

I. Welcome and Review

A. Good morning! Ohayou gozaimasu! Welcome to Calvary Chapel Iwakuni.
I pray you are all doing well and enjoying this wonderful weekend. Praying God meets each one of us as we gather in His name.

1. *Welcome any visitors and those streaming online.*

B. Before we continue any further in our service, let's go ahead and dismiss our elementary aged children to their Sunday School Classrooms.

1. As the kids make their way out, I want to take just a few minutes to share with you all an update regarding our children's ministry.
 - a. As you may have noticed, we have been announcing our need for extra volunteers in a number of areas, but especially our children's ministry. We are in need for some people who are willing to teach our kids and point them to Jesus.
 - b. Each Sunday morning, we try to offer age-appropriate classrooms for our kids to grow in their understanding of Christ; who He is, and what He has done for each of them.
 - c. We know the responsibility to raise children in the ways of the Lord is not the responsibility of the church, but the parent. Our desire is to simply come alongside the parent and assist them for an hour or so on Sunday mornings.
 - d. But this is getting more and more difficult for us to do as a church. We just don't have the volunteers needed to facilitate the various age-appropriate classrooms we aspire to.
 - e. As such, this month we are having to combine our Toddler and Pre-School classrooms as one and our early elementary and older elementary classrooms into one class as well.
 - f. This causes certain challenges that I am sure you can understand. Teaching a classroom with 1st graders and 5th graders at the same time is difficult. You want to keep the older kids engaged, while at the same time not going over the heads of the little ones.
 - g. By the grace of God and in His strength, we are going to do our best. But we could use some more help.
 - h. I've spoken to Zulema Bywater, our children's ministry director, and we are going to make this work for the month of September, but if we don't get more volunteer hours, we're going to have to make some changes to how we operate.
 - i. Which may mean we go to offering children's ministry at only one of our two Sunday morning services, or having to completely drop children's ministry classes for some of the elementary aged kids.
 - j. We hope we don't have to do that. We really believe in the importance of children's ministry and teaching kids at their own level, and giving you all an opportunity to sit and hear from the Lord

without having to worry about kids sitting still, or being quiet, or paying attention during our teachings here in the Sanctuary.

k. I'd ask that you all join us in praying for God's will and for wisdom and guidance from the Lord. We want to honor Him and be faithful with the seasons and opportunities He provides.

2. If you have been thinking about serving, but just haven't gotten the courage to step up, or haven't found the time to fill out a ministry application, please pray and consider if now is the time for you to step up and help meet this need.
 3. We trust that God is at work. That He is going to continue to work in and through this church and that He will provide for the things that He has planned for us. So, please join us in praying for God's provision and God's wisdom over our children's ministry.
 4. Should you have any questions about serving in our children's ministry and what that would be like, feel free to ask myself or any other of the volunteers you see serving here at Calvary.
- C. And with that, let's go ahead and turn our attention to our time of study this morning. We've been making our way through the gospel of John and I'd like to finish off chapter 7 this morning, which I hope we will be able to do while still saving us some time for communion at the close of our service.
1. We started off our study of John 7 two weeks ago by looking at vs. 1-13 and the "Tension at the Temple", as Jews from all over were headed to Jerusalem for the annual Feast of Tabernacles. Many who were gathered were looking for Jesus and talking about Jesus, but Jesus didn't immediately reveal Himself at the beginning of the Feast.
 2. Last week we looked at vs. 14-36 and the "Fallacies at the Feast". It was about the middle of the feast and Jesus finally decided to step forth and reveal Himself to the masses. He entered the temple and began teaching the people.
 - a. And as He taught many came to all sorts of false conclusions, erroneous beliefs, and bought into fallacies that led the people away from Christ.
 - b. Jesus addressed the multitudes and corrected a great number of these fallacies and false conclusions the people were coming to.
 - c. As He responded to the masses, we noted how much of His angst and correction was directed towards the religious leaders and their rejection of Him and their plots to kill Him.
 3. Our text this morning is going to pick up from where we left off last week, beginning in verse 37 and going to the end of the chapter in vs. 53. The title of our study today is going to be "**Indignation at the Invitation**". Jesus is going to rise up and address the crowd once more and boldly declare an open invitation to come to Him, which, as you can imagine, isn't going to be so well received by everyone there at the temple, especially the religious authorities trying to kill Him.

