

# John 7 (Part 2) :25–52 • "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me"

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John Chapter seven. You guys remember we talked— we started this last week; the Feast of Tabernacles. This whole chapter is about the Feast of Tabernacles, and I couldn't tackle it all in the first week. So we're going to pick up the rest of it here this morning. We're starting in verse 25; John 7:25. So if you're there, follow along with me as I read. It says,

<sup>25</sup> *"Some of the people of Jerusalem therefore said, 'Is not this the Man Whom they seek to kill?' <sup>26</sup> And here He is, speaking openly, and they say nothing to Him! Can it be that the authorities really know that He is the Christ? <sup>27</sup> But we know where this Man comes from, and when the Christ appears, no one will know where He comes from.'* <sup>28</sup> *So Jesus proclaimed, as He taught in the Temple, 'You know Me, and you know where I come from. But I have not come of My own accord. He who sent Me is true, and Him you do not know. <sup>29</sup> I know Him, for I come from Him, and He sent Me.'* <sup>30</sup> *So they were seeking to arrest Him, but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. <sup>31</sup> Yet many of the people believed in Him. They said, 'When the Christ appears, will He do more signs than this Man has done?'"*

<sup>32</sup> *"The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about Him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest Him. <sup>33</sup> Jesus then said, 'I will be with you a little longer, and then I am going to Him who sent Me. <sup>34</sup> You will seek Me and you will not find Me. Where I am you cannot come.'* <sup>35</sup> *The Jews said to one another, 'Where does this Man intend to go that we will not find Him? Does He intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? <sup>36</sup> What does He mean by saying, 'You will seek Me and you will not find Me,' and, 'Where I am you cannot come?'"*

<sup>37</sup> *"On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, 'If anyone thirsts, let Him come to me and drink. <sup>38</sup> Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' <sup>39</sup> Now this He said about the Spirit, Whom those who believed in Him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."*

<sup>40</sup> *"When they heard these words, some of the people said, 'This really is the Prophet.' <sup>41</sup> Others said, 'This is the Christ.' But some said, 'Is the Christ to*

come from Galilee? <sup>42</sup> Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the offspring of David, and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David was?' <sup>43</sup> So there was a division among the people over Him. <sup>44</sup> Some of them wanted to arrest Him, but no one laid hands on Him."

<sup>45</sup> "The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, 'Why did you not bring Him?' <sup>46</sup> The officers answered, 'No one ever spoke like this Man!' <sup>47</sup> The Pharisees answered them, 'Have you also been deceived? <sup>48</sup> Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in Him? <sup>49</sup> But this crowd that does not know the Law is accursed.' <sup>50</sup> Nicodemus, who had gone to Him before, and who was one of them, said to them, <sup>51</sup> 'Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?' <sup>52</sup> They replied, 'Are you from Galilee too? Search and see that no prophet arises from Galilee.'"

Stop there. Let's pray.

Father, open our hearts. Jesus, we come to You because You are the Word of God, the Living Word of God, and we need to hear from You. We need Your voice. We need You to speak. We need You to teach.

We need Your understanding LORD. We humble ourselves and we ask You to instruct us LORD, and we thank You that You are more than willing to do that. We just want to open our hearts to You. We ask all this in Jesus' Name, amen.

Well, you might have noticed as we're reading through these verses, as we're kind of finishing out the rest of this chapter, that there's a point of contention that is swirling around, pretty much throughout this entire chapter, and that is the issue of where Jesus was from.

Did you catch that? I mean, it was several, several times. Jesus was, of course, raised in Nazareth of Galilee. And of course we know that. And the people knew that there was nothing prophetically that said that any prophet would arise out of the region of Galilee, let alone the Messiah, you know, Himself.

So there was a lot of conversation going on about this very thing. If you look with me again in verse 27; this is where the first comment appears. It's this statement where the people are talking and they say, "But you know, *We know where this Man comes from. But when the Christ, you know, comes— when He appears, nobody's going to know where He comes from.*"

Now this is really— this is, this was a belief by some people; this idea that when the Messiah came, He would appear suddenly and mysteriously, and nobody

would know where He came from. He would just kind of like, boom, be there. And actually, this belief comes from a misinterpretation of a passage in the book of Malachi. Let me show it to you on the screen. Goes like this.

