

11/1/2020 - John 7:25-52 - "A Voice Crying Out"

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[0 : 00] Father, thank you for our gathering again. I can't thank you enough for this church body, for every saint that gathers here that picks up the load, the workload of ministry that comes together with a missional mindset of seeking and saving the lost.

We don't just merely attend for the sake of entertainment or just a huddle. We go out to the fields and we engage in the game and Father, we pray that this text doesn't just weigh upon our minds, but that it transforms our hearts today.

Father, help me to speak your word how you intended it to be spoken. Help me not add, help me not take away, help me define that line of scripture and the meaning therein.

And we pray this by the power of the Holy Spirit to help us at this time. In Jesus' name, amen. So we see as we read the passage and dive back into this narrative, we pick up where we left off last week.

And the hearers of Jesus' teaching is still continuing at the Feast of Booths. And it brings about confusion. And this confusion, like I just mentioned, it has been stemming back to even the beginning of chapter seven with his brothers, the half-brothers, if you wanna be technical, of Jesus Christ, not knowing exactly what to do with this guy.

[1 : 37] He makes all these claims. You got the Feast of Booths, which is, we'll talk about what that, what the significance of that is again. We'll revisit that. But we also see that this would be a prime time to go to these crowds who are celebrating, this is a very upbeat feast, and do a sign or a wonder and totally just baffle the crowd how many followers he could get.

He could get all the spotlight. Those oppressive Romans at this time would have no leg to stand on. He would be our political, military king of this earth.

But we see that Jesus' kingdom is not to be found in that sort of temporal sense, but an eternal sense, something that lasts.

His kingdom is not necessarily of this earth. So we see that he opens up the scriptures. We left off in chapter seven, verse 24, and I broke up the literary unit for a couple reasons, just to focus on a couple things that the Lord was bringing out of the text that I really wanted to drive in to our convictions of the church regarding self-righteousness and things like that.

But also for the sake of time, I don't know if anybody wants to hear me babble in for two hours long. I surely wouldn't want to hear that. So I broke that into two separate sections, but we're jumping back into his teachings today.

[3 : 01] And looking back at the scope of redemptive history, as he's opening up the Old Testament scriptures, as he's looking at the law of Moses and teaching it to those who were gathered with him at this time, this brings to us sort of like Nehemiah 8, like an Ezra-type prophet who's opening the books of the recovered Old Testament law of Moses and expounding on it.

And something that in Nehemiah 8's day, as Ezra opened that up, we see that that actually brought about great revival. That restored a lot of traditions.

That actually restored, that was leading up to the rebuilding of the temple. That was a time that was pivotal in that redemptive storyline occurrence. And it's hard for us to often think of maybe, I don't know, who you might look up to in your podcasts and things like that.

Any pastors around the area, we live in sort of like a celebrity pastor culture where we can just flip on the TV and we don't really have to engage in the local church. We can have John Piper on our screen, the best of the best, right?

The inerrant John Piper. You know, who could ever go wrong? You know, people put him up on a platform. But he corrects the crowds, thankfully, in great humility that it has nothing to do with him.

[4 : 23] But you know mankind, we'd like to crown our faithful people we look up to. But it's hard for us to think about people like John Piper or maybe R.C. Sproul, things like people like those who would expound and teach scripture that it would be really hard for us to imagine not to be changed by that.

That to not experience like Billy Graham days, the Crusades going on, not to experience revival, just like Nehemiah 8 records in Ezra.

Could you imagine hearing a sermon from Jesus Christ? Can you imagine the guy who knows more theology than any of the Jewish leaders, the one who essentially wrote and was part of the inspiration of the scriptures, of who he centers around the scriptures?

Could you imagine? I would imagine that that would bring about great revival. Well, it didn't. It didn't at all. In fact, it actually led to this crowd even being more confused than they began.

Look with me in verse 25. Through Jesus' teaching, we get a little bit of insight. Verse 25 speaks about the tension of the crowd questioning their theology and questioning their leaders.

[5 : 48] Don't you see that in verse 25? Where they say, but we know this man, where he comes from, when the Christ appears, sort of looking at their theology that no one will know where he comes from, that they have sort of faith in that, where that's actually a misinterpretation that the Messiah will be known and found within a certain location, but it's an interpretive challenge for this audience.