4. Hopefully you all are there in John 7 by now, as is our custom here at Calvary, I'd like to invite all who are able to rise to their feet in honor of God and His Holy Word.
5. I'm going to read through the entirety of our text from my Bible. I'll be reading from the NKJV of the Bible. If you are reading from a different translation, just do your best to follow along in your Bible as I read from mine. John continues his account of what took place there in Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles with the following in vs. 37... (R & P)

II. Outline;

- A. Out text this morning highlights what took place on the final day of the Feast of Tabernacles there at the temple in Jerusalem.
- B. As we make our way through the text, we're going to divide it up into three simple sections.
 1. The first section will be John 7 vs. 37-39 dealing with "The Declaration of Christ", as Jesus boldly invites people to come to Him.
 2. Our second section will be vs. 40-43 highlighting "The Division over Christ", and the various responses of the people from the crowd.
 3. And our third and final section will reveal "The Disdain for Christ", especially coming from the religious authorities as their hatred of Christ and their disdain for Him is on full display.
- C. So, let's take a look at our first section again, verses 37-39 where we will consider "**The Declaration of Christ**" and the significance of it. Read with me again vs. 37-39.

III. John 7:37-39; "The Declaration of Christ"

- A. In the opening of verse 37 we are told that it was on the last day, that great day of the feast, where Jesus stood up and cried out to the people again, just as He had done a few days earlier during the middle of the feast.
 1. Now, there is a lot of debate and uncertainty regarding whether or not this was the seventh day of the feast or the eighth day.
 - a. Leviticus describes the Feast of Tabernacles in chapter 23 stating, "For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. It is a sacred assembly, and you shall do not customary work on it." (**Lev. 23:36**)
 - b. So the actual Feast of Tabernacles was observed for seven days. For seven days the children of Israel would gather in the city of Jerusalem and dwell in make shift booths to remind themselves of how they lived during the 40 years in the desert.
 - c. During the seven days of the feast they would bring offerings to the temple and rejoice and recount the faithfulness of God during those 40 years they wandered through the desert without a place to call their own.

- d. Then on the 8th day, there was to be a holy convocation; like a Sabbath, a day of rest where no customary work would be done.
- e. When John writes that it was the last day of the feast, we don't know whether or not he is talking about the 7th day or the 8th day.
2. You may wonder, what's the difference? Or what significance, if any, is there if it was the seventh or the eighth day?
3. Well, we know from the Jewish oral tradition that there was a significant difference.
 - a. According to the Mishnah, which is the first major written account of the Jewish oral tradition, there had developed a tradition a few hundred years prior to Jesus coming that involved a special water libation; an offering of water from a golden pitcher to symbolize God's provision of water during their time in the desert.
 - b. The priest would travel down to the Pool of Siloam and gather water into this golden pitcher and then proceed to march up to the temple while all the people around him sang the Hallel psalms from Psalm 113-118 commemorating God's work during the Exodus.
 - c. When the priest reached the temple grounds he would enter in through the "water gate" and proceed up to the altar. And there before the altar he would pour out this libation of water into a basin that had a spout that emptied the water onto the rocks of the temple.
 - d. This ceremony was meant to symbolize God's provision of water while they were in the desert. If you are familiar with your Old Testament scriptures you may recall that on two different occasions God provided water from a rock to satisfy the thirst of His people.
 - i. Once, early on at the onset of their journey, the children of Israel came and complained to Moses about not having anything to drink. God instructed Moses to take his staff and strike a rock in Horeb and that when he did so, water would come forth from the rock so the people could drink. (**Ex. 17:6**)
 - Moses did so and all the children of Israel were able to drink from the water of the rock.
 - ii. This happened a second time as well, towards the end of their 40 year journey when they were encamped in a place called Kadesh, the children of Israel once again came and complained to Moses about how there was no water to drink, how they were going to die in that place for lack of water.
 - iii. And again, God gave Moses a plan for how to provide the children of Israel with water from a rock. But this time, instead of striking the rock, Moses would only have to speak to the rock and the rock would yield its water, thus providing the much needed water for the children of Israel. (**Num. 20:8**)

