Lesson 8 [Chapter 7] "The Promise of the Holy Spirit"

Remember:

In chapter 6, Jesus uses five loaves and two fish from a boy to feed a massive crowd, with 12 baskets of leftovers, prompting the crowd to try to make Him king. He walks on the Sea of Galilee to His disciples in a storm, immediately bringing their boat to shore.

Jesus tells the crowd to seek spiritual food, not just physical bread. He declares, "I am the bread of life".

Lesson Goal:

Jesus challenges the crowd to look beyond appearances and judge with righteous judgment: "Stop judging by outward appearances and start judging justly" (John 7:24). This lesson calls us to look deeper, beyond the surface, and to evaluate situations and people with fairness and compassion, reflecting God's justice.

Lesson opener:

I was in the marching band in high school. One of the fascinating things about marching bands is that it is genuinely one of the only places in all human civilization where the one thing you are trying to do is to *not stick out*. Everyone wears the same uniform. Everyone is marching. You must march according to the right beat. You must be playing the right notes.

Well, of course, this works against every inclination of the human heart because you have showboats in the marching band who want to show off their unique way that they can play. You also have people in the band who are the sort of person who is saying, "hey, I'm in the right spot and all of you are in the wrong spot, you all need to conform to me". So, they insist this is where I am going to stand, I can do no other. So, in that they are standing out from the crowd.

Everyone blends into the band perfectly, and no one at any point is standing out, it is something difficult and remarkable to behold. Because of our hearts, we want glory. We want to stand out in a good way, to be exalted and glorified, and people will start to look upon us and see our glory. So, it is hard to be in that kind of a situation. Jesus was called to show off but He refused.

Lesson Body:

The feat of Tabernacle is one of the three major Jewish feasts. During the first seven days of the feast, they brought water from the pool of Siloam. The water was brought in a golden vessel, and the high priest poured it in front of the people to declare that whoever is thirsty may approach and drink. This indicated the rock from which water flowed for the people in the wilderness. On the eighth day they did not bring water from the pool. This was to show that the people would drink from the springs of Canaan, not from the water of the wilderness. On that day, the LORD Christ who is the Supreme High Priest and Bishop of our souls, stood up to offer Himself as the spring that flows living water into the depths of the souls of believers. He asked the believers to drink joyfully from the wells of salvation.

Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve 7:1-9

The healing of the paralytic on the Sabbath aroused the anger of the religious leaders (John 5:16) and they sought to kill Jesus either by stirring up the people against Him or by formal accusation. For this reason, the LORD Christ preferred not to appear publicly in Jerusalem, and instead, to walk in Galilee because it was not His time to be crucified yet.

Therefore, Christ chose to remain in Galilee rather than make a public appearance in Jerusalem, since the time for His crucifixion had not yet arrived.

The Holy Bible usually calls relatives in the same family 'brothers.' Therefore, the words "His brothers" probably mean the LORD Christ's relatives. They asked Him to go up to Jerusalem to show His glory and establish His kingdom. They had bad intentions as they were not thoughtful about His safety, for they knew how dangerous His appearance in Jerusalem was among the leaders who were filled with envy toward Him. They might have wished that the leaders decide whether or not He is the Messiah so they can also believe.

Why did He tell them He will not go but He went later?

He did not want to go to Jerusalem with His followers in a great procession and arouse the leaders there until the time of His passion came according to His divine plan. He told them they can go at any time, and no one will notice them, since they seek glory. He planned to go at the right time towards the end of the feast.

The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

He did not say I am not going, but not going yet, which means He would go alone, later on in the feast to avoid the crowds.

People had different opinion about when He started teaching in the temple.

“In my opinion, the first group (those who said He is good) was the majority. The second point of view was that of the rulers and priests, for this calumny against Him fits their envy and wickedness.” Saint John Chrysostom.

The Jews marveled when they heard His teaching because He spoke with authority. He quoted from the books of the Old Testament. He explained, argued, and said proverbs. His teachings are profound and convincing.

He declared to them that His doctrine does not originate from a school on earth, or from the rabbis and lawyers. His doctrine comes from the heavenly Father, since He is the Christ who saves the world.

His proof was that His divine doctrine is perfectly harmonious with His deeds. He came to the world submitting obediently to the Father so that He may remove from us pride. He who undoubtedly is equal to the Father, seeks not His own glory but the glory of the Father.

How did He explain to them that they are breaking the Sabbath not Him?

They claim that they keep the law, but they break the law when they kill the innocent. They blamed Him for breaking the Sabbath when He healed the paralytic by the pool.

