

## Message Seven

**The Need of the Thirsty – Life’s Quenching**

Scripture reading: John 7:1-52

**I. The Scene of the Feast of the Tabernacles**

- A. In contrast with the scene of the Feast of the Passover in chapter six.
  - 1. The feast of the Passover, as the first feast of the year, implies the beginning of man’s life, which involves man’s seeking for satisfaction and results in man’s hunger – cf. Exo. 12:2-3, 6.
  - 2. The feast of Tabernacles, as the last feast of the year, implies the completion and success of man’s life, which will end and result in man’s thirst – cf. 23:16.
- B. Signifying the completion and success of life with its enjoyment in a religious way.
  - 1. The previous case sets forth the people laboring, working, seeking, and striving to find something to satisfy their hunger, but they fail to get it.
  - 2. This case sets forth the people already having everything they need, but they find that it does not quench their thirst.
  - 3. But with all of their success, with all of their gain, even with all of the things connected with their feasts—their religion and their temple—their thirst cannot be quenched.
  - 4. The thought is that when you have succeeded in all of your achievements, when you have enjoyed all of your possessions, when you have rejoiced in all of your best circumstances, you will then realize that your thirst has not been quenched.
- C. A reminder of the need of the eternal Tabernacle with the water of Life flowing in it.
  - 1. This feast is a reminder that people today are still in the wilderness and need to enter into the rest of the New Jerusalem, which is the eternal tabernacle – Rev. 21:2-3.
  - 2. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob also lived in tents, looking forward to this eternal tabernacle, in which there will be “a river of water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb” to quench man’s thirst – Heb. 11:9-10; Rev. 22:1, 17.
  - 3. At the end of such a feast with such a background, Christ cried out the promise of the rivers of living water, which will satisfy man’s expectation for eternity – John 7:37-39.

**II. Life Under the Persecution of Religion – vv.1-36**

- A. Religion’s plot and religion’s feast – vv.1-2.
  - 1. While the religionists were having a feast, they plotted to kill Jesus.
  - 2. In every century the real seekers after life have been persecuted by the religionists.
- B. Life’s suffering of man’s unbelief – vv.3-5.

1. Although the Lord is the Almighty God, He, as a man under persecution, was limited in His activity.
  2. While the religionists were seeking to kill Him on the one hand, His unbelieving brothers were challenging Him to seek worldly glory on the other hand.
- C. Life's limitation in time – vv.6-9.
1. Although the Lord is the eternal, infinite, unlimited God, He lived on earth as a man, limited even in the matter of time – Rom. 9:5.
  2. The Lord was willing to lose His freedom, to be bound in the matter of time, and to do the will of the Father so that He could minister the living water of life to us.
- D. Life's seeking of God's glory – vv.10-24.
1. Although the Lord had little education, He knew everything; He not only knew the letters; He knew the minds, hearts, and spirits of men.
  2. The Lord would not seek His own glory, but the glory of God – vv.17-18.
- E. Life's source and origin – God the Father – vv.25-36.
1. Although His source was God the Father, He came as a man from Nazareth of Galilee – v.27, 42, 52; 1:45-46.
  2. The people who looked at Jesus outwardly saw Him as just a Nazarene who had no form, comeliness, beauty, or attraction; but within, He is the very God.
  3. There is a vital principle here: with everything concerning the Lord, the outward appearance will never look good, but the inward content will be marvelous.

### III. Life's Cry to the Thirsty Ones – vv.38-39

- A. The last day signifying the ending of all the enjoyment of any success of human life.
1. The last day signifies the ending of all the enjoyment of any success in human life.
  2. Regardless of the kind of success you have, there will be a last day.
- B. The cry to come and drink.
1. While the people were being dismissed on the last day of the feast, the Lord stood up and cried, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" – v.37.
  2. If they would come and drink of Christ, they would have rivers of living water flowing out from within their innermost being.
- C. The flow of rivers of living water
1. The Lord Jesus said, "He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water" – v.38.
    - a. In 4:14 the Lord said that whoever drinks of the water that He gives us will have in him a fountain of water gushing up into eternal life.
    - b. In chapter seven the Lord goes somewhat further, saying that anyone who drinks of Him will have the flow of the rivers of water of life.
  2. The Lord did not speak of just one flow but of rivers.
    - a. The unique river of living water is the Holy Spirit.
    - b. Out of this unique river, many rivers will flow out.
  3. These "rivers of living water" are the many flows of the different aspects of

life of the one unique “river of water of life,” which is God’s “Spirit of life” – cf. Rom. 15:30; 1Thes 1:6; 2Thes. 2:13; Gal 5:22-23; Rev. 22:1; Rom. 8:2.

