

**Subject: *Christ's Invitation to Salvation***

**Scripture: *John 7:37-53***

This text contains an invitation from Christ to sinners who needed salvation. This is not the first invitation or the last one in the Gospel of John. Many people were curious about Jesus. They listened to Him and saw His miracles and admired Him. But the question then and the question is now: what will you do with His invitation to salvation?

If we look ahead in the Gospel of John to the trial of Jesus (six months later) we see Pilate asking the crowd, "What shall I do with Jesus?" That is the most important question anyone will ever consider because it will determine whether a person is forever in heaven or in hell. When Pilate asked that question the crowd shouted, "Crucify Him, crucify Him." After they rejected every invitation from Christ, it would be their final rejection.

### **THE LORD'S INVITATION**

7:37 – "the last day, that great day of the feast"

Verse 2 tells us it was the Feast of Tabernacles, one of three main feasts (Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles) in the year when people came from all around to Jerusalem. This feast was a celebration when the people built temporary housing (tents, booths) and stayed in them for a whole week to remember how God took care of His people during the wilderness wanderings in the days of Moses.

7:37-39 – On the last day of the feast the high priest brought a gold pitcher of water from the pool of Siloam into the temple and poured it on the great altar to symbolize the water that God provided for His people from the rock in the wilderness. As the priest poured out the water the people would recite ***Isaiah 12:3*** *Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.* All this was a powerful reminder that God provided salvation for His people. Jesus used this event and turned it toward Himself as an object lesson and an invitation for people to come to Him and drink living water.

1. A serious need (if any man thirst) – the knowledge or awareness of the problem

This is an open invitation. Every person is invited. Every invitation Jesus gave was an open invitation. ***Matthew 11:28*** *Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* ***John 3:16*** *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

People come to Christ who have a thirst, a craving, a sense of need. There is no requirement for people to have morality, a good heart, or kindness. That's why some of the best people in the world don't come to Christ because they don't have a thirst or a sense of need.

2. A special invitation (let him come unto me and drink) – trust and receive Christ

We must see Jesus as the only one who can save us. We don't come to Him with our feet; we come to Him with our heart. ***John 4:14*** *But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*

3. A satisfying provision (vs. 38)

What does it mean to believe on Him? It means you thirst (sense your need), you come unto Him, and you drink (embrace or receive) Him. Belly represents our innermost being. A believer is not a bucket, not a reservoir. He is a fountain, a river to others. The person who receives grace in salvation becomes a channel of grace. The life of every believer matters. We have heard a lot about different lives that matter (Black Lives Matter, Blue Lives Matter, All Lives Matter). The truth is that Christian Lives Matter. Our lives matter eternally, but if a person doesn't have Jesus Christ, everything about his life will amount to nothing.

4. A simple explanation (vs. 39)

This is the explanation for what Jesus just said in verse 38. Living water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. In verse 39 we learn three important truths about the Holy Spirit:

- The Holy Spirit is the source of eternal and spiritual life
- The Holy Spirit is given to all who believe in Christ
- The Holy Spirit was given after Jesus was glorified

Jesus said much more about the Holy Spirit in John 14-16. He said it would be better for His disciples if He went away because He would send the Holy Spirit to them.

***John 16:7*** Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

This came to pass on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Jesus ascended to the Father in heaven in Acts 1 and the Holy Spirit came to believers in Acts 2.

### **THE PEOPLE'S RESPONSES**

What an amazing invitation this is. Beginning in verse 40 we have several responses to Christ's invitation. These are the same kind of responses people have today.

1. Some were convinced and received the truth (vs. 40-41)

Some were convinced beyond a doubt ("of a truth this is the Prophet").

***Deuteronomy 18:15*** The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken. This was a Messianic promise. ***Acts 3:22-23***<sup>22</sup> For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.<sup>23</sup> And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

2. Some were contrary and rejected the truth (vs. 41-44)

This describes the skeptics and their mockery (Are you kidding?). This is willful unbelief. There was a division between believers and unbelievers (vs. 43). Both groups stood their ground. True believers will always stand their ground and so will stubborn unbelievers.

3. Some were confused and wrestled with the truth (vs. 45-50)

The officers of the temple were honest. They knew what it was to take orders. They were familiar with authority, but Jesus was different. They realized they had no power over Him. They felt pressure from both sides. They heard Jesus and how He offered life and they heard the religious authorities who wanted to arrest and kill Him. The chief priests and Pharisees questioned them and then intimidated them: “Are you stupid enough to believe in Him? None of us have believed in Him, have we? We have more sense than that. Only the common uneducated people have believed in Him.”

4. Some were compliant and researched the truth (vs. 51-53)

We read about Nicodemus again (vs. 50). We have not seen anything more of him since John 3. He wanted to defend Jesus and knew it was not right to condemn Him and kill Him. He was willing to stop the lynch mob and hold them to their own standard of law and justice. The leaders mocked him and stated that no prophet came from Galilee. What about Jonah and Nahum?

Nicodemus was searching and it's hard to say where he was in the process, but we know that eventually he was a firm believer because he shows up in John 19:39 to help Joseph of Arimathaea bury the body of Jesus.

Some are convinced, some are contrary, some are confused, and some like Nicodemus are compliant and searching. The Bible says you will find Him when you search for Him with all your heart. Where do you stand with Christ? Are you convinced? Have you heard His invitation and accepted His offer of salvation for yourself?