

# On Time Every Time

## John 7:1-13

7 1. After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him. 2 Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. 3 His brothers therefore said to Him, "Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. 4 For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world." 5 For even His brothers did not believe in Him.

6 Then Jesus 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 of it that its works are evil. 8 You go up to this feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, for My time has not yet fully come." 9 When He had said these things to them, He remained in Galilee.

10 But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. 11 Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, "Where is He?" 12 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." 13 However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews.

## Introduction:

From the unbelieving world's point of view, history is an unexplained succession of seemingly random events—a meaningless chain of causes and effects.

In contrast, the Bible portrays history as the very opposite, the purposeful and perfect outworking of God's eternal plan. As the "ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations" (2 Chron. 20:6; cf. 1 Chron. 29:11–12; Ps. 47:2, 8) and the "blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15; cf. Rev. 17:14; 19:16), God is in complete control of every situation, working all things together for His glory and the good of His children (cf. Rom. 8:28; 11:36).

### **2 Chronicles 20:6 (NKJV)**

**6 and said: "O Lord God of our fathers, *are You not God in heaven, and do You *not* rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand *is there not* power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You?***

### **1 Chronicles 29:11–12 (NKJV)**

**11 Yours, O Lord, *is* the greatness,  
The power and the glory,  
The victory and the majesty;  
For all *that is* in heaven and in earth *is Yours*;  
Yours *is* the kingdom, O Lord,  
And You are exalted as head over all.**

**12 Both riches and honor *come* from You,  
And You reign over all.  
In Your hand *is* power and might;**

**In Your hand *it is* to make great  
And to give strength to all.**

Nebuchadnezzar, the arrogant ruler of the Babylonian Empire, learned the truth about God's sovereignty in a most humiliating manner. Though he was warned in a dream that "the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes" (Dan. 4:25; cf. v. 17; 2:21),

Nebuchadnezzar nevertheless "reflected and said, 'Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?' " (v. 30). God's judgment on Nebuchadnezzar's prideful boast was swift and devastating:

While the word was in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, saying, "King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you, and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place will be with the beasts of the field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes." Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws. (vv. 31–33)

After living like an animal for seven years, a humbled Nebuchadnezzar reflected on the lessons he had so painfully learned:

At the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever; for His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom endures from generation to generation. All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, but He does according to His will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; and no one can ward off His hand or say to Him, "What have You done?" (vv. 34–35)

Years earlier Sennacherib, ruler of the feared Assyrian Empire, had also needed to learn that same lesson. His nation's conquests, of which it so proudly boasted (cf. Isa. 10:12–14), were not a result of its own military strength, but of God's sovereign design:

Have you not heard?  
Long ago I did it,  
From ancient times I planned it.  
Now I have brought it to pass,  
That you should turn fortified cities into ruinous  
heaps.  
Therefore their inhabitants were short of strength,  
They were dismayed and put to shame;  
They were as the vegetation of the field and as the  
green herb,  
As grass on the housetops is scorched before it is  
grown up.

But I know your sitting down  
 And your going out and your coming in  
 And your raging against Me. (Isa. 37:26–28)

But Sennacherib’s attempt to conquer Jerusalem, God’s holy city, failed disastrously; his army was destroyed (Isa. 37:36), and he was later murdered by his own sons (v. 38). Moreover, when Assyria’s allotted time in God’s program had ended, the nation was judged and destroyed (Isa. 10:12–19; 30:31–33; 31:8–9; Ezek. 31:3–17; Nah. 1:1–3:19)—just as Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome were each destroyed after her (Dan. 2:31–45; 7:1–23). Throughout the millennia since, nations have risen to prominence, had their moment in the sun, and faded from the scene—all in keeping with their “appointed times,” which God has determined (Acts 17:26).

God’s sovereignty and providence extend beyond nations and governments to include all people and events.

Everything happens according to His divine schedule. At the pinnacle of that schedule are the birth, death, resurrection, and return of Jesus Christ—history’s most significant events.

Jesus was born “when the fullness of the time came, [and] God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law” (Gal. 4:4). His death also took place according to God’s perfect timing.

Paul notes that “at the right time Christ died for the ungodly” (Rom. 5:6), having given “Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time” (1 Tim. 2:6).

The Lord will likewise return at the precise moment chosen by God; Paul reminded Timothy of “the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which He will bring about at the proper time” (1 Tim. 6:14–15; cf. Mark 13:33; Acts 1:6–7).