But what they're doing is they're essentially pinpointing that this has to be the Messiah. But if this man is false, can it be the authorities? Because they haven't really acted out against this guy teaching in the temple.

Could it be that he might, in fact, be the Messiah? And so we see that this brings about Jesus' teaching. They elaborates it on verse 28.

Jesus teaches about the coming Messiah, that divine origin of the Messiah. Because this is what the crowd was thinking. He says, you know me. 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. I know him, for I come from him. And he sent me.

[7 : 04] In other words, to know Jesus is to know God. Okay? And then in verse 30, we see that tension building. What would bring about great revival, great faith in Jesus Christ, we see tension in the crowd.

Some are looking to arrest this guy. Some are coming to faith in him. Some are muttering to themselves and to one another, who is like Jesus? Who has, when the Christ appears, who will do more signs than this guy has done?

It seems to be clear, folks, at this time period. This might be the Messiah. And then Jesus continues to elaborate, basically saying that he is departing as well.

He is not only the coming Messiah that has a divine origin, but he is the going Messiah that will be departing. He says, I will be with you a little longer, and then I am going to him who sent me.

You will seek me and you will not find me. Where I am, you cannot come. And this brings about more confusion. Do you feel that tension and confusion in this passage?

[8 : 16] The words of Jesus broadcasted, and the response is confusion, tension, arrest, belief, muttering. And this really got the Jews up for a tizzy. They were wondering, where are you going?

Are you going to the dispersion to teach the Gentiles? Where are you going, Jesus? We better catch you while we can then, right? All collectively consistent theme within these verses leading up to verse 37 of what do we do with Jesus?

The confusions in the crowds is built upon complete misunderstanding of not only Jesus' physical descent, that he was born actually in Bethlehem, according to all these markers that he is the Messiah, but also his eternal descent, as John 1 says, in the beginning he was with God.

He was God. And we see that it's not only his physical descent, his eternal descent, but also his eternal destination.

Essentially that's where he's going. Nobody can go because something has to be fulfilled first in this redemptive history that we have laid out in the Bible. So tension, confusion, what do we do with Jesus?

[9 : 38] And so it's the last day of the Feast of Booze in verse 37. It indicates, it says in verse 37, on the last day of the feast.

This is the final day of this week-long feast. And it's under my conviction that in order to truly treasure and find the precious treasure within Scripture, we have to paint a picture to accurately, to depict it, what the Holy Spirit is trying to make us understand today and to appreciate what the Holy Spirit is telling us today.

I don't just want us to fill our heads with a bunch of knowledge of, oh, well, you'll pass your, who wants to be a million air test of what the Feast of Booze was. I don't just want to fill our heads with knowledge about the Feast of Booze.

I want the Feast of Booze, that knowledge to fill our hearts with great wonder and joy of what this passage means. Because unless you understand the Feast of Booze, you are going to completely miss the passage's significance.

Unless you understand the Feast of Booze, this passage is actually meaningless. Because context matters in this passage, and we need to know that, and we need to feel that within our souls.

[11:01] So we spoke a little bit about the Feast of Booze last week, and I want to talk about that a little bit more for anybody who was not gathered with us, the Feast of Booze.

If you have never heard of the Feast of Booze or studied that, I don't think you're alone. This is a Jewish tradition that was found in Leviticus 23.

And this was, the purpose of the Feast of Booze was a week-long celebration, observing, going out with a branch-like structure with leaves covering the top, and that it would essentially bring about the memory and the wonder and awe of the great provision of God for Israel in the wilderness. And they would do this at various times throughout history so that generations would know and rejoice.

Okay? So that not only that they would know something, but that it would change their hearts and that they would rejoice in God's great provision. So this was a week-long feast recorded in numerous places in the Old Testament.

[12:11] So by observing the Feast of Booze, you remember God's gracious provision of food, water, shelter in the wilderness. And the booth would represent God's covering over people at that time that he came down and he provided a shelter for his people.

Yeah, many of us might ask, what would that be like today? The Feast of Booze. Would it be maybe like a block party or something like that? Would it be maybe a cookout with your neighbor, you know, having a good time, laughing, playing cornhole?