**Malachi 3:1 (ESV)**

*“Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple...”*

“Behold, I send My messenger,” and of course, that's talking about John the Baptist, “and he will prepare the way before Me.” And then this, here's the statement, “and the LORD whom you seek will suddenly come to His Temple.” Well you know, it says that the LORD's going to suddenly come to the Temple, but that—the people assume that that meant, “We'll never know. We won't know where He comes from. He's just going to suddenly appear and it's going to be mysterious and miraculous.” And they probably thought He was going to beam in, you know, or something like that.

I really believe that this is what was behind Satan's temptation of Jesus to leap off the top of the highest point of the Temple and to float gently to the ground. Wouldn't that have just played into this whole idea? You know, “Here He is!” You know, and of course what Satan was tempting Jesus with was being embraced and accepted by the people and that sort of thing. But anyway. Obviously some of the rabbis, some of the teachers got ahold of this passage from Malachi and concocted this idea of, you know, the Messiah showing up in that sort of a fashion. Anyway.

The next comment comes in verse 40, or at least starting in verse 40. Look with me there. It says, “When they heard these words, some of the people said, ‘This really is the Prophet. Others said, this is the Christ.’” And they, of course, they thought those were two different people.

The prophet was predicted by Moses. The Christ was predicted by many different Biblical authors in the Old Testament; but they're the same Person. They thought they were two different people, but it goes on to say, “Some said, ‘Is the Christ to come from Galilee?’” And then they even kind of asked the question you know, “Didn't the Scripture tell us that the Christ is going to be the offspring of David? He's going to come “from Bethlehem,” and so forth, “the village where David was?” And it says here in verse 43 that for that reason, there was a lot of division among the people concerning this whole thing.

And then finally in verse 50; skip down to verse 50. We have this statement with Nicodemus speaking to the Sanhedrin, knowing of course, that they wanted to arrest Him (Jesus) and so forth. He (Nicodemus) asked the question you know, “Really, *does our law really judge a man without even giving him a chance to speak for himself* and hear about what's going on?” and so forth. And look at their response: “*Are you from Galilee too?*”

You can see that that was a slur— to say that somebody was from Galilee. They didn't think very highly of the Galileans, and so they even said to him (Nicodemus), “*Search and see that no prophet arises from Galilee.*” And so that was their whole thing. That was one of their big deals, you know.

Of course they were looking for any justification they could get to hate Jesus. But you can see that this whole issue of where Jesus was from was this major bone of contention. And well you know, the fact of the matter is, God had told them where the Messiah would originate from. And for that you know, we find the answer in Micah. Let me show you on the screen.

**Micah 5:2 (ESV)**

*But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.*

Micah says from chapter five, but you guys know this passage; probably hear it every Christmas, “*But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah. From you shall come forth for Me, One Who is to be Ruler in Israel, Whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.*”

You'll remember this is the passage that the religious leaders and priests quoted to Herod when he asked where the Messiah was to be born; they quoted this passage. So it was pretty clear Jesus was the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem, and we know that Jesus was in fact born in Bethlehem. Look at Luke, chapter two.

**Luke 2:1, 3-7 (ESV)**

*In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son...*

<sup>1</sup> “In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.” That means you know, given— take part in a census,  
<sup>3</sup> “and all went to be registered each to his own town. <sup>4</sup> And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem.”

And then it explains why he traveled there, “...because he was of the house and lineage of David. And he went there <sup>5</sup>to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.” And then look at this next line, <sup>6</sup> “And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth, <sup>7</sup> and she gave birth to her firstborn Son right there in Bethlehem.” There you go. So Jesus was born in Bethlehem, just as the prophecies foretold and it all worked out very great, and yet the people believed He was from Galilee.

Well, of course they— you know, it is probably a somewhat understandable misunderstanding. Is that a proper phrase? An understandable misunderstanding. Given the fact that He was born in Bethlehem, but He probably lived there for a couple of years or so before they then ran off to Egypt you know, to escape Herod's slaughter of the children.

And then when they came back into the land, they made their way up, up to Galilee where He was essentially raised. But the— all of this stuff, you know, that we've just looked at here, kind of raises a question for us because we— you know, knowing that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, we kind of want to know why did God allow Jesus then to be raised in Galilee? I mean, why?

Wouldn't it have cleared up so much confusion if He just— if God would've just made the arrangement that He could not only be born in Bethlehem, but live in Bethlehem, up to the point of His public ministry? And then nobody would've questioned it. They would've said, “Well you know, He is from Bethlehem after all.” But that isn't the way God did it, is it?

And so we're all kinda left to wonder. You know, it's almost like God wanted to kind of bring a little confusion into this sort of a thing, which I don't think was the case. But we have to ask the question, “ Why? Why do that? Why Nazareth? Why Galilee?” You know?

