

Rivers of Living Water

John 7:1-39

1. INTRO

- a. This past week in NYC, prayer walking, 3 circle sharing, two types of people
- b. Contextualized for this passage, there are two types of people: thirsty people and those so satisfied that they are pouring out rivers of living water

2. The Feast of Tabernacles

- a. **After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He would not go about in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him. - John 7:1**

- i. “The Jews” in John always represent Jesus’ enemies, religious leaders.
- ii. So he stayed away from the high country of Judea and Jerusalem.

- b. **Now the Jews' Feast of Booths was at hand. - John 7:2**

- i. The Feast of Booths took place when the harvest had been gathered.

1. Grapes... Figs... Dates... Olives... Pomegranites...

- ii. *[no need for slides] Leviticus 23:33-35, 39-43: The LORD said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites: ‘On the fifteenth day of the seventh month the LORD’s Feast of Tabernacles begins, and it lasts for seven days. The first day is a sacred assembly; do no regular work. For seven days present offerings made to the LORD by fire, and on the eighth day hold a sacred assembly and present an offering made to the LORD by fire. It is the closing assembly; do no regular work. . . .after you have gathered the crops of the land, celebrate the festival to the LORD for seven days; the first day is a day of rest, and the eighth day also is a day of rest. On the first day you are to take choice fruit from the trees, and palm fronds, leafy branches and poplars, and rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. Celebrate this as a festival to the LORD for seven days each year. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come; celebrate it in the seventh month. Live in booths for seven days: All native-born Israelites are to live in booths so your descendants will know that I had the Israelites live in booths when I brought them out of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.’”*

- iii. Time of celebration, a very well-attended festival, for two reasons.

1. It was an exciting festival to attend
2. It was one of the three festivals that required the attendance of every Jewish male who lived within twenty miles of Jerusalem.

- iv. During the feast great crowds came to town. It was a colorful event. The Jews would make temporary residences.

1. Remembered when the Jews wandered in the wilderness and God provided food (mana) and water (like from the rock...)

2. Shelters sprang up all over the city and all of the shelters followed the rabbinical building code.
 3. The walls were extra-thin so that light came through, and the roof had to show enough sky so the stars could be seen, thus reminding the Jews of how they had wandered in the wilderness and of how God had provided for them.
- v. At the heart of the celebration there were three daily rituals
1. Just before dawn each day, they proceeded to the east gate out of the Temple area. As the sun appeared they turned away from it and faced to the west, toward the Temple. Then they announced: "Our fathers when they were in this place turned their faces toward the east, and they worshipped the sun toward the east; but as for us, our eyes are turned toward the LORD."
 2. The second rite was performed at night. Four huge menorahs were set up to illuminate the entire Temple area. In actuality they were so large that each of the stems formed a torch. The wicks were made from the worn out linen garments of the priests. As smaller torches were carried to light the procession, the people danced and played harps, lyres, cymbals and lutes. The Levites chanted the Psalms of Ascent (120-134); one psalm on each of the fifteen steps leading from the court of the Israelites to the court of the women. Imagine what a glorious scene it must have been, with the majesty of the procession and the golden stone walls of the Temple bathed in the glow of the torch-lit night!
 3. Every morning they'd would gather at the Temple of Herod with
 - a. a citrus fruit in their left hands (an **ethrog - see pic**) as a reminder of the blessed land
 - b. In their right hands, a lulav, which was a combination of three tree branches symbolizing their journey
 4. After the priest was sure everything was in order, he would hold out a golden pitcher.
 5. The crowds would then follow the priest to the Pool of Siloam, chanting Psalms and waving their lulabs in rhythm.
 6. The priest would dip his pitcher into the water and they'd recite **Isaiah 12:3: "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation."**
 7. Then the crowd would march back to the temple, through the Water Gate to the blast of the priests' trumpets.
 8. The priest would circle the altar once, ascend with accompanying priests, and pour the water out. This was a daily event.
- vi. All of this was going on up at Jerusalem while Jesus remained in Galilee

- c. So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing. For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world." (vv. 3, 4)
 - i. Jesus' brothers were teasing him For not even his brothers believed in him. - John 7:5
 - ii. First, the Jews wanted to kill him, and now his own flesh and blood were urging him to go to the celebration at the risk of his life.
- d. 6 Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. 7 The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil. 8 You go up to the feast. I am not going up to this feast, for my time has not yet fully come." 9 After saying this, he remained in Galilee.
 - i. "time"—kairos—a word that carries the idea of opportunity.
 - ii. the opportune time had not yet come, though that time came shortly afterwards (see v. 10).
 - iii. After this interchange, Jesus' brothers went up to Jerusalem, but Jesus stayed behind (v. 9).
- e. "But after his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up, not publicly but in private" (v. 10).
 - i. Without the crowds he could travel incognito
- f. 11 The Jews were looking for him at the feast, and saying, "Where is he?"
 - i. verb tenses are continuous.
 - ii. The Jewish leaders (his enemies) were continually asking, "Where is he?"
- g. 12 And there was much muttering about him among the people. While some said, "He is a good man," others said, "No, he is leading the people astray." 13 Yet for fear of the Jews no one spoke openly of him.
 - i. No one wanted to speak too openly for fear of reprisal by the Jews.
- h. 14 About the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and began teaching. 15 The Jews therefore marveled, saying, "How is it that this man has learning, when he has never studied?" 16 So Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. 17 If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority. 18 The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood. - John 7:14-18
 - i. Jesus came into the temple and began to teach, and people realized that no one had ever taught like this. When they questioned him about it, he said, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me" (v. 16).
- i. 19 Has not Moses given you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why do you seek to kill me?" 20 The crowd answered, "You have a demon! Who is seeking to kill you?" 21 Jesus answered them, "I did one work, and you all marvel at it. 22 Moses gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. 23 If on the Sabbath a man receives circumcision, so that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you