The commandment of circumcision was established long before Moses; it dates to Abraham, as noted in Genesis 17:9-10. The Jews kept the circumcision ritual on the eighth day even if it fell on the Sabbath.

If that was the case concerning the practice of circumcision, how much more important was to heal the paralytic who was lying down on his bed for 38 years?

Circumcision was believed to be the "healing" of the newborn by bringing him into the sacred Covenant. Jesus' argument is that if it is lawful to "heal" part of the body, how can it be unlawful to heal the whole body when the need arises on the Sabbath?

The LORD Christ asks them to judge with righteousness, not according to appearance. For, the preoccupation with the letter, rather than with the spirit, ruins our judgment concerning matters of the law. The Sabbath as a day of rest is a day of mercy and love for the glory of God, for the edification of His people and the salvation of all as much as possible.

Could This Be the Christ? 7:25-39

Verse 27: According to Isaiah the prophet, “Who shall declare His generation?” (Is 53:8) That is to say His birth and appearance are a secret.

The rabbis had this saying, “the appearance of the Messiah would be unexpectedly.” Therefore, the people of Jerusalem wondered whether Jesus was the Christ or not because

they knew where He was from. They did not realize that what Isaiah said was about His great eternal birth from the Father. But the prophets announced many details concerning His incarnation and the Jews knew where He was to be born.

Jesus answered those questions openly. You know where I was born on earth, but you do not know how I came from the Father. I have come from heaven, and He who sent Me is true.

Many people began to believe in Him and there was murmuring among the crowd. The rulers felt that any delay was not in their interest. They, therefore, sent officers (of the temple) to arrest Him. He said, "I will not be with you for long". He will go back to Heaven where you cannot come unless you believe.

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.

Let him approach Me with faith, recognizing, accepting, and embracing Me as the Mediator and the Savior of the world, and I will give him any spiritual grace he needs.

By this living water, He refers to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which were promised to the faithful. This is the great outpouring of the Holy Spirit after His ascension at Pentecost.

Who Is He? 7:40-53

Some doubted, as they did not know that Jesus was born in Bethlehem but thought that He was born in Galilee.

As the priests sent the officers of the temple to arrest Him, they were terrified when they saw the officers coming back without Him. They did not expect that the officers of the temple themselves would be attracted to Him and testify boldly before the multitude that "No man ever spoke like this Man."

Verse 52: They thought that Jesus was from Galilee, although He was born in Bethlehem of the house of David. They thought that most of His disciples were Galileans, yet He had many disciples from Judea. Moreover, they claimed that no prophet had arisen out of Galilee, but Elijah the prophet was from Gilead.

Lesson Delivery Idea:

Jesus' ministry was severely opposed at that time. If Jesus hired a public relations representative, a marketing consultant, a political strategist, or a fundraising expert, He could get the best advice on the smartest, most effective next steps for Him to take to turn around these losses that He has suffered and the bad momentum of His campaign.

Jesus, however, refuses to do anything of the sort. He has not come to seek His own, personal, private glory, but to glorify His Father. Jesus demonstrates that human glory-seeking is wicked and willful, but ultimately weak.

Jesus' relatives advised Him to go to Jerusalem. This seems like a pretty good advice if you want to be known, if you want to be popular, you can't do that in secret. You can't remain in backwater Galilee. You have to go to where the people are, to Jerusalem. The time is right. What they're essentially saying to Jesus," Jesus get yours. Go get it. There's glory. Go seek it. Strike while the iron is hot. Don't miss this opportunity that you have".

This is the way of the world. This is everything we are told from when we are very young. Make sure that when you have a chance, seize it. I mean, this comes out even in our eminent public philosophers. "You've only got one shot. Do not miss your chance to blow. This opportunity comes once in a lifetime." This is spoken to us. This is educated in us. Grab it before someone else does.