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (pp. 276–278). Chicago: Moody Press.

**Acts 2:22–23 (NKJV)**

<sup>22</sup> “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—<sup>23</sup> Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;

**Acts 4:27–28 (NKJV)**

<sup>27</sup> “For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together <sup>28</sup> to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.

**Matthew 26:24 (NKJV)**

<sup>24</sup> **The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.”**

## Review

Throughout His earthly ministry, Jesus was always conscious of doing the Father’s will according to His divine timetable—a truth that is in the first thirteen verses of chapter 7 (cf. v. 6). Chapters 7 and 8 usher in a new, more volatile section of John’s gospel, as the smoldering resentment that Jesus encountered in chapters 1–6 finally burst into a blazing inferno of hatred. Chapter 8 even ends with an unsuccessful attempt on Jesus’ life: “Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple” (8:59). The hatred Jesus faced would reach its peak

in 11:45–57, when the Jewish authorities made their final decision to kill Him—a plot that culminated in His crucifixion.

As chapter 7 opens, Jesus was still in Galilee, but preparing to return to Jerusalem at the time predetermined in God’s plan. The section obviously divides into two elements: the wrong time and the right time.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (pp. 276–278). Chicago: Moody Press.

## **Lesson**

### **I. The Situation**

### **II. The Siblings**

### **III. The Season**

### **IV. The Seekers**

### **I. The Situation**

**7 1. After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him. <sup>2</sup> Now the Jews’ Feast of Tabernacles was at hand.**

**1. After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him**

**7:1.** Assuming that chs. 5–7 are in the right order as they stand (*cf.* notes on 5:1; 6:1), *After this (meta tauta; cf. notes on 2:12)* does not establish tight connections, merely **sequence: i.e.** in the period after the feeding miracle and the bread of life discourse,

Jesus *went around* (in context the **imperfect *periepatei*** is probably to be understood ‘continued to go around’) *Galilee*. The reason for this geographical restriction was his desire to avoid Judea, *because the Jews were there waiting to take his life*. **This is a clear reference to 5:18**, where in the wake of the Sabbath controversy and Jesus’ dramatic Christological claims, ‘the Jews sought to kill him’. Both 5:18 and here, ‘the Jews’ (*cf.* notes on 1:19) refers to ‘the Judeans’ or, more precisely, the Jewish authorities in Judea. Jesus spent about a year in Galilee, the year of ministry on which the Synoptists focus most of their attention.

Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (p. 305). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

The phrase **after these things** refers to the events described in chapter 6, which took place around the time of Passover in April (6:4). Since chapter 7 opens at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles in October (7:2), there is a gap of about six months between chapters 6 and 7. John records nothing about that interval, except that Jesus spent it **walking** (traveling and ministering) **in Galilee**. The apostle’s purpose in composing his gospel was not to write



an exhaustive biography of Jesus Christ, but to present Him as the Son of God and Messiah (20:21). The other gospel writers note that during those six months, Jesus traveled the length of Galilee, from Tyre and Sidon, northwest of Galilee (Matt. 15:21–28) to Decapolis, in the southeast (Mark 7:31–37). During that time He performed miracles, including healing (Matt. 15:29–31; Mark 8:22–26), casting out demons (Matt. 15:21–28; 17:14–18), and feeding the four thousand (Matt. 15:32–38).

Most of the six months, however, was spent discipling the Twelve. The Lord taught them extensively (Matt. 16:13–27; 17:19–23; 18:1–35), including telling them for the first time of His impending rejection, crucifixion, and resurrection (Matt. 16:21; cf. 17:22–23). He also revealed to the inner circle (Peter, James, and John) a glimpse of His divine glory (Matt. 17:1–8).

That Jesus spent only two days with the large crowd (perhaps 20,000 people) mentioned in chapter 6 but six months predominantly involved with the Twelve is highly significant. It shows that the primary focus of the Lord's ministry was not on mass meetings, but on discipleship. He devoted His time and effort to the small core group of men who would carry on His ministry after He was gone. The Christian church is in large measure the legacy of those eleven men (plus Matthias [Acts 1:26] and Paul [1 Cor. 9:1]), who faithfully disciplined their followers who disciplined others and so on, down through the centuries to our own day.