- iv. Unfortunately, Moses ended up striking the rock twice in front of all the people and misrepresented the Lord and ended up being punished because of it, being forbidden from entering the Promised Land with the rest of the children of Israel.
- v. But despite Moses' failure to follow God's command to speak to the rock, God still provided an abundance of water from the rock there in Kadesh; enough for all the children of Israel and their animals to drink to satisfaction. (**Num. 20:11**)
- e. So, this ceremony where they would pour out the water from the golden pitcher occurred on each of the seven days of the feast. But it didn't occur on the 8th day according to tradition.
- 4. So the question is whether Jesus stood up and said what He said on the seventh day as they poured out the water, or if He said it on the 8th day when there was an absence of water.
- B. While we can't say definitively one way or the other, understanding the rituals involved in the Feast of Tabernacles gives us a deeper understanding to the context and circumstances of Jesus' declaration here.
 - 1. The people have been celebrating and commemorating God's provision of water for the last seven days. And Jesus stands up in the midst of the crowd and boldly cries out "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."
 - 2. What the people didn't understand is that the water from the rock that they were celebrating and commemorating was meant to be a picture and representation of Christ.
 - a. Paul the apostle tells us this in 1 Corinthians where he writes about how the Jewish people, "all ate the same spiritual food [referring to the manna from heaven] and how all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ." (**1 Co. 10:4**)
 - 3. And so, we see here the significance of Jesus' declaration here. These people are looking back upon God's faithful provision of water from a rock which was a picture of Jesus Christ. And Jesus cries out to the people, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink."
 - a. "You've been celebrating and commemorating God's provision of water from a rock. I am the Rock! I am the One who can satisfy your thirst. It's all pointing to Me."
- C. And let's look at this invitation Jesus gives and note the important details.
 - 1. First and foremost, the invitation is to anyone; to any man, any woman, any child.
 - a. It doesn't matter what you've done, how bad you've blown it, or how far you think you are from God. Jesus's bold declaration is made to any of us and all of us.
 - b. Whether you've grown up in the church or in religion, or whether you've been living for this world and all that it has to offer. It doesn't matter who you are, the invitation is to anyone.
- 2. Anyone who thirsts. Inside each of us is a thirst for meaning and purpose in life that comes from God and can only be satisfied by God.
 - a. David describes this thirst in the book of Psalms. In Psalm 42 he writes, "As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirst for God, for the living God. (**Ps. 42:1-2a**)"
 - b. In Psalm 63 he sings, "O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water." (**Ps. 63:1**)
 - c. The sons of Korah write about it in Psalm 84 stating, "My soul longs, yes, even faints For the courts of the Lord: My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God." (**Ps. 84:2**)
 - d. Ecclesiastes describes how God has placed eternity in the hearts of mankind. Deep down inside all of us is a longing for eternity, a longing for meaning and purpose, for satisfaction and fulfillment that goes even beyond the grave. (**Ecc. 3:11b**)
 - e. But the problem is that many have tried to satisfy that longing that only God can satisfy with the things of this world. They think they can find fulfillment and satisfaction, meaning and purpose in success and material gain, in relationships with others. People turn to drugs and alcohol and anything this world has to offer looking for that fulfillment, only to be left unsatisfied and thirsting for more.
 - f. The prophet Jeremiah described humanity's problem perfectly when he described how the children of Israel, God's people had committed two evils: they had forsaken God, the fountain of living waters, and they had hewn for themselves cisterns—[which were] broken cisterns that can hold no water. (**Jer. 2:13**)
 - g. No matter how much we try to fill up that cistern, it will never be filled because there is a great big hole in it. It can't be satisfied because it's broken; it's faulty; it won't ever meet the longing inside each of us.
 - h. We have a thirst within each of us that can only be satisfied by God.
- 3. Jesus said "if anyone thirsts, let him come to ME..."
 - a. Jesus isn't inviting people to a religion. He isn't inviting them to rules, and rituals and regulations. He is inviting them to *Himself*.
 - b. "Come to Me!" Not come to the church, come to Calvary Chapel, come to Bible Study, come to home fellowship, come to this group or that program. No, He doesn't say any of that. He says come to ME.
 - c. Christianity isn't about coming to church. It's about coming to Jesus. It is so important that we realize our need is to come to Him. To meet with the Son of God and commune with Him.