Well, this all comes back to a point that we've raised several times over the last few months, and I've talked to you about it, and it has to do with the fact that *God wants us to press in to know the truth.*

And that's something we forget. *God wants us to press in.* He wants us to dig a little bit. The truth of God's revelation is not hidden to the point that it can't be found, but it is under the surface so that you have to search for it. Okay? And He *wants you* to search for it.

Because the lazy man can stumble over anything. But the diligent person who really wants *to know* is going to get out there, pick and shovel, and say it's worth it to dig a little bit– to find out, to know the truth. You know?

God wants you to know so much that you're willing to put in some effort to know. You know, I've shared this passage from the proverbs several times with you, but it bears repeating Proverbs chapter two.

**Proverbs 2:1-5 (ESV)**

*My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.*

I actually love this. It says, “*My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments within you,* <sup>2</sup> *making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding;* <sup>3</sup> *yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding,* <sup>4</sup> *if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures,*”

I think today's interpretation of that phrase is, “If you would look for God's truth with as much effort as you put into making money. Right? Then you'll understand.” There's a promise to this; if you search for it, *for hidden treasure, “then you will understand the fear of the LORD and you'll find the knowledge of God.”*

It's there, but God wants you to go looking for it. He wants you to put in some effort; and that's so important. This passage though, from the Proverbs, that— the Jews knew, that this was— this is in the Jewish scriptures, the Hebrew Bible. They knew that God had exhorted them, related to the truth, saying, “Go looking for it. Go dig for it. Search for it.”

And yet when it came to this issue about Jesus, nobody asked. Nobody walked up to Jesus and said, “By the way, where were You born?” Huh? Nobody thought to ask and it just blows me away. Nobody thought to ask. You know? And I have to assume that if they would've asked, Jesus wouldn't have lied about it.

He would've said, “Bethlehem.” You know? All they had to do was ask. But you know why they didn't? Because it's a whole lot easier to make assumptions. Because you see assumptions— you don't have to work for those. You have to work to get information that may not be immediately, you know noticeable, recognizable, apparent. Yeah.

Now you might be thinking, you know, “Aren't some people's assumptions just the result of them just not knowing the Word of God?” And yeah, they are. A lot of people make assumptions. I get questions all the time, and you know, it's before— you can't even answer the question without addressing the assumption.

People... I had somebody write me recently and talk about Jesus as if He was.... The question was something like, “If God created us to be sinful, why did He create Jesus sinless?” And I had to go back, and I had to address the assumptions.

Okay first of all, God didn't create us sinful. He created us innocent and perfect. And Jesus *isn't created*; He is the creator. So you see, I had to address the assumptions before we could even go on to answer the question. You know? And that is just very common. And you know— so I have a lot of grace for people that just don't know the Word. I mean, they're still growing in their understanding and they're still making assumptions.

I— you know, the problem comes when we stop learning and we just rest on our assumptions. That's the problem. We really need to keep pressing, keep— I don't care how long you've been walking with Jesus, or how long you've been reading your Bible; keep pressing in, keep wanting to know. Keep digging. There's more to be found, Guys. There's more, there's still more to be found. You know? All right.

Now if you skip down to verse 30 here in the text it says, *“So they were seeking to arrest Him, but no one laid a hand on Him because His hour had not yet come.”* And that's of course a statement speaking to you and me about the sovereignty of God and His control of the situation.

But then if you skip down to verse 37, we read this— and this is interesting because this is kind of the focus of this last half of the chapter. It says, *“On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, ‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. Whoever believes in Me,’ as the Scripture has said, ‘out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’”*

And then John gives us this commentary in verse 39, *“Now this He said about the Spirit Whom those who believed in Him were to receive. For as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”* Notice first of all, that John says that this all took place on the last and the greatest day of the Feast of Tabernacles.

But the significance of what Jesus did on the last day is highlighted frankly by understanding how the Jews celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles. And this is something that we all have to kind of get historically from the Jews because it's not mentioned in the Bible. Remember now, the Feast of Tabernacles was a total of eight days of Sabbaths on each end and celebration, feasting in the days in between.

But we know from Jewish history that they would perform this ritual every day except the last day: they would go and get water in a golden pitcher from the pool of Siloam. And they would bring it and they would pour it out on a rock next to the altar of the LORD. And this was to signify or to commemorate how God had taken care of them supernaturally during their time in the wilderness and brought forth water from a rock.