Discipleship must also be a priority for the church. The Lord did not commission the church to attract large crowds, but to go and make disciples (Matt. 28:19). Likewise, Paul charged the young pastor Timothy, “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2). The measure of any church’s success is not the size of its congregation, but the depth of its discipleship.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (pp. 278–279). Chicago: Moody Press.

## **2 Now the Jews’ Feast of Tabernacles was at hand.**

**7:2.** That year was about to end, occasioned by the impending Feast of Tabernacles. The institution of the Feast was associated in the Old Testament with the **ingathering of harvest (Ex. 23:16; Lv. 23:33–36, 39–43; Dt. 16:13–15; not grain, which was reaped between April and June, but grapes and olives).**

The Feast ran for seven days, **15–21 Tishri**, the Jewish lunar month that falls in **September–October**.

A special festival assembly took place on the eighth day, 22 Tishri (Lv. 23:36; *cf.* SB 2. 774; Mishnah *Sukkah*). The time, therefore, is about six months after the feeding of the five thousand. According to Josephus, this Feast was the most popular of the three principal Jewish feasts that brought the faithful flocking to Jerusalem (‘especially sacred and important’, Jos., *Ant.* viii. 100).

People living in rural areas built makeshift structures of light branches and leaves to live in for the week (hence ‘booths’ or ‘tabernacles’; *cf.* Lv. 23:42); town dwellers put up similar structures on their flat roofs or in their courtyards. Feast was known for a water-drawing rite and a lamp-lighting rite to which Jesus quite clearly refers (*cf.* 7:37ff.; 8:12).

Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (p. 305). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

## I. The Situation

## II. The Siblings

### John 7:3–5

**<sup>3</sup> His brothers therefore said to Him, “Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. <sup>4</sup> For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world.” <sup>5</sup> For even His brothers did not believe in Him.**

**7:3–4.** As in 2:1, *Jesus’ brothers* most likely refers to the sons of Mary and Joseph, all younger than Jesus himself. At this point they are unbelievers (v. 5), a point attested by the Synoptics (*cf.* Mk. 3:21, 31–35 par.),

- (1) If Jesus' brothers are aware of the large-scale defections besetting Jesus' 'disciples', attested at the end of ch. 6, then their suggestion that he perform miracles for his 'disciples' may mean no more than that he ought to satisfy them before his cause is entirely lost.
- (2) The Feast of Tabernacles was a popular attraction that drew countless thousands to Jerusalem. If Jesus went there to perform his miracles, not only would he enjoy the biggest crowds of his career, but the word would spread very quickly.
- (3) Better still, in the nature of the case the most religious people of the nation would be the most likely to be there. What better place for a religious leader to parade his wares?
- (4) Jerusalem was central to the religious life of observant Jews, not only because of its long heritage but even more because the temple was there. Because the various forms of modern Judaism cannot follow the law of Moses so far as its sacrificial stipulations are concerned (since modern Judaism has no temple), we must make a mental effort to grasp how central the temple and Jerusalem were for the vast majority of Palestinian and even Diaspora Jews in Jesus' day. Even the reclusive monks of the Qumran community, by the Dead Sea, who wrote off the temple as impossibly apostate, thus indirectly confirm its centrality to contemporary thought and religious observance. If Jesus is interested in religious prominence, his brothers reason, sooner or later he must prove the master of Jerusalem. Otherwise he will always be regarded by the authorities and by the upper echelons of society as no more than a rustic, rural preacher (*cf.* 7:52).

What the brothers want, then, is that he should act *en parrēsia* (v. 4): the expression sometimes means ‘plainly’, ‘clearly’, *i.e.* without the obscurity of metaphor (10:24; 11:14; 16:25, 29), but here means ‘publicly’ (niv), ‘openly’ (*cf.* 7:13, 26; 11:54; 18:20).

A public figure who wants to advance must make an impact on the capital. Jesus ought to *show [himself] to the world*, by which they mean ‘to everybody’.

But John the Evangelist doubtless sees irony in their request. Jesus’ brothers want Jesus to put on a display; John’s readers already know that such a display would pander to corrupt motives (6:14, 15, 26ff.) and in any case would not ensure genuine faith (2:23–25; 4:48).

The brothers want Jesus to show himself to the *world*, but in John’s most characteristic sense of that word (*cf.* notes on 1:9) the ‘world’ is precisely that which *cannot* receive him without ceasing to be the ‘world’.

