

GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN

07



CHRYSOSTOM

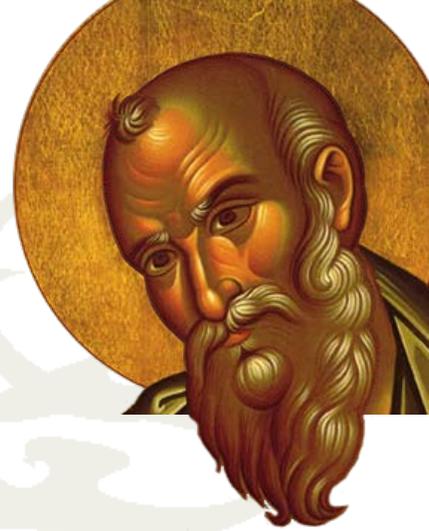
Read St. John Chrysostom's homilies on John chapter 7.



PRACTICE QUIZ

Take a quiz to test your knowledge of John chapter 7.

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Chapter seven begins with Jesus spending time in Galilee to avoid the people who wanted to kill Him in Judea (7:1). His brothers—which probably mean either His stepbrothers or cousins—did not believe in Jesus and His ministry, and therefore sarcastically encouraged Him to go to Judea to demonstrate His power during the Feast of Tabernacles (a Fall festival commemorating the Israelites 40-year wandering in the Sinai wilderness) (7:2-5). Jesus gently replied that He could not go because His time had not yet come (7:6, 8); later, however, He quietly attended the Feast and overheard the different opinions people had of Him (7:10-13).

Jesus later spoke to the people in the Temple, amazing them with His teaching despite not having been trained as a rabbi (7:14). This ability came, He replied, because He taught the doctrine of God (7:16-18); it is for this reason—as well as the healing He performed on the Sabbath (5:16)—that people sought to kill Him (7:19, 21-24).

Christ's enemies were appalled

that He was allowed to speak in the Temple, wondering if the rulers believed that He was the Christ (7:25-26). He can't be, they told themselves, because they thought Jesus was merely a man from Nazareth (7:27). Jesus replied that they knew His background in Nazareth, but they did not know the God Who sent Him (7:28-29). Blessed Theophylact notes that Christ makes the significance of this exchange clear in verse 29 by revealing His two natures: "By the words 'I am from Him' (His divine nature); and by the words 'He hath sent Me' (His human nature)."

This exchange fired up Jesus' enemies to arrest Him on the spot, but they couldn't because—as He said to His brothers—Jesus' time to sacrifice Himself had not yet arrived (7:30). He went on to prophesy His death, Resurrection and Ascension (7:33-34), which the Pharisees mistakenly thought might instead mean He intended to travel around the Mediterranean teaching the Greeks (7:35-36).

This, however, was not His only prophecy: He also prophesied the coming of the Holy Spirit as "living water" (7:38-39). St. Irenaeus puts it clearly, "The Spirit is in us all, and He is the living water that the Lord supplies to those who rightly believe in Him and love Him." St. Cyprian of Carthage sees in the references to water—drinking to satisfy thirst and living water—a significant allusion to Holy Baptism:

Christ reminds of what was previously foretold by the prophet and says, 'If anyone thirst, let him come and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture says, rivers from his belly shall flow of

living water' (Isaiah 43:18-21). As that it might be the more clear that the Lord is there speaking not of the cup (i.e., the Eucharistic chalice) but of baptism, Scripture has added, 'But this He said of the Spirit that those who believed in Him were to receive'...Let no one be troubled because when divine Scripture speaks of baptism it says that we thirst and drink, since the Lord also says this in the Gospel.

The chapter ends with another debate among the people as to the true identity of Jesus. Some saw His past as a native from the Galilee as proof that He was the Messiah (7:41-42), while the Pharisees—ignoring the words of St. Nicodemus (7:50-51)—denied that anyone from the Galilee could be the Messiah (7:52).



LIFE TIP

St. Gregory the Great explains what it means to have living water flow from you: "When sacred preaching flows from the soul of the faithful, rivers of living water, as it were, run down from the bellies of believers. For what are the insides of the belly but the inner part of the mind; in other words, a right intention, a holy desire, humility toward God and mercy toward your fellow human beings."