In fact, on two different occasions, kind of at the beginning of their wilderness wanderings and then again at the end, you'll remember. And that was supernatural. And you know, as much as we take water for granted— we walk up to the tap or the hose or whatever and you know, get a drink. It was not so in those days. You had to work hard many times to find water, and if you couldn't find water, you had to move on.

Because *water is life*. It is literally life-giving. You can't go very long without water. I forget exactly how many days you can go without water before you perish, but it's not that long. [2-4 days] You can go a lot longer without food, but water is so necessary to the continuation of life.



And so this was a big deal for them, you know. And so you can imagine being there for the feast, right? The Feast of Tabernacles. And every single day you come together and you watch the priest take this golden pitcher and dip it in the pool of Siloam. And they carried it, and I'm sure there was some kind of you know, ostentatious sort of you know, parade that went along with this.

And they'd make their way to this rock that signifies the rock where the water gushed forth and they'd pour the water out over the rock. And the people, you know, I don't know, I don't even know how they responded or whatever, but it was all to commemorate this whole thing.

Well on the last day of the feast, they didn't do that. They didn't pour the water. I'm not really sure why. They just didn't, probably because it was you know, a Sabbath and I don't know, maybe they thought that was working. But it was on that day that Jesus chose to speak up and to give a promise, if you will, of what He wanted to offer in the way of Life-giving water. And that's that picture of the Holy Spirit.

And so Jesus cries out on this last day, "*If anyone thirsts,*" again there's no water being poured out today, "*If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.*" And the promise you know, is that— He says, "*Whoever,*" in verse 38, "*whoever believes in Me,*" He says, "*as the Scripture has said, out of his heart, will flow rivers of living water.*"

And that's the picture. That's the picture. The rivers of Living water. And of course, as we said, John explains in verse 39 that He (Jesus) said this because "*the Spirit had not yet been given.*" Now at this point, there are some Christians who kind of scratch their head at this remark by John and say, "Really, the Spirit had not been given? That doesn't make any— I mean, I remember reading the Old Testament, the Spirit being given to people. And when David was praying his prayer of repentance after his sin with Bathsheba, did he not say to the LORD, 'Please don't take your Holy Spirit from me'? So I think the Spirit *was given* in the Old Testament."

Why is John saying that up to this point, "*the Spirit had not been given*"? Well, the reason is because that when the Holy Spirit was given in the Old Testament, the Spirit came *upon* a person to empower them. It's actually the same thing in the New Testament. When the Spirit comes to empower, He comes *upon*.

If you look in your Bible at every single instance— well first of all, in the Old Testament it's always 'upon,' but in the New Testament, every time it speaks of the Spirit *empowering* a person, it says "The Spirit came *upon*."

John is talking about the Spirit coming *in*, and those are different and very important prepositions to take note of. The Spirit had never ever come *in* to *indwell* a person up to this point, and the reason is, the vessel (Pastor points to himself – our bodies) had not yet been cleansed and Christ had not yet been glorified.

But *after* the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ and *after* the cleansing that came our way because He bore our sin on the cross, the Spirit was now free to not just come *upon* to empower, but to come *in*, to *indwell*. And when is the first time that happened? Well, we actually read about it in this very gospel account, but we have to go all the way to chapter 20 to read about it. Let's put it on the screen.

**John 20:19-22 (ESV)**

*On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."*

It says, <sup>19</sup> *"On the evening of that first day, that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.'"* This is the first time He's appeared to them as a group. It says, <sup>20</sup> *"When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord."* <sup>21</sup> *Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you.'* In other words, "Shalom."

*"As the Father has sent Me, even so I am sending you."* <sup>22</sup> *And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'* What's going on? The Spirit is coming in, to indwell for the very first time. But it's such a cool picture because this reflects back to the Old Testament to Genesis chapter two, where God creates the man out of the dust of the earth. And how does He make him a living being? He breathes into his nostrils the breath of Life.

But yet, what did Jesus tell Nicodemus? *"You must be born again."* (John 3:3-8) And so once again, this breathing needs to take place and the Holy Spirit comes within to regenerate and renew by which we are born again. This work of

the Spirit, and it's happened ever since to every person who's come to faith in Jesus Christ and said, "I need a Savior. I am a sinner and I need a Savior." The Holy Spirit is breathed upon you.