In one sense, Jesus has no intention of showing himself to the ‘world’ (*cf.* note on 14:22). And yet in another sense, the reader who presses on to the rest of this Gospel discovers that it is in Jerusalem where Jesus reveals himself most dramatically—not in the spectacular miracles the brothers want but in the ignominy of the cross, the very cross by which Jesus draws all men to himself (12:32) and becomes the Saviour of the world (4:42).

Since that feast **was near**, and was one of the three that all Jewish males were required to attend (Deut. 16:16; *cf.* Ex. 23:14–17; 34:22–24),

Jesus’ **brothers** assumed He would soon **leave Galilee and go into Judea** to celebrate it. Jesus’ brothers were His half brothers, the children of both Mary and Joseph.

Matthew 13:55 lists their names—James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas (or Jude).

Although they did not believe in Him at this time (see the discussion of v. 5 below), they would later come to believe in Him (Acts 1:14).

Two of His brothers, **James and Jude**, penned the epistles that bear their names, and James became the head of the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; cf. Gal. 1:19; 2:9).

Jesus' brothers challenged Him to perform His miracles openly, on the grand stage that Jerusalem would provide during the Feast of Tabernacles.

Then, they reasoned, His **disciples** from both Galilee and Judea would **see the works which** He was **doing**—works which demonstrated that He was in fact the Messiah. Further, some of the disciples who had recently abandoned Him (6:66) might be won back. The Lord's brothers were not, as some mistakenly think, zealous for Him to show His glory. On the contrary, they did not even believe in Him yet (v. 5).

Their comments appear to have had a dual motivation. First, they may have wanted to see Jesus perform miracles, so they could decide for themselves whether or not His works were genuine. Second, they were probably expecting a political Messiah, like the crowd Jesus fed (6:14–15). Thus, in their minds, the acid test of Jesus' messiahship would be at Jerusalem (the political center of Israel), and not in Galilee. If the ruling authorities at Jerusalem signed off on Jesus, His brothers would also accept Him as the Messiah.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (pp. 280–281). Chicago: Moody Press.

**5 For even His brothers did not believe in Him.**

**7:5.** The conjunction *For* introduces John's explanation as to *why* Jesus' brothers spoke as they did in vv. 3–4: they *did not believe in him*. The point is confirmed by the Synoptics (Mk. 3:21, 31 par.). Apparently Jesus' brothers did not become his followers until after the resurrection (Acts 1:14), and this because Jesus revealed himself to at least one of them personally (1 Cor. 15:7). We ought not to think the brothers' scepticism extended to doubt that he could perform dazzling miracles, otherwise their challenge that he should perform his works of power in Jerusalem would be incoherent. But they, like so many of the superficial disciples in 2:23–25; 6:60ff., could not perceive the *significance* of what they saw, and therefore did not penetrate to Jesus' real identity and entrust themselves entirely to him. There is no evidence that their unbelief went as far as that of some opponents who credited Jesus with the power to perform remarkable miracles, while ascribing this power to Beelzebub, the prince of demons (Mk. 3:22 par.).

The apostle John's footnote, **For not even His brothers were believing in Him**, explains why they spoke to Him the way they did. Earlier in His ministry, their unbelief had led them to think He had lost His mind (cf. Mark 3:21, 31–34). Nothing the Lord had done since then had penetrated their hard hearts. It would take His resurrection from the dead to finally persuade them that He was the Son of God (Acts 1:14).

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (p. 281). Chicago: Moody Press.

The disciples thought that they could make the ministry of Jesus successful by getting him to Jerusalem or Judea and in the right spot where you could get the most

exposure. They were thinking like anyone would think with and unregenerate heart. Men in their loss condition do not understand spiritual things. As stated in I Corinthian's chapter 2:14 the Bible states the natural man does not understand nor comprehend spiritual things.

John 3:3 (NKJV)

<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

John 8:43 (NKJV)

<sup>43</sup> Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.

John 6:44–45 (NKJV)

<sup>44</sup> No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. <sup>45</sup> It is written in the prophets, ‘*And they shall all be taught by God.*’ Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.

Acts 16:14 (NKJV)

<sup>14</sup> Now a certain woman named Lydia heard *us*. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.

2 Corinthians 4:2–7 (NKJV)

<sup>2</sup> But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God. <sup>3</sup> But even if our



gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,  
<sup>4</sup> whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. <sup>5</sup> For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. <sup>6</sup> For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

The brothers of Jesus were superficial just like the ones of John 6. There is no indication that they did not believe in miracles were legitimate.

