

Day 204, John 7

by David Servant

David Servant explores the significance of Jesus' teachings on the Holy Spirit and the controversy surrounding His ministry during John 7.

Scripture: Mark 16:17, Luke 24:49, John 4:14, John 7:1, John 7:37, Acts 2:4

Topics: "The Cross", "Holy Spirit"

Description

David Servant delves into the Gospel of John, highlighting Jesus' references to His hour not yet coming, which pointed to His atoning sacrifice on the cross. Despite threats on His life, Jesus strategically attended the Feast of Booths secretly, emphasizing the timing of His crucifixion. During the feast, Jesus invited all who were spiritually thirsty to come to Him and receive living water, symbolizing the Holy Spirit. This living water represents being born of the Spirit and being filled with the Spirit, empowering believers to be Christ's witnesses.

Transcript

For a second time in John's Gospel we read of Jesus making reference to the fact that His time, or hour (as in 2:4), had not yet come (7:6, 8). He obviously didn't mean that His time hadn't come to attend the Feast of Booths, because He ultimately did attend it. Rather, He was once again speaking of the hour of His atoning sacrifice. Jesus knew that the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem "were seeking to kill Him" (7:1), but it wasn't time for Him to die, so it was prudent for Him to go to the feast secretly.

When we read the third reference in John's Gospel to Jesus' hour which "had not yet come" (7:30), it becomes even more clear that it was a reference to the time of His crucifixion. John wrote, "They were seeking therefore to seize Him; and no man laid his hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come" (7:30).

Each day during the Feast of Booths, the priest would gather water from the Pool of Siloam in Jerusalem and pour it out at the altar of the temple. It was with this ceremony as a backdrop that Jesus cried out, "If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water'" (7:37-38). This was yet another obvious universal invitation to everyone who is spiritually thirsty.

John said that the water Jesus spoke of was representative of the Holy Spirit (7:39). It would seem safe to think that the "living water," of which Jesus spoke to the woman at the well of Samaria (4:4-29), and which

He said would become "a well of water springing up to eternal life" (4:14) within whomever He gave it, also represented the Holy Spirit.

Believing this is so, some thus deduce that these two "water scriptures" illustrate a comparison between being born of the Spirit and being filled with (or baptized in) the Spirit. When a person is born again, the Holy Spirit indwells him, becoming "a well of water springing up to eternal life" (4:14). But when a believer is baptized in the Spirit, the waters of the Holy Spirit do not just reside within him, but flow from him. He is "clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49) and empowered to be Christ's witness.

Others think that the second "water scripture" is also a reference to being born again, as Jesus offered the "rivers of living water" to "anyone [who] is thirsty" and to anyone who believes in Him (7:37-38). Also, we know that the fruit of the Spirit flows from every person who is truly born again.

Regardless of which interpretation is correct, I am persuaded that every person who is born of the Spirit can also be baptized in the Holy Spirit simply by asking the Lord with faith. Based on Jesus' promise in Mark 16:17 and the historical record in the book of Acts (Acts 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:2-6), the initial evidence of that baptism is speaking in other tongues. This is not something just for Pentecostal or charismatic Christians, but for all who believe in Jesus, and it has been experienced and enjoyed by millions. That being said, those believers who have not enjoyed the experience are not lesser Christians in any sense.

We gather from our reading today that Jesus was the center of controversy in Jerusalem. Bible Jesus is controversial, whereas American Jesus gets along so well with everyone. Just today I read an article in our local newspaper about a man who walked into a fitness club just a few miles from where I live, turned out the lights in a women's aerobic class, and then indiscriminately started shooting two handguns. He killed three women and himself. He wanted to kill many more. His pastor was quoted as saying that he was sure the murderer was in heaven because he once professed faith in Christ, and the Bible teaches that once a person is saved, he is always saved. There's American Jesus for you. He even gets along quite well with mass murderers.

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