STUDY BIBLE WORKBOOK

John 7

Rivers of Living Water

QUICK STUDY + DEEP DIVE

Jesus journeys to Jerusalem for the Feast of Booths, teaches openly in the temple, challenges distorted judgments, and invites spiritually thirsty people to come to Him and receive the Holy Spirit.

Scripture quotations: World English Bible (WEB)

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

Quick Study: Begin with the overview, chapter movements, Bible words, Greek pronunciation notes, Gospel Connection, and a guided prayer.

Deep Dive: Ten Scripture-first SOAP passages include all 53 WEB verses, substantial observation, application, and prayer.

WESTERN GRACE MEDIA

John 7 — Geographic Setting

John 7 begins in Galilee and centers on Jesus' teaching in Jerusalem during the Feast of Booths. The atlas marks these broad settings, not an exact travel route or an unrecorded meeting location.



Original WGM atlas; Galilee and Jerusalem marked. Historical boundaries and uncertain sites approximate.

Regional location



COUNTRIES IN YEAR 2020

Galilee (7:1, 9): Jesus is there before going to the feast.

Jerusalem (7:10–52): Festival crowds and officials discuss His identity.

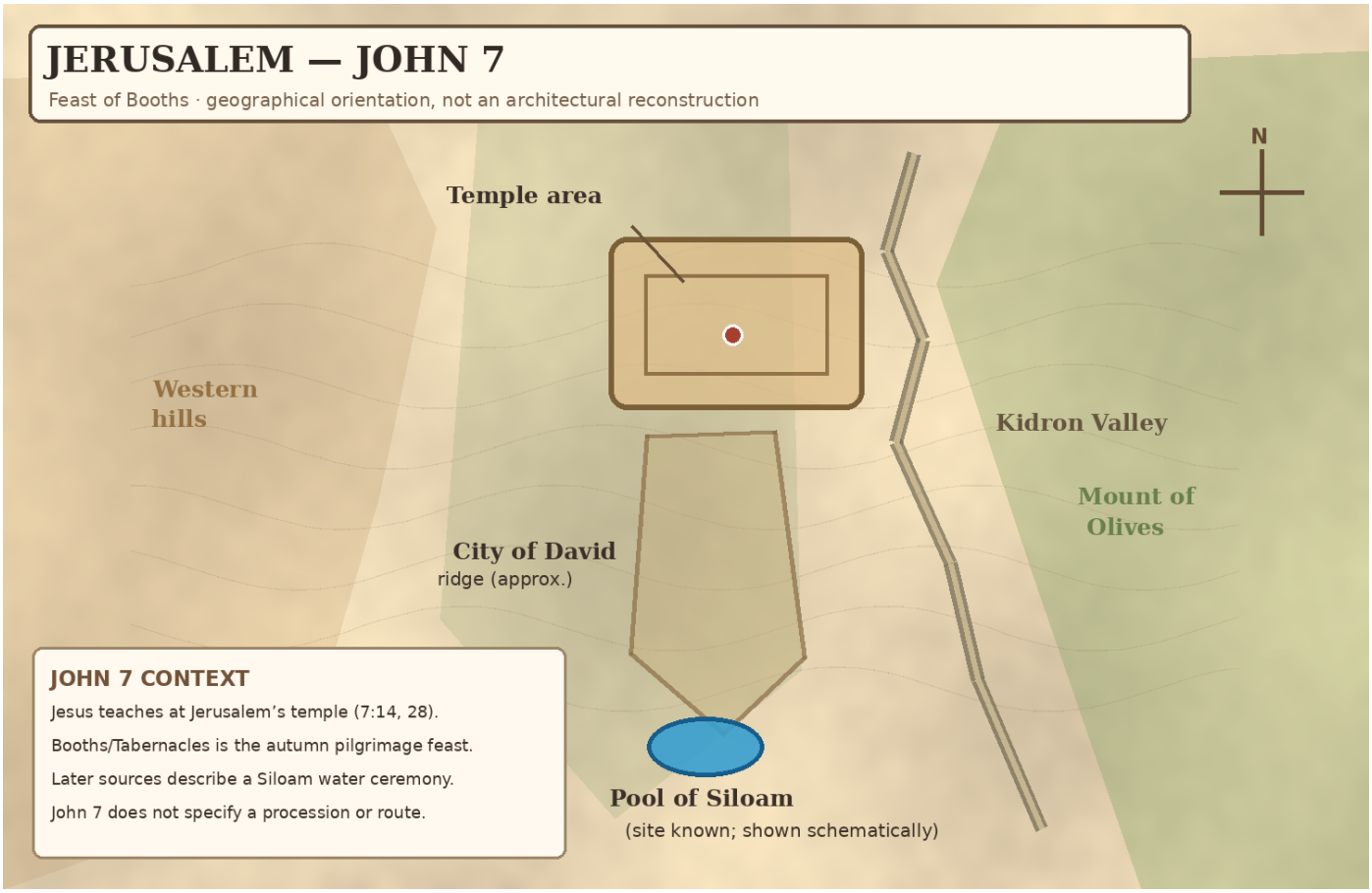
Temple (7:14, 28): Jesus teaches there; no specific court is identified.