Although they did not believe that he was who we claim to be they simply thought that if he wanted to be successful in this endeavor then the way to do it was to do it by political means and physical means.

Much like today many believe that if they just do certain things they could make people come to Christ. They will employ all types of methods other than the ones specifically that God has ordained.

Churches are employing all types of methods and gimmickry to try to accomplish something that is only to be accomplished by God's supernatural power. We will try everything. We will try to make sure we have the right preacher. The right music. The right atmosphere. The right situation.

We will change the name of the church so that it doesn't sound like it's a church. We will make the building look like anything other than a church building. We will remove crosses anything in the hymns that we may believe offend believer.

We will completely remove prayer from church services and dismantle the midweek prayer service because we do not believe it is effective in reaching people for Christ.

If none of this works we will try to accomplish our spiritual objective three politics. We will try to get the right president, the right congressman, the right leader so that we feel like we can have a more spiritual nation.

It is our hopes that if we have a more Moral nation that more people would come to Christ.

All of these things have proven over and over again to be bankrupt yet at the same time the church continues to return to these powerless, devoid of the Holy Spirit methodologies

In our celebration of the Reformation I referred to John Calvin. On one occasion he was asked to leave the city of Geneva but after a time they ask him back because they knew that he was having an impact on the people of Geneva through the preaching of the word. When he returned, he picked back up in the next verse that he left off preaching when he left Geneva. He knew that it was the preaching of the Word that God would use.

God has ordained to use the preaching of the word of God and the prayers of the Saints to accomplish the

evangelism of the lost and the growth of the local church. Ask yourself a question, how much time do you spend actually using the God ordained means of reaching the lost.

How often and how long do you spend in prayer for those that are lost. Or do you really even believe that it's worth your time.

How much time do you spend sharing Jesus Christ as specific statements about who he is and what he did on the cross, can you not just a general God loves you and God cares for you.

In many ways we will do exactly like the unbelieving brothers will do we will try everything else to make Jesus successful except the very things that he has ordained.

## **I. The Situation**

## **II. The Siblings**

# **III. The Season**

John 7:6–9

<sup>6</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. <sup>7</sup> The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil.

<sup>8</sup> You go up to this feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, for My time has not yet fully come.” <sup>9</sup> When He had said these things to them, He remained in Galilee.

**<sup>6</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready.**

**John 2:4 (NKJV)**

<sup>4</sup> Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.”

**John 7:30 (NKJV)**

<sup>30</sup> Therefore they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.

**John 7:44 (NKJV)**

<sup>44</sup> Now some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him.

**John 8:20 (NKJV)**

<sup>20</sup> These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come.

**John 10:39 (NKJV)**

<sup>39</sup> Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand.

**John 13:1 (NKJV)**

**13** Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from

this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

### John 17:1 (NKJV)

17 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You,

7:6. His brothers did not believe in him. *Therefore* Jesus gave further explanation as to why their judgments were so faulty. In brief, they had projected onto him what *they* would have done under similar circumstances, without reckoning with the uniqueness that stamped him.

*The right time (kairos) for me has not yet come; for you any time is right* (lit. ‘but your time [*kairos*] is always ready’). This calls to mind Jesus’ response to his mother: ‘My time (*hōra*) has not yet come’ (2:4). The similarity in expression prompts most commentators to conclude that the difference in actual terms is incidental: *kairos* and *hōra*, on this view, mean the same thing. If so, *kairos* (which in John occurs only here and in v. 8) refers to the ‘hour’ (*hōra*) when Jesus is glorified by being lifted up on the cross, on the way to his Father’s presence (*cf.* notes on 2:4). But another analysis seems preferable. The Greek word for ‘hour’ (*hōra*), often rendered ‘time’ in niv, always bears the theological content just indicated, provided it is not modified by a number (as in ‘the tenth hour’ or the like). *Chronos*, another word rendered ‘time’, always focuses on the *extent* of time, not the point or specific hour of time (used in John only in 5:6; 7:33; 12:35;

14:9). The word *kairos*, found in vv. 6, 8, unlike *chronos* but like *hōra*, refers in this Gospel to a point of time, but unlike *hōra* does not refer to Christ's 'being lifted up', to his glorification by way of the cross. If that is the case, then unlike 2:4, Jesus is *not* saying that the time for unrestrained messianic blessings has not yet dawned because the 'time' of his glorification is not yet at hand (the final Passover was still more than six months away). Rather he is saying that the 'time' for his going up to Jerusalem for this Feast of Tabernacles is not yet at hand.

