the the same-gendered parent did this trip together to celebrate their 10<sup>th</sup> birthday

And they took that as an opportunity to have a more in-depth conversation about sex and sexuality, changes that are going to start happening to their bodies, and all that good stuff

We thought this was brilliant!

So almost two years ago now my son Davis turned 10 and he made an awesome choice for his 10<sup>th</sup> birthday trip, he decided to go to a zipline park

And we went to this really great zip-line park not too far away and had a great road trip together

we zipped and ate Burger King and stayed in a hotel room and we had some really good conversations—not all at the same time, that would have been totally awkward!

The genius and brilliance of our friends was that they recognized that 10 is a significant TIME in a child's life on the front-end of a whole lot of changes and growth ahead

See, not all time is created equal, is it?

It comes at us in equal parts and sometimes we represent time like a line  
but the reality is that there are particular points along that line and particular moments

where there is opportunity for something unique or where there's more meaning, more happening

Sometimes there is more possibility HERE at this point in the line than there was previously or there will be immediately afterwards

The Greeks had a word for this kind of point in time that was especially pregnant with possibility or importance and that word is *kairos*.

Kairos time is unique time, is time that is especially loaded with possibility or opportunities

And that's exactly the word used here.

Jesus says this is NOT my kairos moment—it is not yet time to do this unique, public, spectacular work that you my unbelieving brothers want for me to do!

And because Jesus understood what his work WAS and what his work WASN'T and because he knew WHAT TIME IT WAS

he was able to dismiss his brother's insistence that he do the wrong thing in the wrong way

And this was a perpetual challenge and issue for Jesus his whole life: his whole life, everyone around him wanted him to do something that he didn't come to do

And his whole life, this issue of OTHER PEOPLE'S EXPECTATIONS versus HIS ACTUAL CALLING was perpetually in play

And my friends, I want to suggest to you that for most of us, this is a thing.

For a few of you, you don't care what other people think AT ALL—that's both a blessing a curse; if you haven't figured out what the curse side is yet just ask your spouse or your best friend

MOST OF US deal at some point with this tension of other people's expectations versus what we've actually been made and put here on this earth to do

True for all of us and ESPECIALLY true if you're a Jesus-person here this morning

And the reality is that when you get born in this country, you immediately step onto a moving walk-way of cultural expectations and what's normal and what's happening on schedule:

school, marriage, jobs, kids, starter house, big house, bigger house,

And we internalize it and we think, "Yeah, that's what normal people do!"

And if we don't STOP and THINK about it, we can just keep going down this moving walk-way of what's normal and what everyone around us expects us to do and what we come to think of as normal

But at various points in our lives, at key moments, there are going to be KAIROS moments where we will be called upon to make weighty, significant DECISIONS

And sometimes if we're just making moving-walk-way, what everyone else expects of us type decision, it is exactly the WRONG decision

Jesus does not complicate a hard situation with a bad decision

because he is prayerfully tuned into God his good Father who is pacing him through his life and who is leading and guiding him through his decisions

He will not be pressured by his brothers or his disciples or the crowds or the religious leaders into making ANY kind of decision

he has a higher authority and a something much more important to be about than to spend his life trying to fulfill other people's expectations

***Jesus knew what his work was, what his work wasn't, and what time it was.***

Let me ask you, do you have a sense of this yet? Are you growing into this yet?

We're going to spend a good chunk of time later this fall talking about this, but let's go ahead and start right here and right now

Do you understand and know that God has placed you uniquely on this planet

with your gifts and in your situation and context and that he's gone ahead of you and prepared work in advance for you to do?

Do you know today that there is work God has prepared for you to do—which also means that there's work you're NOT supposed to be doing!

And that every day, you have a unique opportunity to lean into the work and the gifts and the Spirit of God who walks with you, with Jesus who is always with you, and before the Father who loves you.

And not every day is a kairos moment, not every day is a life-changing day full of dizzying demands or possibilities or critical inflection points

But every day we can be awake to the wide-awake reality of God and his goodness to us, his love for us

and recognize that all around us at every turn are opportunities to trust him, love him, meet him, and know him

And every day we can grow in understanding what our work IS, what our work ISN'T

and we can be awake to what time it is and be on the lookout for opportunities to step in or to wait for the work God has given us to do

Jesus knew what his brothers wanted him to do: put on a good show, draw a crowd, re-gather your public opinion momentum!