Judea (7:1–3): Roman-administered region around Jerusalem.

How to read: Shading identifies approximate first-century territories. The circles show regions, not a travel path.

Jerusalem: The Feast of Booths

The feast brings pilgrims to Jerusalem, where Jesus teaches in the temple. This original relief-style diagram illustrates the temple area, the City of David slope, the Kidron Valley, and Siloam in general relationship, not as a reconstructed street plan.



HOW TO READ THE JERUSALEM CONTEXT

Temple

John says Jesus teaches in the temple (7:14, 28). It does not name the particular court or exact speaking spot.

Feast of Booths

An autumn festival of remembrance and thanksgiving, requiring pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Pool of Siloam

Later descriptions of the festival mention Siloam water ceremonies. John does not specify an actual procession or location for Jesus' invitation.

My notes about the setting:

John 7 — Rivers of Living Water

MAIN VERSE

John 7:37–38, WEB: Now on the last and greatest day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink! He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, from within him will flow rivers of living water.”

BIG PICTURE

Jesus refuses His brothers’ pressure to pursue publicity and visits Jerusalem during the Feast of Booths. He teaches with the Father’s authority, calls for righteous judgment, and invites all who thirst to come to Him. John explains that His promise of living water refers to the Holy Spirit. The chapter ends with disagreement, opposition, and Nicodemus urging a fair hearing.

Pressure in Galilee (7:1–9)

Jesus’ brothers urge Him to seek publicity; He follows His Father’s timing.

Quiet arrival (7:10–13)

He comes to Jerusalem amid conflicting opinions and fear.

Teaching at the feast (7:14–19)

Jesus identifies the Father as the source of His teaching.

Righteous judgment (7:20–24)

He exposes inconsistent Sabbath judgments.

QUICK STUDY NOTES

The Chapter’s Major Movements

Questions and opposition (7:25–36)

People debate His identity as authorities seek to arrest Him.

Living water (7:37–39)

Jesus invites the thirsty; John identifies the promised gift as the Holy Spirit.

Division and resistance (7:40–49)

The crowd and authorities disagree about who He is.

Nicodemus and textual note (7:50–53)

A call for fair hearing closes the secure narrative; verse 53 begins a debated manuscript passage.

QUICK STUDY FLOW

Galilee: family pressure and the Father’s time

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Jerusalem: a quiet visit to the feast

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Temple: teaching from the Father

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Healing and righteous judgment

↓

Crowd questions; officers sent

↓

Jesus invites the spiritually thirsty

↓

Division over His messianic identity

↓

Nicodemus calls for a fair hearing

QUICK STUDY NOTES

Important Bible Words

Word / Phrase	Simple Meaning	Why It Matters
Feast of Booths / Tabernacles	Israel’s autumn pilgrimage festival remembering wilderness shelter	The setting for Jesus’ public temple teaching and living-water invitation.
The Hour / Time	The timing of Jesus’ mission under the Father’s purpose	Jesus refuses to be pressured into public self-display.
Temple	Center of Israel’s public worship in Jerusalem	Jesus teaches in the temple during a major festival.
Law of Moses	God’s law given to Israel through Moses	Jesus exposes inconsistent applications of the Sabbath command.
Messiah / Christ	God’s promised anointed king	The crowd argues about the identity and origins of Jesus.
Righteous Judgment	Evaluation according to truth and God’s standards	Jesus commands discernment rather than appearance-based condemnation.
Living Water	Jesus’ image for life given through the Spirit	John explains that believers would receive the Holy Spirit.
The Spirit	The Holy Spirit, giver of life	The promised Spirit is received in connection with Jesus’ glorification.
Nicodemus	A Jewish leader first introduced in John 3	He speaks for due process rather than joining immediate condemnation.

Which of these words is most important to me in John 7, and why?