Maybe the summer nights that we did at church this summer of gathering every other week and just having a good time, cooking out. Well, I think something that we can understand being in Northeast Ohio, the closest thing that comes into my mind of what the Feast of Booze would look like, minus all the ritual stuff, but more so the atmosphere, would probably be none other than the Canfield Fair, right?

The Canfield Fair where you just, if you're familiar with it, you walk down these vendor aisles over this 150-acre sort of small location, and there within that 150 acres, plus or minus, you have anywhere up to 80,000 people gathered, walking around, eating food.

You'll probably see me walking around like a caveman with a turkey leg around those streets. And so you would be walking through, there would be claustrophobia all over, you'd start getting panic attacks in some areas, just compact, very tight space.

[13:52] Think of the sounds of that. Think about the smells when you walk past those turkey leg vendors that just bring that salivation. You can smell the cooked meats.

Think about the laughing. This comes to my head of what the Feast of Booths might appear like. And we see that this was a week-long celebration, and unlike, I don't think that there's much going through the streets, singing and things like that.

There's a little bit of difference. I'm not trying to say it's exactly, but as far as the atmosphere and the context, I think that that would be close. But we arrive, and not only just the Feast of Booths, this week-long celebration, we arrive at the last day, and look at verse 37 as far as what this day was commemorated with.

You see it. On the last day of the feast, the great day. Context matters, church. And what we have here is that this was not just any ordinary day.

This wasn't just, you know, any kids under the age of 10 get in for free at the Canfield Fair Day. This is the great day. All of the feast builds up and anticipates this last day of the feast.

[15:17] And so this is also known as the Roshana Rabbah. This was no ordinary day of the feast. It was marked with water libation, and it's a ceremony of sorts at this time of water libation.

So I want to paint a picture for you from a helicopter view of Jerusalem at this time. From a helicopter view, you would see these swarms of thousands of Jewish people among the streets of Jerusalem observing this feast.

And you would see this swarm of people assembling over here, having sort of like a processional going over here and then going back.

So you'd see this movement on this last day of the feast. And what that is is this feast goes. It migrates in a procession from the Pool of Siloam to the Temple of Jerusalem.

And on their way, they followed Jewish leaders. And the crowd would craft together in great joy and splendor and thanksgiving and liberation of God's provision.

[16:23] They would craft branches together. They would wave them around, and they would be singing all through the streets. They would be singing Psalm 118, verse 25.

Save us, we pray, O Lord. O Lord, we pray. Give us success. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. We bless you from the house of the Lord.

And so we see that once the procession would reach the Pool of Siloam, the priest would then take a golden censer, which is like a gauntlet of sorts. He would go into the Pool of Siloam.

He would dip it down into the water and lift it up, and the crowds would cheer. You might hear a shofar, and they would all be cheering, singing, and praising God as he submerges it and lifts it up and carries it back to the temple in Jerusalem.

And once they were at the temple in Jerusalem, tradition reveals that the priest would lift that water up for the crowds to see, and he would pour it out along the altar. And also, they'd also pour from a different bucket.

[17:29] a bowl of wine as well. And what would come to these Jewish people's heads would be Isaiah 12, too. Behold, God is my salvation.

I will trust and I will be afraid, and I will not be afraid, sorry, for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.

With joy, you will draw water from the wells of salvation. salvation, and with a great shofar blow, with singing, with praising, the priest would pour out that water for all to see.

This was the last day of the feast. What anticipation. What joy and thanksgiving, right?

And yet, from a distance, you hear a man on this last day, it could have been at that point when they're back at Jerusalem singing, the shofar is blowing, you hear a voice from a distance crying out, if anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.

[18:46] Whoever believes in me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. Could you imagine?

Jesus standing up, crying out, there's not much in the context of this that makes it deviate, that this was a sure cry to the people, essentially saying, what you are doing points to me.

There's no more shadow. These rituals, these feasts, these festivals pointed to the Messiah and the Messiah is revealing himself to the world.

No more shadow. It's become a reality, folks. I am the tabernacle. I am the booth. If God is provider for his people living in the wilderness through the provision of things like food, water, and shelter, well, in that essence, Jesus Christ is the provision of God.