- d. He will meet our need. He will satisfy the thirsty soul; not church, not fellowship, not relationships, not friendships. We need Jesus. It's all about Him. It's all about coming to Jesus!
 - e. What an incredible invitation.
4. He says come to Me and drink. The verb drink is written in the present tense in the imperative mood. It speaks of a command to continually come and drink. It isn't just a one-time sip, or a single big guzzle. It is a constant drinking from the Lord.
- a. It's not a constant drinking seeking to quench our thirst. It's more of a satisfying drink that you just can't get enough of. You taste and see that the Lord is good and you keep wanting to come back and drink more and more because you've discovered that He is the only thing that can fill your thirsty soul.
5. Jesus invites people to come to Him, to drink and states He who believes in Me, again the verb believe is written in the present tense, symbolizing not just a one-time statement of faith, but a continual faith in God, a life the continues to believe in and trust in God from day to day and season to season.
6. Jesus says that out of his heart will flow rivers of living water, just as described throughout the Scriptures. Jesus isn't quoting from one specific verse here, but a summary of what the Bible describes throughout the pages of Scripture.
- a. Isaiah 12:3 speaks about drawing water from the wells of salvation. **(Isa. 12:3)**
 - b. Isaiah 44 describes how God will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; [He says] I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring;" **(Isa. 44:3)**
 - c. Isaiah 58 describes how the Lord will satisfy our souls in drought and strengthen our bones and that we will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail." **(Isa. 58:11)**
 - d. Isaiah 53 declares, "Ho, Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat." **(Isa. 55:1a)**
 - e. Jesus told the woman at the well back in John chapter 4 to drink of the water that He offers and that whoever drinks of the water that He gives will never thirst again. He said, "But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." **(Jn. 4:14)**
 - f. So, we see the Bible describing this life of satisfaction in Him like a spring of water, like rivers of water flowing out from a well, from a spring or from a fountain.
7. The description here in John 7 depicts not just a filling, but an overflowing. He said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.

- a. The idea being that God will not only fill and satisfy all of your need, but He will overflow your life and use your life to be a conduit of His water to others.
 - b. Our lives will be like rivers flowing with this soul satisfying water from the Lord. It will fill us, and then pour out of us, impacting those around us as we act as conduits of God's satisfying provision.
- D. Now, John gives a commentary note here in verse 39, telling us that Jesus spoke this specifically about the Holy Spirit whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified.
- 1. The means by which this river comes into us and flows out of us is through the Holy Spirit.
 - 2. You see, when someone comes to faith in Christ they are baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ. This is what happened when we were saved. We probably didn't know it or understand it. All we knew was that we were a sinner in need of a savior when we prayed to ask God to save us from our sins and receive us into His family. But at that time, we were baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ. And we are one with the Lord. The Spirit of God came and took residence within us.
- a. Galatians 4 speaks about how God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts. **[Gal 4:6]**
 - b. 1 Corinthians describes how our bodies have become temples of God because of the Spirit that dwells within us. **(1 Co. 3:16; 6:19)**
 - c. If you are a believer this morning, then the Spirit of God dwells inside of you. But that isn't what Jesus is describing here. He is describing something else, something that happened after Jesus was glorified, after His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension to heaven where He was greeted with glory in the presence of God the Father.
 - d. This is speaking of Pentecost and the Holy Spirit coming upon people and empowering them as witnesses of Christ to the world around them.
 - e. You see, the disciples received the Holy Spirit in John 20:21 after Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, but prior to His ascension.
 - f. Jesus came and stood in the midst of His disciples as they gathered behind closed doors in fear of the Jews and He declared peace to them and sent them out just as the Father had sent Him. Verse 21 tells us that "when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'" **(Jn. 20:21)**
 - g. The disciples received the Holy Spirit in John 20, but then Jesus told His disciples to tarry in Jerusalem, to wait there for the Promise of the Father, "which", He said, "you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." **(Acts 1:4-5)**