Translation Word Notes

Pronunciations are approximate classroom-style Biblical Greek. CAPITAL letters show the stressed syllable. Greek helps clarify meaning but is not required for understanding Scripture. NKJV/NIV/NLT phrases are brief comparisons; full Scripture quotations remain WEB.

Verse	Greek & pronunciation	NKJV	NIV	NLT	Meaning in context
7:2	skēnopēgia skay-noh-PAY-gee-ah	Feast of Tabernacles	Festival of Tabernacles	Festival of Shelters	The festival of booths remembers the wilderness journey.
7:6	kairos KAI-ross	time	time	right time	Jesus' mission unfolds according to divine timing.
7:16	didachē dee-dah-KHAY	doctrine	teaching	message	Jesus declares that His teaching comes from the Father.
7:18	doxa DOX-ah	glory	glory	honor	Jesus seeks the Father's glory instead of self-praise.
7:24	dikaios dee-KAI-oss	righteous	right	correctly	Judgment must be guided by truth, not appearances.
7:37	dipsaō dip-SAH-oh	thirsts	thirsty	thirsty	Jesus addresses genuine spiritual need.
7:38	hydōr zōn HOO-dor ZOHN	living water	living water	living water	Jesus promises spiritual life through His Spirit.
7:39	pneuma PNEW-mah	Spirit	Spirit	Spirit	John names the Holy Spirit as the promised gift.
7:41	Christos khree-STOSS	Christ	Messiah	Messiah	The crowd debates whether Jesus is God's Anointed One.

Word-study notes:

The Gospel Connection

John 7 does not present Jesus as one more religious teacher seeking attention. He is the Son sent by the Father, revealing true judgment and inviting the thirsty to receive life. In John 7:37–39 He promises living water through the Spirit, a gift connected with His glorification. The Gospel of John leads us to His death, resurrection, and exaltation; eternal life comes through faith in Him. Public opinion cannot save us, and religious reputation cannot replace believing Christ.

Reflection: Will I come to Jesus for life and let His Word govern my judgments?

A Short Prayer from John 7

Father, thank You for sending Jesus, who speaks Your truth and welcomes thirsty people. Forgive my pride, my fear of others, and my habit of judging by appearances. Help me come to Christ in faith, obey His Word, and depend on the Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name, amen.

Pray this in your own words:

QUICK STUDY COMPLETE

One Truth to Carry With You

Jesus speaks with the authority of the Father and invites everyone who is spiritually thirsty to come to Him and believe. The Holy Spirit is God's life-giving gift.

READY TO GO DEEPER — NEXT PAGE

Ready to Go Deeper?

This Deep Dive follows S.O.A.P.: Scripture, Observation, Application, and Prayer. Begin with the complete WEB passage. Let the text set the terms of our study, then consider the explanation, respond personally, and pray.

S — Scripture

Read every verse slowly; note changes in speaker, setting, and what Jesus reveals about Himself.

O — Observation

What does John teach about the Son, the Father, eternal life, judgment, faith, and testimony?

A — Application

What should I believe, confess, obey, trust, or share in response to the passage?

P — Prayer

Pray from the passage’s truth rather than from imagined details about the characters.

Before I begin, what do I want God to teach me from John 7?

Questions and repeated words to watch for:

JOHN 7:1–9

When Family Pressure Meets God’s Timing

S — Scripture

1 After these things, Jesus was walking in Galilee, for he wouldn’t walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill him.
2 Now the feast of the Jews, the Feast of Booths, was at hand.
3 His brothers therefore said to him, “Depart from here and go into Judea, that your disciples also may see your works which you do.
4 For no one does anything in secret while he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, reveal yourself to the world.”
5 For even his brothers didn’t believe in him.
6 Jesus therefore said to them, “My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready.
7 The world can’t 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 yet going up to this feast, because my time is not yet fulfilled.”
9 Having said these things to them, he stayed in Galilee.

John 7:1–9, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Jesus remains in Galilee because leaders in Judea want to kill Him. His brothers urge Him to go public at the Feast of Booths, but John plainly says they do not yet believe in Him. Family proximity to Jesus does not guarantee saving faith.

Jesus acts according to His Father’s purpose rather than pressure to seek attention. His reference to His “time” must be read with the unfolding story and the later arrival of His “hour,” not as a refusal to fulfill the Father’s mission.

The text also records opposition to Jesus because He exposes evil works. Faithfulness is not the same as popularity.

My observations:

A — Application

Where do I feel pressured to prove myself instead of obeying God’s timing?