You *receive* the Holy Spirit to the degree that Paul says, "*Do you not know that you are now a temple of the Holy Spirit?*" (1 Corinthians 6:19) He comes to live within? He indwells you. What a wonderful reality that is for every Believer to know that the Holy Spirit lives in me. This is incredible! And there's, and this dynamic is just so, I mean, the implications of it are so widespread and so incredible, you know. Anyway, so this is the fir— that's what John's talking about when he said, up to this point, the Spirit had not been given.

So verse 44. He (John) says, "*Some of them wanted to arrest Him, (Jesus) but no one laid hands on Him.*" I love this. The officers, they come back empty handed, probably [with] this sheepish look on their face, and the Pharisees are like, "What are you, what's going on? Why didn't you bring Him in? What?"

And I love their answer. They said, "No one ever spoke like that guy." Think about— I want you to think about this because you know, guards around the temple were common. They probably heard a lot of rabbis and a lot of teachers of the law over the years. They heard a lot of people speak. And this was nothing new to these men, and yet when they listened to Jesus, it was— they were captivated because this was completely different. They heard things they had never heard before, and so they just— they couldn't even bring themselves to arrest Him. They kinda looked at each other and they're like, "I'm not going to take Him in." You know? I just think that is so cool.

And then in verse 47, the Pharisees, you know, they say to them, "So have you guys been deceived too? Have any of us believed in Him? Do you see any of us running after Him?" As if they're some kind of an example.... He says [the Pharisees continue], "But you guys, you're all accursed. You don't know anything about the law then because of that," and you can really hear the contempt of the religious leaders in their response.

I mean, they truly believe that if people didn't observe the Law, just the way they observed the Law, then they were in fact under a curse. And then the chapter ends with yet another repeat of that assumption by the religious leaders that Jesus was *only* from Galilee and so forth. And then that's kind of just how the chapter ends.

Now, here's what's interesting about this: the Feast of Tabernacles is the last feast of the Jewish calendar year. The next feast to come up is going to be

Passover, because that's the first feast of the Jewish calendar year, and this is going to be the last Passover for Jesus. This one that's upcoming.

I don't know if you've ever been invited to participate in a Jewish feast before. When Sue and I were living up in the Seattle area it was becoming very popular for churches to refer to themselves as Messianic. I think whether the people were Jewish or not. It was just kind of in vogue to say that, “We're a Messianic church,” and what that usually meant is that in addition to, you know being—holding to the essentials of the faith that is ours in Christ, they would participate and often observe many Jewish rituals and feasts and things like that.

And even in the last ten years, I would say, this has become somewhat popular again, and that's one of the reasons why I ask if any of you have ever been invited to participate in any kind of a Jewish feast, because they can be very cool, very cool— and very eye-opening, but they can also be something to watch out for.

There is a danger that is connected with it. I want to share with you very quickly an email that I got just this last week from a gal that I answered. It goes like this.

**QUESTION:**

I have some friends who are trying to convince me that I should be celebrating the feasts that are talked about in the Bible. My friends feel that they are just as important as keeping the ten commandments, and I'm not sure how to explain to them that it is different.

She said, “I have some friends who are trying to convince me that I should be celebrating the feasts that are talked about in the Bible. My friends feel that they are just as important as keeping the ten commandments, and I'm not sure how to explain to them that it is different.”

Now, again I hope that you're awake enough to see *all* of the errors that are being expressed to this woman in this letter; this whole idea of keeping the feasts and even keeping the Ten Commandments. You can't keep the Ten Commandments. Not— when we say keep, (Pastor uses air quotes), that means *perfectly keep*.

There's nothing wrong with the Ten Commandments. Do you guys know that The Ten Commandments are perfect? Yeah, because they're a reflection of the perfect nature of God. There's nothing wrong with the Ten Commandments.

The only thing wrong is you and me; because we're sinners and there's no way we can— and in order to “keep,” you have to keep them perfectly.

Now there are wonderful guidelines in the Ten Commandments, you know, for us to look at. In fact, many of our laws here in the United States of America and around the world for that matter, are based and predicated upon what we know to be right and wrong as it is expressed, or as those things are expressed, in the Ten Commandments.

So you know, the Ten Commandments are wonderful. But when you start hearing Christians talking about keeping the Ten Commandments.... Red Alert, okay? Because there are a lot of Believers, a lot of Christians walking around who believe that we come to faith in Jesus Christ, and we accept what He did for us on the cross. But in order to stay saved, you've got to keep the Ten Commandments. That— and it's not an unpopular belief. All right?

So here's this woman that writes to me and says she's got these friends who are not only hanging on very closely to “keeping” (Pastor makes air quotes.) the Ten Commandments, but are also wanting her and telling her you need to keep the feasts and that sort of thing. So here's my answer to her.