- i. So, they had received the Holy Spirit already, but God described a different scenario where they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Where the Holy Spirit would come upon them, overflow them if you will, and empower them.
 - h. Jesus said, “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (**Acts 1:8**)
 - i. And this of course was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost when the Spirit of God fell upon the disciples empowering them as witnesses to all who were there at the temple.
 - j. And some 3,000 people got saved that day as the disciples ministered to the people, being not just filled with the Holy Spirit but empowered by Him, where the Spirit of God came upon them and ministered and flowed through them, like rivers of living water flowing out of their hearts as described here in John chapter 7.
3. So Jesus’ bold declaration is an invitation to come to Him and to receive the Holy Spirit and to be empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- a. That God would not just fill you, but overflow you and work through you, to minister to those around you.
 - b. It isn’t just a filling He is offering, it is a filling and then some; an overflowing of the Spirit coming out of us impacting the world around us. He’s offering a life filled with and empowered by the Holy Spirit.
 - c. It is an invitation to salvation; an invitation to have God come and dwell in you and for Him to flow through you.
4. And I think the question we have to ask ourselves is whether or not we’ve taken Him up on His offer. What does our life look like?
- a. Is our life a demonstration of the outpouring of God’s Holy Spirit? If you are saved this morning, you have the Holy Spirit in you, but is He overflowing you and working through you?
 - b. Are you a channel or conduit of God’s Spirit, or simply a container, a reservoir holding the Spirit, but not experiencing the overflowing power of God’s Spirit upon your life?
 - c. The invitation Christ offers is for **the thirsty to become channels** of God’s Holy Spirit, not just containers.
 - d. May our lives be a reflection of what Jesus offers for us. May we be those who take Jesus up on His offer and come to Him and receive the overflowing power of God’s Holy Spirit upon our lives.
 - e. That we would walk in the Spirit and demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit, and experience the power of the Spirit working through us.

E. Back to our text, let’s move on to the next section dealing with “**The Division over Christ**” in vs. 40-43.

IV. John 7:40-43; “The Division over Christ”

- A. Upon hearing Jesus’ bold declaration there on the final day of the feast, many people responded to Jesus. And the responses were all over, causing great division amongst the people
1. Some thought that Jesus was the Prophet.
 - a. This is a reference to a prophecy spoken by Moses all the way back in Deuteronomy 18. In Dt. 18:15 we read, “The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear,” (**Dt. 18:15**)
 - b. The Lord said to Moses, “I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.” (**Dt. 18:18**)
 - c. When some of the people said, “Truly this is the Prophet”, this is who they were referring to.
 2. Some thought that Jesus was the Christ.
 - a. The word Christ in English is the word “christos” in Greek and it simply means “anointed One”. It’s the same as the Hebrew word [maw-shee-akh] or as we say in English “messiah”. All these words mean the same thing; they simply mean anointed One.
 - b. Some people came to the conclusion that He wasn’t the Prophet but the Messiah, the anointed One.
 - c. Many during that day believed that the Messiah would be preceded by Elijah the prophet and accompanied by the Prophet like Moses. Elijah would come prepare the way, the Messiah would be more the military leader, and the Prophet would be the spiritual leader.
 - d. That’s why during John the Baptist’s ministry the people came to Him and asked who he was. John said he was not the Christ and so they asked “what then? Are you Elijah?” and he said no. Then they asked, “Are you the Prophet?” and he answered no again. (**Jn. 1:21**)
 - e. The people were looking for and expecting Elijah, the Prophet, and the Messiah to be three different people. Elijah would be the preacher calling people to repentance preparing the way. The Prophet would come and speak forth God’s Word boldly and perhaps perform some of the miracles Moses performed and the Messiah, the Christ would come and be the military leader that would deliver them from bondage and rule over them.
 3. Some questioned whether the Christ would come out of Galilee.
 - a. Galilee was a despised place. A place filled with and overrun with Gentiles. It was the proverbial “other side of the tracks” sort of place for most first century Jews, and especially for those from Jerusalem.
 - b. That is why Nathanael responded the way he did when Philip said “we have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” Nathanael responded, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” (**Jn. 1:46a**)