P — Prayer

Father, teach me to seek Your will instead of living for attention or approval.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 7:10–13

A Quiet Arrival and Divided Opinions

S — Scripture

10 But when his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up, not publicly, but as it were in secret.
11 The Jews therefore sought him at the feast, and said, “Where is he?”
12 There was much murmuring among the multitudes concerning him. Some said, “He is a good man.” Others said, “Not so, but he leads the multitude astray.”
13 Yet no one spoke openly of him for fear of the Jews.

John 7:10–13, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Jesus does go to Jerusalem for the feast, but not in the public manner His brothers urged. The crowds debate His character and mission; some call Him good, and others accuse Him of deception.

Fear of influential authorities keeps people from speaking openly. John portrays several Jewish groups and individual perspectives, not one uniform response by all Jewish people.

Public opinion does not determine who Jesus is. We must examine His own words and works.

My observations:

A — Application

Am I hiding my convictions about Jesus because I fear other people?

P — Prayer

Lord Jesus, give me humility and courage to confess the truth about You.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 7:14–19

Teaching That Comes from the Father

S — Scripture

14 But when it was now the middle of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple and taught.
15 The Jews therefore marveled, saying, “How does this man know letters, having never been educated?”
16 Jesus therefore answered them, “My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me.
17 If anyone desires to do his will, he will know about the teaching, whether it is from God or if I am speaking from myself.
18 He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory, but he who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.
19 Didn’t Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill me?”

John 7:14–19, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

At the middle of the feast Jesus teaches in the temple. His listeners wonder how He has such understanding without the expected formal education. Jesus answers that His teaching comes from the One who sent Him.

Jesus connects willingness to do God’s will with discernment about His teaching. The issue is not mere intellectual ability; humble obedience matters when confronting God’s revelation.

He seeks the Father’s glory rather than self-promotion and exposes the inconsistency of those claiming Moses’ law while seeking His death.

My observations:

A — Application

Do I approach Jesus’ teaching ready to obey, or only ready to evaluate it on my terms?

P — Prayer

Father, make me willing to obey Your truth, not merely admire it.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 7:20–24

Judge with Righteous Judgment

S — Scripture

20 The multitude answered, “You have a demon! Who seeks to kill you?”
21 Jesus answered them, “I did one work and you all marvel because of it.
22 Moses has given you circumcision (not that it is of Moses, but of the fathers), and on the Sabbath you circumcise a boy.
23 If a boy receives circumcision on the Sabbath, that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because I made a man completely healthy on the Sabbath?
24 Don’t judge according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment.”

John 7:20–24, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

The crowd disputes Jesus’ report of a plot against Him. Jesus points back to the Sabbath healing controversy of John 5. His argument shows that His opponents allow circumcision on the Sabbath while condemning a complete act of healing.

Jesus does not forbid every moral evaluation. He commands righteous judgment that considers God’s purposes rather than surface appearances or inconsistent standards.

This verse must not be used to excuse harshness; righteous judgment begins with submission to the Lord’s truth.

My observations:

A — Application

Where might I be judging by appearance instead of by God’s Word and justice?

P — Prayer

Lord, correct my double standards and teach me to judge with humility and righteousness.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 7:25–31

Where Does the Messiah Come From?

S — Scripture

25 Therefore some of them of Jerusalem said, “Isn’t this he whom they seek to kill?
26 Behold, he speaks openly, and they say nothing to him. Can it be that the rulers indeed know that this is truly the Christ?
27 However, we know where this man comes from, but when the Christ comes, no one will know where he comes from.”
28 Jesus therefore cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, “You both know me, and know where I am from. I have not come of myself, but he who sent me is true, whom you don’t know.
29 I know him, because I am from him, and he sent me.”
30 They sought therefore to take him; but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come.
31 But of the multitude, many believed in him. They said, “When the Christ comes, he won’t do more signs than those which this man has done, will he?”

John 7:25–31, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

People in Jerusalem wonder why Jesus speaks openly while leaders seem unable to arrest Him. They question His origins and speculate about whether He could be the Messiah.

Jesus declares that He did not come on His own initiative but was sent by the true Father, whom He knows. His earthly residence does not explain His divine mission.

John notes that no one arrests Him because His hour has not yet come. Others believe because of His signs. The responses remain mixed; the text does not tell us the inward state of every hearer.

My observations:

A — Application

Am I willing to let Jesus define His identity rather than reduce Him to what I already assume?