This interpretation is well-nigh necessitated by the final words of the verse: *for you any time (kairos) is right*. In this reading, *kairos* makes sense: *i.e.* Jesus' brothers are free to go up to Jerusalem for the Feast any time they like, while Jesus is under special constraint (*cf.* v. 8). Jesus' words become more biting when Odeberg's evidence (pp. 270–281) is taken into account. He lists numerous Jewish sources which, largely building upon Ecclesiastes 3:1ff. ('There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven....'), delight to appeal to divine sovereignty to give significance to the diversity of things that can befall both the created order in general and the individual in particular. In that light, Jesus' brothers would not be upset to hear Jesus say his time had not come, but they may well have been scandalized to hear him say *for you any time is right*. It is almost as if they are being excluded from divine sovereignty—not that God suspended his providential reign in their case, but that what they did was utterly without significance as far as God is concerned. This interpretation is confirmed by the next verse.

In reply to His brothers' misguided attempt to force His hand, **Jesus said to them, "My time is not yet here."** He would not allow His brothers' skepticism to dictate His actions. His course of action was determined by the sovereign Father who orchestrated everything in His time.

The Lord had responded similarly to His mother at the wedding in Cana: "My hour has not yet come" (cf. the exposition of 2:4 in chapter 6 of this volume). There Christ also rejected pressure from His family to reveal Himself prematurely. But He would not manifest Himself before the right time, the moment chosen by the Father.

In its fullest sense, the divine time would not come until the next great feast, Passover, the following spring. Though He would minister in Judea for most of the intervening months (cf. Luke 9:51–19:11), the Lord would not enter Jerusalem publicly and openly declare Himself to be the Messiah until then (Matt. 21:1–11; cf. Luke 19:37–40). And just as He had predicted (Matt. 16:21; 17:22–23; 20:17–19; 26:2), that final manifestation would lead to His death.

In contrast, His brothers' **time** was **always opportune**. As part of the unbelieving world (v. 7), they were not concerned with operating on God's timetable. They knew nothing of His plans and purposes, and were indifferent to His providence. Any time would do for them to go to the feast. Leon Morris observed, "In this respect the brothers joined with the world. Since the world (and the brothers) have cut themselves off from the divinely appointed 'time' all times are alike to them" (*The Gospel According to John*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979], 398)

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (pp. 281–282). Chicago: Moody Press.

This Divine timetable is not just for Jesus alone but it's also for the believer God has all of your life at the details of your life in his hands. Nothing will happen to a believer that has not been specifically ordained by God.

**Genesis 50:20 (NKJV)**

<sup>20</sup> But as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it is* this day, to save many people alive.

**Psalms 105:16–17 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup> Moreover He called for a famine in the land;  
He destroyed all the provision of bread.

<sup>17</sup> He sent a man before them—  
Joseph—*who* was sold as a slave.

**Romans 8:28 (NKJV)**

<sup>28</sup> And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.

**7 The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil.**

Unlike Jesus, they would face no hostility at Jerusalem from the Jewish authorities. **The world** could not **hate** them, since they were part of it, and it loves its own (15:19). But the world, as Jesus reminded His brothers, “**hates Me because I testify of (or against) it, that its deeds are evil**” (cf. 2:14–16; 3:19–20; 5:30–47; 12:48; 15:22–25).



### John 3:19–21 (NKJV)

<sup>19</sup>And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup>For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. <sup>21</sup>But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”

Since it is controlled by Satan (1 John 5:19), the activities and priorities of the world are inherently sinful.

1 John 5:19 (NKJV)

<sup>19</sup> We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies *under the sway* of the wicked one.

When believers **testify** against the world and confront its wickedness, like Jesus did, they arouse its antagonism and hatred (cf. 15:18–19; 17:14; Matt. 10:22; 24:9; Luke 6:22; 1 John 3:13; 2 Tim. 3:12; James 4:4).

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (p. 282). Chicago: Moody Press.

