



I am so glad to be back with you and continue to study the greatest subject in the world – Jesus Christ! If you are new this year, don't worry! Each study, though related, is a single, self-contained study.

For some, history may seem like an unexplained succession of random events. The Bible, on the other hand, portrays history as the perfect and purposeful outworking of God's plan. The Bible makes it clear that God is in complete control of every situation, and that He is "working all things together for His glory and the good of His children" (Romans 8:28, 11:36).

Several people in the Old Testament had to learn the hard way that God was sovereign over all. One individual in particular was Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. After God had humbled him he had this to say – "He does according to His will in the Host of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and no one can ward off His hand or say to Him, 'What have you done?'"

God has a predetermined plan. At the center of that plan is the birth, death, resurrection, and the future return of Christ. Everything has a divine timetable, which nothing can stop. In this passage in John we see just how specific that timetable is and how concerned Jesus was with doing the Father's will, right down to the exact moment.

¹After these things Jesus was walking in Galilee, for He was unwilling to walk in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him. ²Now the feast of the Jews, the Feast of Booths, was near. ³So His brothers said to Him, "Move on from here and go into Judea, so that Your disciples also may see Your works which You are doing. ⁴For no one does anything in secret when he himself is striving to be known publicly. If You are doing these things, show Yourself to the world." ⁵For not even His brothers believed in Him. ⁶So Jesus said to them, "My time is not yet here, but your time is always ready. ⁷The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify about it, that its deeds are evil. ⁸Go up to the feast yourselves; I am not going up to this feast, because My time has not yet fully arrived." ⁹Now having said these things to them, He stayed in Galilee.

¹⁰But when His brothers had gone up to the feast, then He Himself also went up, not publicly, but as though in secret. ¹¹So the Jews were looking for Him at the feast and saying, "Where is He?" ¹²And there was a great deal of talk about Him in secret among the crowds: some were saying, "He is a good man"; others were saying, "No, on the contrary, He is misleading the people." ¹³However, no one was speaking openly about Him, for fear of the Jews (John 7:1-13).

This passage naturally breaks into two main themes – the **wrong time**, and the **right time**.

The Wrong Time:

This chapter (7) begins about six months after the events of chapter six ("after these things"). The events of chapter six took place around the time of the Passover (April) and the events of this chapter take place at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles (October).

After the notable events of chapter six, including the feeding of the 5,000 (plus women and children) and walking on water, Jesus had spent the following months walking all over the region of Galilee. The other gospel writers inform us that during this time He performed miracles, including healing, casting out demons, and feeding the 4,000. The bulk of that time, however, was devoted to discipling the Twelve. He poured into the men who would continue His ministry and launch the Church into the known world.

The text also informs us that He was unwilling to walk in the region of Judea (area near Jerusalem), because the Jews (Jewish leaders) were seeking to kill Him. Their hatred of Him was well-noted, and He was not going to go to Jerusalem until the proper time. Although, He would go to Jerusalem to be crucified, it would be at the time in perfect accordance with God's timing, not the Jews' timing.

The Feast of Booths (or Tabernacles) was one of three major Jewish feasts. It was the most

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celebratory, and therefore, the most popular. During this feast, the people built tents out of branches and leaves to live in to commemorate their living in tents in the wilderness when God had brought their ancestors out of Egypt. According to Jewish law, all Jewish males were to attend.

Jesus' half-brothers (the sons of Mary and Joseph) pushed Him to quit wandering around in Galilee, to go up to Jerusalem, and to prove Himself the Messiah. John includes the note that at this time His brothers did not yet believe in Him, although they would after His resurrection. Instead, they seemed to be like most of the Jewish people, expecting a political messiah. They thought if He were really the Messiah, He would have to be crowned by the Jewish leaders at the political center of the nation – Jerusalem.

However, Jesus would not be prodded by His brothers or anyone else. He replied that "My time is not yet here." They could go up to the feast at any time. He could not. They were unbelieving, and therefore, of the world's system. He, on the other hand, by His very nature and person, was a rebuke to the sinfulness of the world's system, so the world hated Him.

He told them to go without Him. He stayed behind because the timing had to be right. His going with them in a large caravan would likely lead to a premature conflict with the religious leaders.

The Right Time:

After His brothers had left for the feast, along with most other people, Jesus secretly went to the feast. According to verse 14, Jesus did not arrive at the feast until it was half over. He also went by a different road, through Samaria (Luke 9:51-56).

Jesus was avoiding a premature confrontation with the Jewish leaders who wanted Him dead. Six months later He would ride publicly into Jerusalem on a donkey, and then they would kill Him. That would be at the exact moment God had pre-ordained. At the Passover, as lambs were being sacrificed, Jesus would be crucified as the Lamb of God for the sins of the world.

At the Feast of Booths, the Jewish leaders were looking for Jesus knowing that as a good Jew He must come to the feast. The Jewish leaders had made up their minds

about Jesus, and they wanted Him dead. However, many people were undecided about Him. There was much discussion and argument about who Jesus was. Some thought He was a good man, while others thought He was a deceiver. However, they did not discuss these opinions openly because they did not want to anger the Jewish leaders.

Both views of Jesus are incorrect. "A good man" does not claim to be God. Nor was He a deceiver as His many supernatural miracles authenticated His claims. He really was the Son of God.

This passage shows that Jesus followed God's plan perfectly. He always performed God's will exactly. He came to earth with a divine purpose – to die on the cross for our sins, paying the price we deserve to pay, and purchasing our salvation. He would complete that mission to perfection. At the perfect time.

He was in the world, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name (John 1:10-12).



Bible Studies:

7:00 am Tuesdays: Bible Study – Governor's Large Conference Room – Open to All: Legislators, Constitutional Officers, Lobbyists, Staff

8:00 pm Tuesdays: Legislator Only Bible Study – Perkins

Zoom: Want to attend, but concerned about Covid-19? Talk to me about a Zoom link.