P — Prayer

Lord Jesus, open my mind to Your testimony about the Father and Your mission.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 7:32–36

You Will Seek Me

S — Scripture

32 The Pharisees heard the multitude murmuring these things concerning him, and the chief priests and
the Pharisees sent officers to arrest him.
33 Then Jesus said, “I will be with you a little while longer, then I go to him who sent me.
34 You will seek me and won’t find me. You can’t come where I am.”
35 The Jews therefore said among themselves, “Where will this man go that we won’t find him? Will he
go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?
36 What is this word that he said, ‘You will seek me, and won’t find me;’ and ‘Where I am, you can’t
come’?”

John 7:32–36, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

The chief priests and Pharisees send officers to seize Jesus. He says He will remain a little while and then go to the One who sent Him.

His hearers misunderstand Him, imagining that He may travel to Jews scattered among Greek-speaking peoples. Yet Jesus is pointing beyond His present ministry toward returning to the Father through His death, resurrection, and exaltation.

The passage challenges people who delay their response to the Lord while assuming He will always be available on their terms.

My observations:

A — Application

What would it mean to take Jesus’ words seriously today rather than postpone faith and obedience?

P — Prayer

Father, help me respond faithfully to Your Son while I hear His voice.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 7:37–39

Come to Me and Drink

S — Scripture

37 Now on the last and greatest day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, “If anyone is thirsty, let him
come to me and drink!
38 He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, from within him will flow rivers of living water.”
39 But he said this about the Spirit, which those believing in him were to receive. For the Holy Spirit was
not yet given, because Jesus wasn’t yet glorified.

John 7:37–39, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

On the feast’s last great day Jesus publicly invites the thirsty to come to Him and drink. The invitation is open to “anyone”; belief in Him is the response He calls for.

John himself interprets the rivers of living water as referring to the Spirit whom believers would receive. The wording “not yet given” concerns the coming outpouring following Jesus’ glorification, not the Spirit’s total absence in the Old Testament.

Traditions about water ceremonies at the Feast of Booths illuminate the setting, but John does not explicitly describe such a ceremony at the moment Jesus spoke. The sure truth is His promise of life through the Spirit.

My observations:

A — Application

Where do I look to satisfy spiritual thirst instead of coming to Christ?

P — Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for inviting the thirsty. Fill me with Your Spirit and make me faithful to You.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 7:40–44

The Crowd Divided over Christ

S — Scripture

40 Many of the multitude therefore, when they heard these words, said, “This is truly the prophet.”
41 Others said, “This is the Christ.” But some said, “What, does the Christ come out of Galilee?
42 Hasn’t the Scripture said that the Christ comes of the offspring of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?”
43 So a division arose in the multitude because of him.
44 Some of them would have arrested him, but no one laid hands on him.

John 7:40–44, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Some identify Jesus as the prophet, others as the Messiah, and others object because they associate Him with Galilee. They appeal to promises connecting the Messiah with David and Bethlehem.

John has already shown how people can know some correct Scripture while misunderstanding Jesus. The synoptic Gospels identify Bethlehem as Jesus’ birthplace; John 7 reports the crowd’s debate without narrating His birth.

The division confirms that Jesus cannot be assessed merely through rumor or geography. Readers must reckon with His claims and the whole biblical testimony.

My observations:

A — Application

Am I forming my beliefs about Christ from Scripture or from incomplete assumptions and hearsay?

P — Prayer

Lord, keep me rooted in the full counsel of Your Word.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 7:45–49

No One Ever Spoke Like This Man

S — Scripture

45 The officers therefore came to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said to them, “Why didn’t you bring him?”
46 The officers answered, “No man ever spoke like this man!”
47 The Pharisees therefore answered them, “You aren’t also led astray, are you?
48 Have any of the rulers or any of the Pharisees believed in him?
49 But this multitude that doesn’t know the law is cursed.”

John 7:45–49, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Temple officers return without arresting Jesus and report His extraordinary speech. The religious leaders respond with scorn, arguing that influential people have not believed and condemning the crowd.

Their response exposes an appeal to status rather than careful hearing. Authority and learning can be blessings, but neither replaces the need to listen honestly to Jesus.

John distinguishes the particular leaders in this exchange from the Jewish people as a whole; Jesus and His first followers were Jewish too.

My observations:

A — Application

Do I evaluate Jesus’ words with humility, or let respected voices decide for me without study?