**D. The Spirit was not yet**

1. “But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.” – John 7:39.
  - a. The Spirit of God was there from the very beginning, but the Spirit as “the Spirit of Christ,” “the Spirit of Jesus Christ,” was “not yet” at the time the Lord Jesus spoke this word, because He was not yet glorified – Gen. 1:1-2; Rom. 8:9; Phil. 1:19.
  - b. Jesus was glorified when He was resurrected – Luke 24:26.
  - c. In resurrection, the Lord became the life-giving Spirit – 1 Cor. 15:45.
  - d. After His resurrection, the Spirit of God became the Spirit of the incarnated, crucified, and resurrected Jesus Christ, who was breathed into the disciples by Christ in the evening of the day He was resurrected – John 20:22.
  - e. The Spirit is now the “another Comforter,...the Spirit of reality” promised by Christ before His death – 14:16-17.
2. When the Spirit was the Spirit of God, He had only the divine element; when He became the Spirit of Jesus Christ through Christ’s incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection, He had both the divine and human element, with all the essence and reality of the incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection of Christ.

**IV. Division Caused by Life’s Appearance – 7:40-52**

- A. In 7:40-52 we see the division caused by the Lord’s appearance.
- B. Christ, the seed of David, was born in Bethlehem, but He appeared as a Nazarene from Galilee – v.42; Luke 2:4-7; John 7:52.
  1. So we should not know Him according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit – 2Cor. 5:16.
  2. Some comprehended Christ according to His outward appearance by taking the tree of knowledge resulting in death – John 7:27, 41-42, 52; Gen. 2:17.
  3. However, some apprehended Christ according to His inward reality (7:40, 50-51) by taking the tree of life resulting in life – John 7:40, 50-51; Gen. 2:9.
  4. We all must know Christ according to the inward reality and not according to the outward appearance.

## Message Seven

## Reference Scriptural verses

**John 7:1-52.** 1 And after these things Jesus walked in Galilee, for He would not walk in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill Him. 2 Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was near. 3 His brothers therefore said to Him, Depart from here and go into Judea, so that Your disciples also may behold Your works which You are doing; 4 For no one does anything in secret and himself seeks to be *known* openly. If You do these things, manifest Yourself to the world. 5 For not even His brothers believed into Him. 6 Jesus therefore said to them, My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. 7 The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me, because I testify concerning it, that its works are evil. 8 You go up to the feast; I am not going up to this feast, because My time has not yet been fulfilled. 9 And having said these things to them, He remained in Galilee. 10 But when His brothers had gone up to the feast, then He Himself also went up, not openly, but as *it were* in secret. 11 The Jews therefore sought Him at the feast and said, Where is He? 12 And there was much murmuring about Him among the crowds: some said, He is a good man; but others said, No; rather He leads the crowd astray. 13 Yet no one spoke openly about Him for fear of the JEWS. 14 But when it was now the middle of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple and began to teach. 15 The Jews therefore marveled and said, How does this man know letters, without ever having studied? 16 Jesus therefore answered them and said, My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me. 17 If anyone resolves to do His will, he will know concerning the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself. 18 He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of Him who sent Him, this One is true, and unrighteousness is not in Him. 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 and said to them, I did one work, and you all marvel. 22 For the same reason Moses gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and on the Sabbath you circumcise a man. 23 If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made an entire man well on the Sabbath? 24 Do not judge according to appearance, but judge the righteous judgment. 25 Then some of the people of Jerusalem said, Is not this the One whom they are seeking to kill? 26 And look, He is speaking openly, and they say nothing to Him. Have the rulers, perhaps, really recognized that this is the Christ? 27 But we know where this man is from; yet when the Christ comes, no one knows where He is from. 28 Jesus therefore cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, You both know Me and know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. 29 I know Him, because I am from Him, and He sent Me. 30 They sought then to seize Him, yet no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. 31 But many out of the crowd believed into Him and said, Will the Christ, when He comes, do more signs than this man has done? 32 The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things about Him, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent attendants to arrest Him. 33 Jesus therefore said, I am still with you a little while, and *then* I am going to Him who sent Me. 34 You will seek Me and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come. 35 The Jews then said to one another, Where is this man about to go that we will not find Him? Is He about to go to the *Jews in* dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? 36 What is the word which He said, You will seek Me and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come? 37 Now on the last day, the 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 into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water. 39 But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for *the* Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified. 40 *Some* of the crowd therefore, when they heard these words, said, This is truly the Prophet. 41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Does then the Christ come out of Galilee? 42 Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes out of the seed of David and from Bethlehem, the village where David was? 43 So there arose a division among the crowd because of Him. 44 And some of them wanted to seize Him, but no one laid hands on Him. 45 The attendants therefore came to the chief priests and Pharisees, and these said to them, Why did you not bring Him? 46 The attendants answered, Never has a man spoken as this man *has*. 47 The Pharisees then answered them, Have you also been deceived? 48 Has any one of the rulers or Pharisees believed into Him? 49 But this crowd which does not know the law is accursed. 50 Nicodemus said to them (he who came to Him before, being one of them), 51 Does our law condemn a man unless it first hears from him and knows