- c. Nazareth was a city from the region of Galilee, and nothing good came out of that region was the view of some.
- 4. Some spoke of the Scriptures and how they said the Christ would come from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem.
 - a. This was true. God had promised to David that from His seed would come One to rule upon his throne forever.
 - b. 2 Samuel 7 reads, "When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be His Father, and He shall be My Son." (2 Sam. 7:12-14a)
 - c. And it was also true that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem. Micah 5:2 declares, "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting." (Mic. 5:2)
- 5. And so there arose a great division amongst the crowd, each clinging to their own conclusions about Jesus, thinking that they were right, and the others were wrong.
- B. But here is the thing that they all missed. They all had different pieces of the same puzzle. And all they had to do was put them all together and they would realize that everything came together in Jesus.
 - 1. Jesus is the Prophet to come. Peter will boldly make this claim later in the book of Acts chapter 3. Where he quotes from Deuteronomy 18 in his preaching to the people about Jesus. [Acts 3:22]
 - 2. Jesus is the Christ, the anointed One of God. Sent by the Father.
 - 3. Jesus is from the region of Galilee. But what the people failed to realize is that is exactly where God said the Messiah would come from.
 - a. In Isaiah chapter 9 we read, "Nevertheless the gloom will not be upon her who is distressed, As when at first he lightly esteemed the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, And afterward more heavily oppressed her, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, IN Galilee of the Gentiles. The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined." (Isa. 9:1-2)
 - b. That light that Isaiah prophesied about shining in Galilee of the Gentiles was none other than the Messiah. We know this for just a few verses later in chapter 9 Isaiah identifies the light as a child born to us stating, "For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isa. 9:6)

- c. We read that verse nearly every Christmas season because we know it was fulfilled by Jesus Christ.
- d. And so, the people got it wrong. They missed this prophecy in Isaiah that clearly stated the Messiah would shine as a light in Galilee.
- 4. Jesus was associated with Nazareth of the Galilee, but we know that He was actually born in the little town of Bethlehem.
 - a. Both Matthew and Luke's gospel describe how Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Again, we read these accounts nearly every Christmas.
- 5. And Jesus was in fact from the line of David.
 - a. Mary, his biological mother came from the line of David through his son Nathan according to Luke chapter 3. [Lk. 3:31]
 - b. While Joseph, Jesus' adoptive father, also came from the line of David. Though Joseph wasn't Jesus biological father, he still would meet the standard should anyone have issue. Joseph was from the line of David through Solomon according to Matthew ch. 1. [Mt. 1:6]
- 6. So, the people had the pieces, they just didn't put them all together to figure out that the person standing before them inviting them to come to Him, **was indeed their Messiah.**
 - a. They missed it because they clung only to certain aspects without considering how other pieces may fit together to bring a fuller, deeper picture of who their Messiah was.
 - b. All the information they had pointed to Jesus, but the people simply failed to put it all together. And because they failed to see how it all fit together, it created division amongst the people.
 - c. As I was studying, I felt like the Spirit was impressing upon my heart how many of these same things still happen today within God's church. People want to hold to certain truths without being willing to see how they fit together with the rest of the pieces.
 - i. People will champion one Biblical truth while minimizing another, or ignoring another, or even denying the other. And what results? Division; the body of Christ being divided.
 - ii. People fail to realize that with so many of God's doctrines it's not an "either/or", but a "both/and" type of thing.
 - iii. People are divided over God's sovereignty and man's responsibility. Some champion one side and ignore or deny the other side. But it isn't an "either/or" situation. Both are true.
 - iv. But instead of looking at the totality of Scripture and holding to a balanced viewpoint, people will divide from and fight with their fellow brothers and sisters in Christ over things that they really shouldn't be divided over. It's sad, but as we see here in our text this morning, it isn't new.

- v. These people had the right info, they just couldn't bring it all together to see their Messiah and it ended up dividing the crowd.