P — Prayer

Father, keep me from pride and teach me to recognize Your truth.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 7:50–53

Nicodemus Asks for a Fair Hearing

S — Scripture

50 Nicodemus (he who came to him by night, being one of them) said to them,
51 “Does our law judge a man unless it first hears from him personally and knows what he does?”
52 They answered him, “Are you also from Galilee? Search and see that no prophet has arisen out of Galilee.”
53 Everyone went to his own house,

John 7:50–53, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Nicodemus, who appeared earlier in John 3, points out that the law calls for hearing a person before judging him. Others answer dismissively and invoke Galilee against him.

John 7:53 is printed in the WEB, but it begins the passage traditionally numbered John 7:53–8:11. That passage is absent from many early Greek witnesses and appears in different locations in manuscript traditions. We preserve the WEB text and clearly mark this textual question.

We can confidently learn from verses 50–52 that Nicodemus appeals to a fair hearing. We should not build a doctrine on disputed wording without discussing the manuscript evidence.

My observations:

A — Application

How can I practice fairness and careful listening when facing disagreement?

P — Prayer

Father, help me hear truth honestly and speak with courage and charity.

Pray this in your own words:

Hard Questions

Why did Jesus say He was not yet going, then go?

In John 7:8 Jesus says He is “not yet going” (WEB Classic), and verse 10 says He later goes quietly. The sequence contrasts His timing and manner with His brothers’ demand for public self-display. Some manuscript traditions omit “yet” in 7:8; this is a textual variant that must be noted rather than concealed.

Does “the Jews” mean all Jewish people opposed Jesus?

No. John frequently uses this expression within a particular context for some Jerusalem authorities or other groups, and it does not describe every Jewish person. Jesus, His disciples, and many believers were Jewish. John portrays both opposition and faith among Jewish people.

Does John 7:17 teach salvation by obedience?

No. Jesus relates willingness to do God’s will to recognizing His teaching as from God, not to earning salvation. John repeatedly identifies life through believing in the Son (John 3:16; 6:40; 20:31). A teachable heart matters, but obedience does not purchase eternal life.

Is “Judge righteous judgment” permission to condemn others?

Jesus corrects distorted appearance-based judgment (7:24), especially inconsistent responses to Sabbath healing. He requires truthful and just discernment, not pride, unfairness, or self-righteousness. His other teachings about humility and mercy remain relevant.

Questions and study notes:

Hard Questions (continued)

What did water mean at the Feast of Booths?

The feast remembered Israel's life in the wilderness. Later Jewish sources describe a water-drawing ceremony associated with Siloam and the temple. Such history can illuminate John 7:37–39, but John does not explicitly state that Jesus spoke during a particular water ceremony. His central promise concerns the Holy Spirit.

Was the Holy Spirit absent before Jesus was glorified?

No. The Old Testament records the Spirit's activity. John 7:39 anticipates a new, promised gift of the Spirit to believers in the light of Jesus' completed mission. Read it with John 14–16 and Acts 2 rather than as denying earlier activity of the Spirit.

How could the Messiah be from Galilee rather than Bethlehem?

The crowd discusses the Messiah's Davidic descent and Bethlehem (7:42), but does not present complete information about Jesus' birth. Matthew and Luke place His birth in Bethlehem, and John emphasizes His deeper heavenly origin. The crowd's objection is reported, not endorsed as the final truth.

Is John 7:53 part of the original Gospel?

John 7:53 starts the passage traditionally placed at John 7:53–8:11. Many early and important Greek manuscripts omit it, and surviving manuscripts place it at different locations. The WEB Classic includes it, so we print and note it, but readers should not assume its original placement or build a distinctive doctrine on the disputed text.

Questions and study notes:

Reflection

What social pressure makes it harder for me to follow Jesus faithfully?

How can I judge with righteousness rather than by appearances?

What does Jesus' invitation to spiritual thirst teach me about His sufficiency?

Where do I need the Holy Spirit's help to obey the Word?

When I encounter disagreement, do I seek truth and a fair hearing?

A Prayer for Living Water and Truth

Lord Jesus, You stood during the feast and invited the thirsty to come to You. I confess how often I seek approval, easy answers, or outward religious respect instead of Your living truth. Teach me to judge rightly, to hear Your words faithfully, and to bear witness with courage and charity. Thank You for the promised Holy Spirit and for the life You give through Your saving work. Keep me close to You. In Your name, amen.

Pray this in your own words:

ONE TRUTH TO CARRY WITH YOU

Jesus speaks with the authority of the Father and invites everyone who is spiritually thirsty to come to Him and believe. The Holy Spirit is God’s life-giving gift.

Final Notes