He is the source of life whom all depends upon. Don't observe this feast any longer. Come and drink from Jesus.

[20:16] Don't we see that at this time at this time? The voice cries out. Jesus Christ is the treasure of the Feast of Booths.

All Scripture is fixated upon the Messiah and that being Jesus Christ and especially this whole feast focused on that great day that was to come.

not only does it signify Jesus' divinity that he is truly the Messiah as he was teaching in the temple in verse 28, but it also signifies the basis of Jesus' departing.

As this feast would also foreshadow the second coming of Jesus Christ and is rooted in Zechariah 14 at the coming day of Jesus standing on the Mount of Olives.

There's a lot of eschatological meaning and significance in this passage. And we see here in verse 39, now this he said about the Spirit whom those who believed in him were to receive.

[21:31] For as yet the Spirit had not been given because Jesus had not been glorified yet. We see that the chapter isn't fully complete yet. We see that something is coming in the redemptive storyline of Scripture.

But the analogy of Spirit and water, I mean, those things are as old as the Bible, isn't it? You can look back to the pages of Genesis and see that the Spirit hovered over the waters. And Jesus is the source of water in life, and this also means that this water was symbolic of a Spirit that would be given. Just as the Spirit hovered over the waters in Genesis, is not just hovering over us, or covering us like it was in the days of Moses, or empowering and clothing the judges in the book of Judges, but this Spirit is residing in us. It is in our hearts, and with it is sealed the promises of God. Think about the rivers flowing out of the Garden of Eden to bring life to all the world now flow from within our hearts to go and make disciples bearing the same message. Look at the provision of God in Jesus. And the water offered to the Samaritan woman is still offered abundantly today, and it has nothing to do with our works, only the works of Jesus Christ through the atonement, through the propitiation in his blood to receive forgiveness of sins. [23 : 07] And this also pointing forward to Revelation 22, this points to the picture of the river of life in Revelation 22, 1, that gives life and healing to the nations.

We drink of the cup of life, church, because he drank of the cup of wrath. And so as we go into this sort of conglomeration of confused individuals following this sort of climax of this feast, we see that the response was not revival. It wasn't a Billy Graham crusade of people coming forward for altar calls and asking Jesus into their hearts. We see that there was confusion. We see in verse 40 that there was a division of responses to this. Some thought he was Moses, some did think that he was the Messiah, and some thought that he was an imposter. What do we do with Jesus? And the most precise words of truth are still misunderstood by a heart not prepared to receive. Isn't that the truth, church? [24 : 21] We can have the most articulated gospel message and still we have no control over how deeply that seed rests within other people's hearts. It's God who gives the growth.

And so how much clearer could they have been? Could Jesus have been at this time? But better yet for us today in the 21st century, how much clearer can he be for us today? Because I could only imagine there are probably unbelievers sitting here listening to this same message who have not fully given their lives to Jesus Christ that are still listening to this sermon on the living waters. It's an historic account and still we're stuck, confused of who Jesus was, confused and sort of trapped in the things of this world and the things of God. I can only imagine that of the mixture of people found on the live stream and even sitting here today. How much clearer can he be for us even right now, church? church. And we see, in effect, a ripple effect.

[25 : 31] He creates a ripple effect by that voice crying out. Essentially, it was the, as in kind of like the words of the American Revolution, the shot heard around the world.

This was essentially the voice heard among the multitude. And this was not kindly received by the Jewish leaders. We see in verse 46, they couldn't even arrest him. Look with me in verse 46. It says, no one has ever spoken like this man as officers go back to the chief priests and the Pharisees saying, this guy, there's something with this guy. I don't know what to do with Jesus, but there's something there. We can't put handcuffs on this guy. Isn't this the truth though?

Because when man makes their plans to go and arrest Jesus, Jesus is planning to arrest man's heart and completely take them captive and there's nothing you can do about it at that time. [26 : 43] the Pharisees at risk of losing all control of their systems and rituals and control over the religion and the people identify anyone who believes in this Jesus is to be accursed.