angry with me because on the Sabbath I made a man's whole body well? 24 Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment."

- i. He is referring back to John 5 and the good work of healing
- j. 25 Some of the people of Jerusalem therefore said, "Is not this the man whom they seek to kill? 26 And here he is, speaking openly, and they say nothing to him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Christ? 27 But we know where this man comes from, and when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from." 28 So Jesus proclaimed, as he taught in the temple, "You know me, and you know where I come from. But I have not come of my own accord. He who sent me is true, and him you do not know. 29 I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me." 30 So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come. 31 Yet many of the people believed in him. They said, "When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done?" 32 The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest him. 33 Jesus then said, "I will be with you a little longer, and then I am going to him who sent me. 34 You will seek me and you will not find me. Where I am you cannot come." 35 The Jews said to one another, "Where does this man intend to go that we will not find him? Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? 36 What does he mean by saying, 'You will seek me and you will not find me,' and, 'Where I am you cannot come'?" - John 7:25-36
- k. The drama definitely escalated and now it was the final day of the feast, the seventh day
 - i. The priest would again come to the temple, followed by the great throng chanting their psalms and waving their lulabs.
 - ii. They would come in through the Water Gate. The trumpets would sound again. But this time the priest would circle the altar seven times in succession—just like at the walls of Jericho.
 - iii. When he came around for the sixth time, he would be joined by another priest carrying wine.
 - iv. They would ascend the ramp to the altar. There would be a pause as the priest raised his golden pitcher. The crowd began to shout to the priest to hold it higher, and he would try to do so.
 - v. *It was considered to be the height of joy in an Israelite's life if he could see the water being poured onto the altar.*
 - vi. It was in that hush and at that dramatic moment that Jesus acted.
- l. On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink." (v. 37)
 - i. Can you imagine? "It's not the opportune time yet!" No kidding, Jesus.
 1. He chose the MOST opportune moment.
 - ii. Imagine the uproar his statement must have caused! The priest had just poured out the water libation as an appeal to the Creator God to provide

water for the people, and Jesus, as if to answer the prayer, tells the people to come to him for water. What a radical statement and shocker to the crowd.

- iii. Jesus was claiming to be none other than the Creator himself!
- iv. Thirsty = A powerful image to those in the Middle East. They knew what it was to be thirsty.
- v. We don't know thirst, so we twist the object lesson of our thirst for God into a desire for a new wardrobe, a new car, a new experience, or whatever. These people, however, knew the idea of thirst!
- vi. **My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water. (Jeremiah 2:13)**
- vii. They, like us, were guilty of two evils. They turned away from the one who could satisfy, and replaced him w/ idolatrous solutions!
- m. **Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" - John 7:38**
 - i. Jesus is saying that the part of us that is never satisfied (your heart) when we receive this water, is the very thing that is satisfied and then more!
 - ii. Notice that Christ does not say "river" but "rivers." Rivers of living water flow out of us by virtue of the indwelling Spirit of Christ. When a person comes to Christ and satisfies his thirst, satisfaction flows out of him into multiple streams
 - iii. We never experience satisfaction as we are meant to until our lives give satisfaction to others. Gospel sharing!
 - 1. Philemon 1:6, I pray that the faith you share with us may deepen your understanding of every blessing that belongs to you in Christ.
- n. **39 Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.**
 - i. There was another time in the OT when the people were thirsty....Ex17
 - ii. During the desert wanderings that the Feast of Tabernacles portrayed, Moses struck a rock, and out of it came rivers of water for the people.
 - iii. That was a picture of Christ. He would be the rock that was struck and from him would flow rivers of living water
 - iv. Jesus had not yet been killed on the cross and resurrected. Therefore the Spirit had not yet come to indwell believers.
 - v. Once Jesus was glorified, rivers of HS poured into his people for his purposes and then they pour from us to others as we share the gospel

3. Conclusion

a. **Are you thirsty?**

- i. Are you thirsting for the right water?
- ii. Jesus is the living water.
- iii. Matthew was thirsty **Show video and then pic**

b. Are you satisfied?

- i. Jesus alone satisfies.
- ii. Matthew found satisfaction in Jesus

c. Is your satisfaction flowing out to others?

- i. Jesus intends for rivers of living water to flow out of you
 - 1. Generational growth
- ii. The day after Matthew's baptism, three days after Nick shared w/ him on the street, Matthew was pouring out rivers of living water to other people

iii. PIC