

I AM the Light of the World (I am Living Water)

John 7, John 8

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John: Two sections, Public & Private Ministries.

Diminishing disciples – many choose to leave Him.

Growing of those who believed in Him –depth and breadth.

Background **John 7**:

Jesus' brothers don't believe – tease him... *"my time has not yet come"*.

Jesus goes to Festival of Tabernacles or Shelters and teaches.

The Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated in the autumn (Lev 23:33-36; Dt 16:13-14), beginning five days after the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) and lasting eight days. Each family constructed a temporary shelter of branches to live in for the period of the feast. This typified the years of wandering in the desert before the people entered the Promised Land. The feast itself was a joyful time of thanksgiving for the harvest they now enjoyed. It was one of the three annual feasts at which attendance was required of all Jewish men (Dt 16:16).

Dialogue between Jesus and the people... then Pharisees & leading priests...

Bantering – baiting ... *"you are trying to kill me..." / "You work on the sabbath..."*

Crowds begin to speculate Jesus is the Messiah...

Leaders tried to arrest him ... *"you will search for me and cannot find me..., and you cannot go where I am going..."*

1. JESUS IS LIVING WATER

"On the last day, the climax of the festival, Jesus stood and shouted to the crowds, "Anyone who is thirsty may come to me!"³⁸ Anyone who believes in me may come and drink! For the Scriptures declare, 'Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.'"³⁹ (When he said "living water," he was speaking of the Spirit, who would be given to everyone believing in him. But the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not yet entered into his glory.)" (John 7:37-39)

Confusion, division, and unbelief...

"The celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles included a daily procession of priests from the temple to the Pool of Siloam, from which they drew water that was poured out as a libation at the altar, accompanied by a recitation of Isa 12:3: *"With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation."* This offering of water memorialized God's provision for the thirsty people in the wilderness, but the

water had been poured out and had left them unsatisfied. Now Jesus appeals to the individual: **"Whoever believes in me."** He was requiring an individual response of faith..."

- a. River of delight.
Fountain of life.
- b. River of healing.
- c. Rivers of Living Water.
- d. River of the Water of Life.

"Your unfailing love, O Lord, is as vast as the heavens; your faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds. ⁶ Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your justice like the ocean depths. You care for people and animals alike, O Lord. ⁷ How precious is your unfailing love, O God! All humanity finds shelter in the shadow of your wings. ⁸ You feed them from the abundance of your own house, letting them drink from your river of delights. ⁹ For you are the fountain of life, the light by which we see. ¹⁰ Pour out your unfailing love on those who love you; give justice to those with honest hearts." (Psalm 36:5-10)

The River of Healing

"¹In my vision, the man brought me back to the entrance of the Temple. There I saw a stream flowing east from beneath the door of the Temple and passing to the right of the altar on its south side. ² The man brought me outside the wall through the north gateway and led me around to the eastern entrance. There I could see the water flowing out through the south side of the east gateway."

"¹² Fruit trees of all kinds will grow along both sides of the river. The leaves of these trees will never turn brown and fall, and there will always be fruit on their branches. There will be a new crop every month, for they are watered by the river flowing from the Temple. The fruit will be for food and the leaves for healing." (Ezekiel 47:1-2;12)

Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." (John 4:10)

"For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." (Revelation 7:17)

"Then the angel showed me a river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. ² It flowed down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations." (Revelation 22:1-2)

"No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him." (Revelation 22:3)

Jesus said, "Anyone who is thirsty may come to me! ³⁸ Anyone who believes in me may come and drink! For the Scriptures declare, 'Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.'" (John 7:37-38)

John chapter 8: Setting...

Woman caught in adultery:

Lose - Lose situation: If, then, Jesus refused to confirm the death penalty, he could be charged with contradicting the law of God and would himself be liable to condemnation. If, on the other hand, he confirmed the verdict of the Pharisees, he would lose his reputation for compassion; and possibly he could have been reported to the Romans as inciting the Sanhedrin to independent exercise of the death penalty.

"All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!" (8:7b)

"Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?" ¹¹*"No, Lord," she said. And Jesus said, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more."* (8:10b-11)

2. JESUS IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

¹² *Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, "I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life."* ¹³ *The Pharisees replied, "You are making those claims about yourself! Such testimony is not valid."*

¹⁴ *Jesus told them, "These claims are valid even though I make them about myself. For I know where I came from and where I am going, but you don't know this about me."* ¹⁵ *You judge me by human standards, but I do not judge anyone.* ¹⁶ *And if I did, my judgment would be correct in every respect because I am not alone. The Father who sent me is with me.* ¹⁷ *Your own law says that if two people agree about something, their witness is accepted as fact.* ¹⁸ *I am one witness, and my Father who sent me is the other."*

¹⁹ *"Where is your father?" they asked.*

Jesus answered, "Since you don't know who I am, you don't know who my Father is. If you knew me, you would also know my Father." ²⁰ *Jesus made these statements while he was teaching in the section of the Temple known as the Treasury. But he was not arrested, because his time had not yet come.*

- a. Light as illumination... *"Your Word is a lamp..."* (Psalm 119:105).
- b. Light as heat and power.
- c. Light as opposed to darkness... Walk in the light. *"But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin."* (1 John 1:7)

3. "BEFORE ABRAHAM WAS, I AM"

"When you have lifted up the Son of Man on the cross, then you will understand that I Am he. I do nothing on my own, but say only what the Father taught me." (John 8:28)

Another important phrase is Jesus' use of *"I am"* in *"then you will know that I am."* It occurs three times in this discourse (v.24, 28, 58). It may be translated as in v.24, "I am [the one I claim to be]," referring to himself as the Son of Man. But it may also be related to God's revelation of himself to Moses as the "I AM" (Ex 3:14) and to Isaiah's theistic proclamations (Isa 41:4; 43:11-13; et al.). The

Jews recognized "I AM" as a term for deity (cf. Mk 14:61-62). The term predicates self-existence and eternal being. Along with this claim to divine nature, Jesus reaffirmed his subordination to the Father as the bearer of his message. Both his nature and his message have come from God.

- a. The preeminence of Jesus Christ - Jesus first in all things!
- b. The pre-existence of Jesus Christ.
- c. The preparation of Jesus Christ. The I AM was prepared for this, the cross, obeying the Father's will.

Many who heard believed...

³¹ Jesus said to the people who believed in him, "You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. ³² And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32)

³⁴ Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave of sin. ³⁵ A slave is not a permanent member of the family, but a son is part of the family forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you are truly free." (John 8:34-36)

Pedigree and tradition vs. transformation.

Slaves to sin no more.

⁵⁸ Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, before Abraham was even born, I am!" ⁵⁹ At that point they picked up stones to throw at him. But Jesus was hidden from them and left the Temple." (John 8:58-59)

The rejoinder of Jesus, "*Before Abraham was born, I am*" could only mean a claim to deity. "Was born" (or "came into being") implies the event of entering into a new state or condition of existence (the same verb is used in 1:14 to denote the Incarnation). "I am" implies continuous existence, including existence when Abraham appeared. Jesus was, therefore, asserting that at the time of Abraham's birth, he existed (see also comments on 8:28 for a discussion of "I AM"). "I AM" was recognized by the Jews as a title of deity.

Love Incarnate Gives Hope & Truth