

AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP

BIBLE STUDY - Study Series: That you May Believe: A Journey Through The Gospel of John
Part 12: Rivers of Living Water: The Spirit, Controversy, and Public Decision Wednesday, April 22, 2026
Text: John 7: 1-52 **Teacher: Pastor Yewande Efodili**

Introduction:

In **John Chapter 7**, we encounter a powerful and tension-filled moment in Jesus' ministry during the Feast of Tabernacles—a time when Israel celebrated God's provision of water in the wilderness. Amid religious tradition, public debate, and growing opposition, Jesus boldly reveals Himself as the true source of life, declaring that all who are spiritually thirsty can come to Him and receive "living water." This chapter captures the clash between the Pharisees, the Sadducees and others, belief and unbelief, the struggle between human expectation and divine timing, and the **urgent call for every individual to make a personal and public decision about who Jesus truly is.**

As we study this passage, **we will explore how the promise of the Holy Spirit, the reality of controversy, and the necessity of a clear response to Christ still speak powerfully to our lives today.**

*John 7:1–2, 10–13, and 37–39 – “After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him. Now **the Jews’ Feast of Tabernacles** was at hand. ... But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, ‘Where is He?’ And there was much complaining among the people concerning Him. Some said, ‘He is good;’ others said, ‘No, on the contrary, He deceives the people.’ However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews. ... v37 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. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’ 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.**”*

1. Jesus' introduction of the Holy Spirit at the Feast of Tabernacles

Q: What is the Feast of Tabernacle? **Leviticus 23:33–43.** Tabernacle means

- Also known as the Feast of the Booth is Jewish Seven-day feast to commemorate God's gracious provision to the Israelites during their forty-years' wandering in the desert.
- The Israelites would camp in makeshift booths or huts throughout the feast to remember how God took care of them when they camped in the desert.
- Each day of the feast, the Priest would take water from the Pool of Siloam and pour it around the altar, praising God for the water he provided in the desert
- Jesus used this ceremony involving water to introduce the living water of the Holy Spirit
- Jesus often capitalized on literal things to discuss spiritual things. Literal bread to explain spiritual bread that feeds the soul (John 6)
- Literal water to explain spiritual water that quenches the soul (John 4)

John 7:37–38 (NIV)

*“On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. **Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.**”*

Q: What does spiritual thirst look like? Jesus is describing a **deep inner need for God.**

A deep desire for more of God. It could also be spiritual dryness.

Lesson:

- Jesus offers the Holy Spirit as living water that fills, satisfies, and overflows.
- Stay spiritually filled through prayer, the Word, and worship. Your life should impact others.

Q: Are you overflowing or running dry? Are you spiritually full or dry? Matt.11:28

In what ways are we still relying on “outward religion” instead of inward transformation?

John 7:39 *Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.*”

Q: Explain John 7:39?

Here Jesus was talking about the presence of God living inside a believer and not physical water, The living water = Holy Spirit.

As of that time, those who believe in Jesus has not yet received the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

2. Controversy – Jesus Divides John 7:10–36, 40–44

⁴⁰“On hearing his words, some of the people said, “Surely this man is the Prophet.”

⁴¹ Others said, “He is the Messiah.” Still others asked, “How can the Messiah come from Galilee? ⁴² Does not Scripture say that the Messiah will come from David’s descendants and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?” ⁴³ Thus the people were divided because of Jesus. ⁴⁴ Some wanted to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him”. NIV

Lesson:

-Truth produces division. People respond differently to Jesus.

-Expect opposition when you stand for Christ. Do not compromise truth.

Q: - Why does truth create tension?

- Have you ever avoided standing for truth?

3. Public Decision – Choose Your Stand John 7:45–52

⁴⁵ Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and the Pharisees, who asked them, “Why didn’t you bring him in?” ⁴⁶ “No one ever spoke the way this man does,” the guards replied.

⁴⁷ “You mean he has deceived you also?” the Pharisees retorted. ⁴⁸ “Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in him? ⁴⁹ No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law—there is a curse on them.”

⁵⁰ Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier and who was one of their own number, asked, ⁵¹ “Does our law condemn a man without first hearing him to find out what he has been doing?”

⁵² They replied, “Are you from Galilee, too? Look into it, and you will find that a prophet does not come out of Galilee.” NIV

-Contrary to v52 statements we have prophets that is said to have come from Galilee, e.g. Elijah 1 kings 17:1, Jonah 2 kings 14:25 or possibly Nahum.

Lessons from study of Chapter 7

- Jesus used the Feast of the Tabernacle to introduce the Holy Spirit,
- You cannot remain neutral about Jesus. Faith must be public.
- Be bold and stand for truth even if alone.
- **Jesus shifts the focus of the people from ritual to relationship.**
- You are now God’s dwelling place Not tents or buildings; But your life becomes His tabernacle
- Come to Jesus for satisfaction; Not religious ceremonies. But a personal encounter with Him.
- Live in joy and dependence. Just like Israel depended on God daily. We are called to trust Him fully
- Look forward to fulfillment. The Feast of Tabernacles is also prophetic:
- It points to a future where God will dwell with His people forever (Revelation 21:3)

Think About -> How you can consciously live as God’s “**tabernacle**” this week.

Go ahead and invite the Holy Spirit right now as you ask Him to quench your thirst. ‘Out of my belly shall flow river...7:38