We see that they're weighing the words of Jesus and along lines with the law. He said, have you been deceived to those people who come back who can't arrest him? Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him? This crowd that does not know the law is accursed. Accursed. That anybody believing in Jesus, if you are making Jesus to be the Messiah, you are under a curse. Think about that. Condemned by God, essentially, by believing in Jesus at this time. But then we find one man. Isn't it interesting, as Rick read today, we find one man we've seen before,

Nicodemus.

And sort of contrasting in John's way of looking at the multitudes, the single voice crying out among the multitudes, the multitudes of officers in this passage, and now going to one Pharisee, Nicodemus.

[28 : 05] The man who had the honor of receiving the words of Jesus late that one faithful night, and man, was he thirsty. That night. And could his thirst still occur even in this time frame?

Could it be that the truth that Jesus proclaimed to him that night, that he visited him, kind of was weighing on his conscience, that was resounding in his heart, stirring up his heart, he truly felt thirsty ever since.

Maybe after standing there among all the Pharisees and Sanhedrin, from a distance, hearing Jesus' cry from among the multitude, maybe he started to understand what being born again was really like as he's feeling that thirst occur within his heart.

We see a lingering tension though, but even Nicodemus was dismissed by the religious leaders. They were ridiculing him, banking on this unfortunate misunderstanding of Jesus' physical origin of birth.

Confusion, tension, what do we do with Jesus? As we come to a close today, what was stirring within the heart of Nicodemus and within the hearts of the multitudes who believed was thirst.

[29 : 26] Christ, okay? They were thirsty. And Jesus Christ, we've established, is the provision of Jesus Christ.

He's the provision of life. He is the booth. He's the tabernacle. All things, this whole feast and that water libation at the last day of the feast all point to him. If you are not in Jesus Christ today, what are you waiting for?

You might have your plans to go from church today and have all these laundry lists of things to do. You might have reservations for lunch.

You might have plans with friends or families after this. What are you waiting for? Why are you confused about the words of life that Jesus was proclaiming with such boldness and accuracy and precision at this time?

How are we acting like still, like foolish mankind, the foolish Jews of this day? I got to warn you, if you don't find life before death, you can't find life after death.

[30 : 38] It's impossible. There is no purgatory. There is no time of cleansing. What do you do with Jesus today? Remember, he's saying that this on the final day of the feast, this time commemorated, a time in Israel's history when they were stuck in the desert.

And one thing you got to know if you are thirsty today, if you are not in Christ, those who are thirsty in a desert are dying. If you have thirst in a desert and you don't have water to drink, you're on the brink of death.

If you're not in Christ today, I must warn you that you are headed for death. There is no life apart from Jesus Christ. He is the provision of God, the source of life, and not only that, the source of great joy and fulfillment and abundance of mercy in your life.

In the desert, water means life. In the desert, if you're thirsty, you're dying. Charles Spurgeon says, you must keep all earthly treasures out of your heart and let Christ be your treasure and let him have your heart.

heart. I got to tell you, if you have the slightest bit of thirst today, he's already got your heart right now if you're thirsty.

[32 : 02] And so this is why Christians can be assured that we might lack everything in life, but we can have it all. We can lack all the basic necessities.

We could be no greater than Central Africa. Africa. We could be in no different position than any persecuted country who lack the basic necessities in life, who have a threat of death target on their head when they leave their houses.

We could have that, but we can have everything, even in the midst of that. So in suffering, in trial, in hardships, uncertainty, worry, doubt, stress, drama, and I guess I could say it a little sarcastically.

If the clothes aren't folded the way you like it, you can have joy. Silliest things, church, that cause us to be struggling in our faith.

All things we can have joy, even if our life is being lost. As his feet commemorated that miraculous provision of God for his people in the wilderness, might we remember the same God who is the provision in our lives.

[33 : 20] Not simply of physical nourishment, but spiritual nourishment. Full satisfaction in him alone. There's nothing of this world that can ever offer no drug that can provide a high, no addiction that can provide a fill in our lives, quite like the fulfillment, the abundance that we can have in Jesus Christ.

Glory to God, church. church. This should bring us great joy. And I think I'm going to leave that here with you today. If you are not in Christ, I pray that you come and speak with one of us and we will help you in that road of discipleship.

If you're thirsty, he's already got your heart. Let him take you the rest of the way. And let's do that together. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray.

Let's pray.

Let's pray.