But here's the thing, Jesus not only had a clear "to do" list he also had a clear "don't do" list, and putting on a good show was on the "not doing" list.

Most of us don't have as much clarity as this, so what we do along the way is we just keep adding and adding and adding stuff on our to-do list

But maybe this summer you need to make a new list: your "stop doing" list. I'm going to stop doing something at work, at home, in my personal life

Because this activity, whatever it is, was maybe useful in the past but it's no longer useful any more.

Maybe when you were single or before you had kids that thing worked for you, but now it's a new season and there are different needs and it's time to stop doing that for the sake of the better thing happening right here and now

Knowing what to do and what to stop doing is often a function of knowing what time it is.

And not every season and not every moment is a kairos moment full of mega-significance

But here's the problem: kairos moments aren't always so clear, are they?

Sometimes they are—you graduate from high school or college, you're starting a new job, new baby is born, you get married

There are these signal life events that scream "this is a moment of extreme importance that will have disproportionate impact on your future!"

And those are important to attend to and they are, frankly, easy to spot.

But there are other very important kairos moments that are much more subtle. My son turning 10

that was a kairos moment that we entered into much more deliberately largely because a friend pointed out the kairos-ness of that birthday

And what can happen is that some of these more subtle kairos moments can be easy to miss because we're kind of on auto-pilot and we kind of blow right past it

Do you know how we make sure that we don't MISS those kairos moments? We cultivate the habit of praying about what time it is.

We cultivate the habit of asking God,

"what are you already up to today? What's going on in this season of my life? How do I enter into the work you've prepared for me to do?"

Maybe you need to ask "God, is there something that I need to STOP doing? What needs to go on my "stop doing" or "don't do this" list that I might be tempted to want to put on there?

Jesus knew what his work was, what his work wasn't, and what time it was and even when he might have been a little more emotionally down he doesn't complicate a hard situation with a bad decision

Let's press this a little more specifically and say this:

lots of time when we think about kairos moments full of disproportionate impact for the future, we think about or at least I think about opportunities for really cool stuff to happen that I don't want to miss out on

And that's true, my son and I had a blast on his 10<sup>th</sup> birthday trip, so glad that I didn't miss out on that kairos opportunity

But do you know what Jesus' kairos opportunity was? Do you know what it meant for him when it was his TIME TO SHINE?

It meant the cross. It meant death. It meant laying down his life for others.

If you're here this morning and you're not a Jesus-person, you get a pass on this one, so you can just listen here

But for those of us who are Jesus-people, if we're following Jesus and we're serious about following him

there's likely going to come a time when our kairos moment means that we set aside comfort, convenience, our own aspirations, our own desires, our own futures

we put all that aside and we make a significant decision to sacrifice for someone else because Christ in us has sacrificed for us

We have decided to follow Jesus, no turning back.

And we follow him wherever he leads us, to the ends of the earth  
and every so often we follow him to the cross where he calls us to follow in his footsteps to lay our lives down in a particular way for a particular person in a particular situation.

Jesus says to his brothers,

“That kairos is coming, it’s not yet here, but it will come. And when that time comes, there will indeed be a pretty big public display.

And the crowd will be pretty big, but they won’t be cheering, they’ll be jeering and shouting “Crucify him!”

And when that kairos moment comes all his closest friends will abandon him, just like he just got abandoned by a bunch of people six months before this conversation with his brothers, only this time it will be worse

And when that kairos moment comes, the only way that Jesus makes it through the pain and the difficulty and the challenge of that call

Is the fact that before it all went down, Jesus had spent all kinds of non-kairos days and all kinds of non-kairos moments

developing a really clear sense from his perfect and good Father of what his mission was, what his mission wasn’t, and knowing what time it was.

Jesus declares to his brothers that his time has not yet come and he’s not going to go to Jerusalem for this big festival and put on the big show that they want him to put on.