**ANSWER:**

My counsel is to walk cautiously from your description. It sounds like your friends are into the Hebrew Roots Movement. It starts out very innocently with people just simply wanting to know more about Hebrew history and culture. But it can quickly blossom into total legalism (law, keeping food laws, Sabbath keeping, etc.) It eventuates into a complete disconnect from the New Testament Covenant of Grace and attempts to integrate the Mosaic Covenant into daily Christian life. The Hebrew Roots Movement ignores huge parts of the New Testament in favor of an Old Covenant mindset.

“My counsel is to walk cautiously from your description. It sounds like your friends are into the Hebrew Roots Movement. It starts out very innocently with people just simply wanting to know more about Hebrew history and culture. But it can quickly blossom into total legalism (Law keeping, food laws, Sabbath keeping, etc.) It eventuates into a complete disconnect from the New Testament Covenant of Grace and attempts to integrate the Mosaic Covenant into daily Christian life. The Hebrew Roots Movement ignores *huge parts* of the New Testament in favor of an Old Covenant mindset.”

I want to reiterate right now, even given this answer, that there's nothing wrong with learning about Hebrew culture and history. It's fascinating! And if you've even gone through my Old Testament studies, I bring a lot of cultural references and historical references into those teachings to give them, you know, more insight and so forth. And on the surface when you hear about something like the Hebrew Roots Movement, which I think even started being referred to that as, in the last decade or so, it really looks good and it really attempts very much to provide that.

And it draws people in by simply saying, “You know, the Bible comes alive when we learn more about Hebrew culture and history.” And they're right; (Pastor leans forward) it does. The Hebrew Bible truly is— we gain great understanding when we understand more of their culture and history. But as I said, if you aren't careful and if the people who are leading that push aren't thoroughly anchored in the Gospel of Grace, and particularly Ephesians two, [verses] eight and nine, which says, *“It is by grace we are saved through faith and this not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, lest anyone should boast.”* If they're not completely anchored in that, this thing can go south real fast. And I've seen it happen.

I have; it's— I've seen it up close and personal. So it's just one of those things you just need to be very careful about because this simple desire to want to know more about Hebrew life and history can easily suck you into a legalistic approach to being accepted by God. So.

And that is *not* how we are accepted. We are accepted through Jesus Christ Who died on the cross and Who fulfilled the Law. You know one of the most beautiful things that Jesus said related to the Law was— He said, “I have not come to abolish the Law. I've come to fulfill it.”

And so every time you hear somebody saying, “Well you’ve got to do this; you got to do this; you...” and they're pointing to some aspect of the Law, usually.

You can ask yourself the question, “How did Jesus fulfill that?”

Because He said He came to fulfill it. And somebody tells you, “No, you’ve got to go to church on Saturday because that's the real Sabbath.” Well, they're right. Saturday is the real Sabbath. But how did Jesus fulfill the Sabbath?

And somebody says to you, “You know, you’ve got, you really should. You got to follow those food laws. Those are... God never rescinded any of that.”

You say, “Okay. Well, Jesus said He fulfilled the Law.”

How did he fulfill the food laws? “It's up to you to dig, to look into it, but He has fulfilled the Law. He said that's what He came to do.”

When you are in Christ by faith, you also walk in obedience to the Law because Christ, Who came before you, fulfilled the Law. And it's pretty cool. So somebody says to you, “Do you keep the Sabbath?”

“Oh yeah. Every single day. Every single day. Because I am in Christ who kept the Law perfectly.”

So. Let's stand together. If you need prayer this morning, we'd love to pray with you here, after the service.

Father, we thank You so much for Your Word and the freedom and the liberty that is ours in Christ, LORD, to follow you. To follow the Spirit, to be led by the Spirit. LORD, thank You so much for Your Holy Spirit who now indwells every Believer.

And through Your Spirit, LORD, we are not only regenerated, given new Life, but You are constantly speaking to us— opening our hearts, opening our minds, opening our understanding, and revealing the Person and the glory of Jesus Christ. Thank You so much, LORD God for giving Your Spirit. Thank You for filling us with hope and Life and truth.

This world is bent on taking the truth and ignoring it, pushing it aside, belittling it. And LORD, You are ever so gently and lovingly directing us into the truth that sets us free. Thank You so much. We praise You and we worship You as King of kings and LORD of lords, our soon coming Redeemer. It is in Your Name we pray, and all God's people said, amen.

God bless you.