### **John 15:18–20 (NKJV)**

<sup>18</sup> “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated you*. <sup>19</sup> If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. <sup>20</sup> Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his

master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

### **John 17:14–17 (NKJV)**

<sup>14</sup> I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. <sup>15</sup> I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

<sup>16</sup> They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

<sup>17</sup> Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

### **Matthew 10:22 (NKJV)**

<sup>22</sup> And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.

### **1 John 3:13 (NKJV)**

<sup>13</sup> Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.

### **James 4:4 (NKJV)**

<sup>4</sup> Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

**7:7.** Jesus’ brothers lack an appointed time because they belong to the ‘world’ (*kosmos*; cf. notes on 1:9, 7:4). *The world cannot hate you*, Jesus tells them, for they belong to it, and the world loves its own (15:19). By contrast, the world hates Jesus, not only because he does not belong to it, but because he testifies that *what it does is evil* (cf. 3:19–20; 7:19; 8:31–59; 9:39–41; 16:8–9). The world always hates to have its evil exposed, to be convicted of its sin. That is why the brother’s suggestion, that Jesus should show himself to the

world (v. 4), was so misplaced. By ‘the world’, they mean ‘everybody’, but Jesus knows that ‘everybody’ belongs to ‘the world’ in a far more negative sense, already summarized in the Prologue (1:10).

Thus v. 7 simultaneously explains why Jesus will not rise to the challenge set him in v. 4, and why, for the brothers, *any time is right*. Their alignment with ‘the world’ means they know nothing of God’s agenda. They do not listen to his word, do not recognize it when it comes, and cannot perceive the Word incarnate before them. They are divorced from God’s *kairos*, his divine appointments, and so any time will do. All appointments that ignore God’s *kairos* are in the eternal scheme of things equally insignificant.

Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (p. 308). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

**8 You go up to this feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, for My time has not yet fully come.”**

**9 When He had said these things to them, He remained in Galilee.**

**7:8–9.** So let the brothers go to the Feast whenever they will. Their decision is without significance. But Jesus, whose itinerary is regulated by the Father, must at this point decline, because (he says) *for me the right time (kairos; cf. v. 6) has not yet come*. The early textual witnesses are divided between *I am not yet (oupō) going up to this Feast* (niv), and ‘I am not (*ouk*) going up to the Feast’. The word *oupō* may have been an early scribal ‘correction’ to remove the obvious difficulty that arises in v.

10: Jesus does go up. But even if the reading *ouk* ('not') is correct, the difficulty is superficial because the context supplies a condition. Jesus' response to his brothers is not that he is planning to stay in Galilee forever, but that because his life is regulated by his heavenly Father's appointments he is *not* going to the Feast when they say he should. The 'counsel of the wicked' (Ps. 1:1) cannot be permitted to set his agenda. His 'not' turns down his brothers' request; it does not promise he will not go to the Feast when the Father sanctions the trip.

The verb rendered 'going up' (*anabainō*) is also used to refer to Jesus' ascent to the Father through death (3:13; 6:62; 20:17), and some see a similar allusion here. That is just possible, even though the brothers also 'go up' to the Feast, in the purely mundane sense that anyone travelling to Jerusalem from any point on the compass was said to be 'going up' to the capital. If such an allusion is intended, the idea is that Jesus' 'going up' cannot possibly be like the 'going up' of other pilgrims.

Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (pp. 308–309). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

- I. The Situation**
- II. The Siblings**
- III. The Season**

## **IV. The Seekers**

### **John 7:10–13**

**<sup>10</sup> But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. <sup>11</sup> Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, “Where is He?” <sup>12</sup> 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.” <sup>13</sup> However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews.**

**<sup>10</sup> But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.**

**7:10.** The assumption in this verse is that the Father has signaled Jesus in some way, so Jesus goes to Jerusalem, leaving Galilee for the last time before the cross. Even so, his journey is marked by maximum discretion, exactly the opposite of what the brothers had in mind. Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel*

according to John (p. 309). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

**<sup>11</sup> Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, “Where is He?”**

**7:11.** Since there seems to be a difference between ‘the Jews’ in this verse, and ‘the crowds’ in the next, ‘the Jews’ (*cf.* notes on 1:19) here refers to the Jewish authorities in Judea, especially in Jerusalem. Doubtless we are to understand their search to be hostile: they hope the occasion of the Feast will draw Jesus out of Galilee, where he was in the jurisdiction of Herod Antipas, and thus bring Jesus into their hands. The words *that man (ekeinos)* probably reflect scorn or exasperation, possibly both.

Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (p. 309). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

**<sup>12</sup> 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.” <sup>13</sup> However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews.**

**7:12–13.** The crowds, made up not only of Judeans but of Galileans and of diaspora Jews, adopt a milder stance. They are frankly curious about Jesus, and clearly divided in their opinions. Some, doubtless because they remember the good results of his miracles, simply conclude, *He is a good man*, even if their categories prevent them from concluding anything very profound about him. Others, of a more cynical disposition (for the punishment of the liar is not so much that he is not

believed but that he does not believe), suspect he is a charlatan: *No, he deceives the people*. The latter view became dominant in some Jewish circles after the resurrection. The Evangelist is doubtless aware of it, and, seeking to win Jews and proselytes to the Christian faith, here attempts to explain it by tracing it to its origin. Whatever their opinions, however, the crowds discuss them in whispers *for fear of the Jews* (*cf.* v. 11). Apparently the antipathy of the authorities has reached the point where they do not want Jesus discussed *publicly* (*parrēsia*; *cf.* notes on v. 4). Their displeasure with Jesus is boiling over to affect his followers (*cf.* 9:22; 16:1–2), and even those who, by their topic of conversation, make Jesus a more important figure than ‘the Jews’ wanted him to be.

Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (pp. 309–310). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

Meanwhile, events in Jerusalem confirmed the wisdom of the Lord’s caution. John notes that **the Jews were seeking Him at the feast and were saying, “Where is He?”** The phrase **the Jews** does not refer to the common people who made up the crowds (v. 11), but to the Jewish leaders who were **seeking** to kill Him (5:18).

The leaders were not the only ones discussing Jesus in His absence; **there was much grumbling** and disagreement **among the crowds** of worshipers **concerning Him**. On the one hand, **some were saying, “He is a good man,”** while **others were saying, “No, on the contrary, He leads the**

**people astray.”** Actually, both views of Jesus were incorrect. He was not merely **a good man**, since good men do not claim to be God (5:18; cf. 8:24, 28, 58; 10:33). Nor was **He** one who **leads the people astray**, because deceivers do not perform the supernatural and authenticating miracles that Jesus did (10:25, 37–38; 14:10–11; cf. 3:2; 5:36).

Sadly, it was this second view of Jesus—that He was a deceiver—that eventually prevailed among the majority of the Jewish people. The second-century apologist Justin Martyr wrote that the Jews “dared to call Him a magician, and a deceiver of the people” (*Dialogue of Justin with Trypho, a Jew*, 69, cf. 108). **Yet no one**, whether they thought He was good or a deceiver, **was speaking openly of Him for fear of the Jews** (cf. 9:22; 12:42; 19:38; 20:19). Though it was clear that the authorities rejected Jesus, the Sanhedrin had not yet rendered a formal judgment regarding Him. Thus, the people were careful to guard their words, speaking neither for Him or against Him until they knew what the official response to Jesus would be. In any case, the crowds certainly did not want to publicly contradict their religious leaders. The consequences for doing so were severe and could include excommunication from the synagogue (9:22; cf. 16:2). That dreaded punishment cut a person off from all of Jewish life.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (pp. 283–285). Chicago: Moody Press.

There are three groups of people in this passage and three responses to the claims of Christ.

There are the brothers of Jesus, the people of Jerusalem, and the Jewish leaders. The three responses are first no belief in Christ but later come to Christ. Second conclude



that Jesus is just a good man. Third conclude that he is a deceiver of the people.

Let's take them in reverse order

1. The Jewish leaders – concluded he was a deceiver and empowered by the devil I did all of this works by the power of the devil. To say that he was a deceiver goes contrary to all other biblical data. A deceiver would not be able to do the miracles that Jesus did. In Matthew 12 the Jewish leaders concluded that he did his miracles through Beelzebub the devil

2. The people of Jerusalem – concluded that he was a deceiver and some concluded that he was a good man. Hey good man and a moral man would not lie and claimed to be God and believe the people astray. Although Jesus was the good man and the perfect man to believe he was good to believe he was perfect is not enough it will not save you.

3. The brothers of Jesus. Did not believe he was the Messiah before the resurrection but believed he was the Messiah and work part of the 120 in the upper room at Pentecost and two of his brothers became New Testament authors.

Which of these three groups are you?