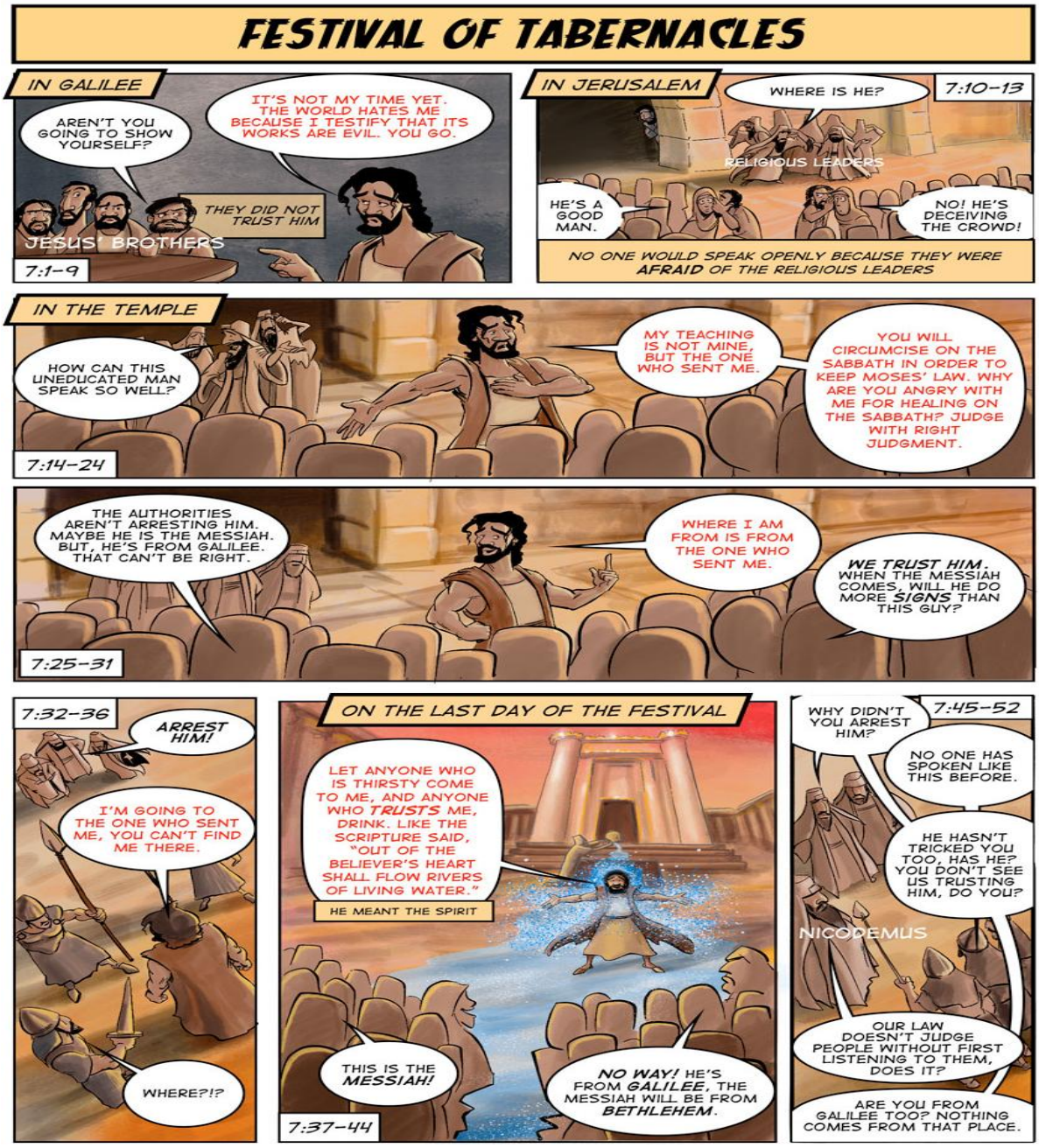
What do you want in life? Do you want money? Do you want popularity, fame, prestige? What is it? Go, get it. Jesus says that's wicked, you're building your glory at the expense of God's, who says, "I am the Lord and there is no other, I do not give my glory to another." Jesus then represents a clear and present threat, a danger to those opposers.

The way of the world starts with saying, OK, I'm going to go get my glory. The problem with that is that once you get your glory, whatever it is, whatever you're looking for, well, so you have to then protect your glory. Got to get yours and you've got to protect yours at any expense.

Do not judge by appearances, judge with right judgment. I am the only one who can give you what you seek. Don't forfeit the good thing you are seeking by the way that you seek it, by building up your own kingdom. What you're grasping for today will slip through your fingers just as quickly as you grab hold of it. Yet the things that are unseen, to live by faith, are eternal.

Let's pray. Father, we ask that you watch over your people. There are a lot of scary things out there. There are a lot of places where we feel left out, left behind, that things are slipping away from us, that we are justified and in fact, we have to go get it for ourselves. Yet Jesus lays out a different way, that He was perfectly fully obedient. He offers us His perfect righteousness as a gift, and He promises that He's going to give us the kingdom. Father, help us trust that we're so weak. We are so shortsighted that we struggle there. God, give your people faith to believe, eyes to see not only things that are seen, but in things that are unseen. Amen.

Memory Verse: 7:38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."



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