So here’s what happens next as we close out and set the stage for what we’ll talk about next week

His brothers go on down to the festival and after they’re gone, Jesus actually goes ahead and goes to the festival in secret

And after the several day celebration is well underway, he goes to the temple and starts to again teach the people

and again Jesus, the most polarizing figure in all of history, both deeply attracts all kinds of people while at the same time he deeply repels others

His brothers want him to come down and do a big freak fireworks show:

heal a lot of people not to bless them but to use them for his own self-aggrandizement

they want him to do another food miracle not to provide for people's needs but to get more Facebook friends

Jesus will not go to the festival that way, not in that Spirit, not for those reasons and not to do that kind of work

His kairos moment hadn't come yet, but it would. The moment when he would do the greatest miracle that the world would ever see that would change all of world history

Jesus's kairos moment was coming, this wasn't it, but there was a smaller but still important work to do at this festival

We'll look more at that next week, but for this week as we close, I want to give you a few questions to think about that tie into all of us understanding what our work is, what it isn't and what time it is.

I want to invite you to try out these questions this week even if you're not a Jesus person

these are just good diagnostics to be asking and they might be a way that God surprises you by meeting you as you think about these things

### ***1. What time is it in your life: What season is it now and what's just ahead?***

Can you step back and begin to really map out your life and what are the important things happening all around you:

This includes stuff like your **age and stage**: single, married, 20's, 30's, 40's, 50's or you've been 50 for like 20 years now

This includes things like your key **relationships**, your **occupation**, your **spiritual life** and journey,

the **extra-curriculars** that you enjoy, your **life stuff** like is it time to downsize the house or make some important financial decisions that you've been putting off?

***Is there a kairos moment*** that's obviously here or on the horizon that would be helpful to name and plan for?

Is there a kairos moment that you might have recently missed and you can't turn back the clock nor should you scramble anxiously to try to make up for something

But there are often opportunities for apologies, forgiveness, and sometimes small ways to begin to fill in that gap

Can you begin to pray about this question and cultivate a new attentiveness?

To ask for eyes to see what time it is now and begin to pay attention to how the Lord speaks and leads you uniquely into the works he's prepared in advance for you to do?

## ***2. Do you have a sense of the works God's given you to do in this season?***

This is a combination of your **circumstances or roles and titles** like being a parent or having a job or your marriage or your friendships

As well as naming your **passions and interests and hopes and dreams and how all of that fits with your unique gifts and abilities.**

Try to be as specific as possible. Not just "kids" but what about your kids? Not just your job but what about your job?

Example: My son that I took on that zip-line trip almost two years ago now is heading into middle-school this fall.

There are some changes coming and they're coming fast—what does it mean for me to be a dad to my son during this season? How do I grow up with him?

One way is that we've got to continue to have that sex and sexuality conversation and find ways to have it that will foster good open communication as well as helping to set healthy boundaries.

I've found a couple of good books that we'll start to read together soon.

That's part of the work that God's given me to do in this season.

What about you? Do you have a sense of the work God's given you to do in this season?

If you're at a kairos moment or about to come up to one, it's important not only to name it but also to be thoughtful and creative about what the work is God has for you to do

## ***3. What needs to go on your "don't do" or "stop doing" list?***

In order to do the work God prepared in advance for you to do, you need to NOT be distracted by stuff that's not yours to do

And maybe this summer one of the most important and helpful things that you could possibly do to prepare you for the great gift that God has in store for you this fall

Is to get RID of something that's just cluttering up your life, your attention, your heart and would distract you from the grace and mercy God wants to invite you to step into this fall.

I want to invite everyone to at least do some initial thinking about these questions and here's an added wrinkle for those of you over-achievers out there

This is great work to do just with you and the Lord, prayerfully thinking through the different parts of your life

But this is even better when it's done in community. So the bonus assignment for the overachievers is after you've taken a first crack at these questions: ***who can you share this with?***

And maybe not just share it with them but invite them to speak into it—maybe you can't think of anything that needs to be on your “stop doing” list

Chances are, someone who knows you well can see something VERY clearly that you can't see—our blindspots are called our blindspots for a reason! We can't see them!

This is part of the purpose and the power of community.

So take a crack at some of these questions and then take a risk and invite someone to speak into your process and help you to navigate these questions.

And as we're doing this, hear this good news: because Jesus knew what time it was, what his work was, and what it wasn't

He successfully and faithfully embraced THE kairos moment that changed all of world history

and has changed the lives of hundreds and hundreds of millions of people all around the world including many of us here

The one who graciously gives us kairos moments embraced his own, and in the process, he offers us forgiveness, reconciliation with our good Father, and life everlasting.

PRAY: “here we are send us” prayer for vision and direction for the church.

Offering: Connection Card or text it in, waiting a minute to get your info

Benediction: guests come see me!