C. Let's look at our final section real quick dealing with "**The Disdain for Christ**" from the religious authorities. Read with me vs. 44-53.

V. John 7:44-53; "The Disdain for Christ"

A. In these verses we hear the disdain and hatred of the religious leaders; the Pharisees and chief priests against Christ and any who would seemingly support Him or align with Him.

1. To the officers who came back empty handed because they were captivated by His words they accused them of being deceived; led astray and misguided.
 - a. They saw themselves as the sole purveyors of truth and challenged the officers with the thought that none of the rulers and none of the Pharisees believed in Him, and so they were foolish to have been swayed by Jesus.
2. To the crowd of people, they accused them of being ignorant. Without knowledge of the Law. And claimed they were accursed.
3. To Nicodemus, one of their own who tried to hold them to the standard of the Law they so boastfully claimed knowledge of, they accused him of rebellion and being a traitor. Of aligning himself with those of the Galileans who, as I mentioned before, were despised by the Jewish elite, seeing them as being defiled by Gentile influences.
 - a. They even challenged Nicodemus to search the Scriptures and see that no prophet had ever arisen out of Galilee
 - b. Their hatred has completely consumed them and blinded them to the truth. For one of their most famous prophets of all time, the prophet Jonah was from Gath Hepher, a town of the tribe of Zebulun in the region of Galilee. **(2 Kg. 14:25b)**
 - c. Not to mention the Messianic prophecy we already noted about how the Messiah would come as a light from Galilee.

B. These religious elite were so prideful and corrupted by their longing for power that they were filled with rage and contempt for anyone who would even suggest something contrary to their opinion or align themselves with Christ.

1. They were blinded by their pride and ridiculed any who thought differently from them.
2. Because of their pride and disdain for Christ, their unwillingness to put the pieces together themselves, they completely **missed their Messiah** who was standing right in front of them inviting them to come to Him.
3. Pride is still one of the greatest barriers to recognizing Jesus and surrendering your life to Him. People don't want to admit that they are wrong, they don't want to admit and confess their sins, they don't want

to relinquish control of their life because they don't want to yield to anyone else. They are plagued by pride and blinded to the truth.

C. This is what happened to the religious authorities. They were blinded by their pride and indignation towards Christ and missed out on the greatest invitation ever given.

1. To come to Christ and know Him, to have communion and fellowship with their Messiah, God's very own Son.
2. To have God's Spirit not just fill them, but overflow them and move through them and from them. They missed it all because of pride.
3. And the question I think we all ought to ponder ourselves is what keeps us from receiving this invitation as well. The invitation is for us all. Not just to come to Christ for salvation and have His Spirit inside of us, but to have His Spirit actively flowing through us like rivers of living water to the world around us.
4. Jesus' offer still stands today. For any who thirst for Him, He says "*Come to Me. Believe upon Me.*" And He promises His Spirit not just filling us, but overflowing us and flowing through us.
5. That is my heart for us all. That we would have the Spirit of God not just in us, but flowing from us.

VI. Conclusion / Communion;

A. At this time, we're going to come to the table to observe the Lord's Supper. The worship team is going to come up and the ushers are going to begin to distribute the communion elements, and here is what I would like for us to do.

1. I'd like us all to consider the invitation Jesus has given us. To come to Him, to be filled with and overflowed with God's Holy Spirit.
2. I would ask that during this time of communion that you would remember what Christ has done for you, but also keep in mind what Christ wants for you. He wants you to have this kind of relationship with Him. To have His Spirit filling you and flowing from you.
3. Confess any sins, any hindrances that have kept you from full surrender to Him. Ask Him for His grace and forgiveness and ask Him to fill you with His Spirit to the point of overflowing. Confess your desire to respond to His invitation and to live the kind of life He desires for you.
4. And when you are ready, go ahead and partake of the communion elements, remembering His broken body and His shed blood for you.
5. Because of a lack of time, I won't come back up and read from the Scriptures like I normally would do. I'm going to close in prayer and ask God's continued presence and blessings upon our time of communion and then the worship team will close out our time of communion and conclude our service with one final song of worship. Let's pray.