what he is doing? **52** They answered and said to him, Are you also from Galilee? Search and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee.

## I.A.

**Exo. 12:2-3. 2** This month will be the beginning of months for you; it shall be the first of the months of the year to you. **3** Speak to all the assembly of Israel, saying, On the tenth of this month each man shall take a lamb according to his fathers' house, a lamb for a household.

**Exo. 12:6** And you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; and the whole congregation of the assembly of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

**Exo. 23:16** And you shall keep the Feast of the Harvest, of the firstfruits of your labors from what you sow in the field, and the Feast of Ingathering, at the end of the year when you gather in your labors out of the field.

## I.C.

**Rev. 21:2-3. 2** And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. **3** And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them *and be* their God.

**Heb. 11:9-10. 9** By faith he dwelt as a foreigner in the land of promise as in a foreign *land*, making his home in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the fellow heirs of the same promise; **10** For he eagerly waited for the city which has the foundations, whose Architect and Builder is God.

**Rev. 22:1** And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

**Rev. 22:17** And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who is thirsty come; let him who wills take the water of life freely.

## II.C.

**Rom. 9:5** Whose are the fathers, and out of whom, as regards what is according to flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

**John 1:45-46. 45** Philip found Nathanael and said to him, We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, wrote, Jesus, the son of Joseph, from Nazareth. **46** And Nathanael said to him, Can anything good be from Nazareth? Philip said to him, Come and see.

## III.C.

**Rom. 15:30** Now I exhort you, brothers, through our Lord Jesus Christ and through the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf,

**1Thes. 1:6** And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Spirit,

**2Thes. 2:13** But we ought to thank God always concerning you, brothers beloved of the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth,

**Gal. 5:22-23.** **22** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** Meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

**Rev. 22:1** And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

**Rom. 8:2** For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

III.D.

**Gen. 1:1-2.** **1** In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. **2** But the earth became waste and emptiness, and darkness was on the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was brooding upon the surface of the waters.

**Rom. 8:9** But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him.

**Phil. 1:19** For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and *the* bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

**Luke 24:26** Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into His glory?

**1Cor. 15:45** So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.

**John 20:22** And when He had said this, He breathed into *them* and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.

**John 14:16-17.** **16** And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever, **17** *Even* the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know *Him*; *but* you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.

IV.B.

**Luke 2:4-7.** **4** And Joseph also went up from Galilee out of the city of Nazareth into Judea, to David's city, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, **5** To be registered with Mary, who was engaged to him and was pregnant. **6** And while they were there, the days were fulfilled for her to bear, **7** And she bore her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger because there was no place for them in the inn.

**2Cor.5:16** So then we, from now on, know no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know *Him so* no longer.

**Gen. 2:17** But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, of it you shall not eat; for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.

**Gen. 2:9** And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.