

Lesson 2 – Unbelief & Living Water

September 15, 2019

Worship: 10 minutes

Points to consider as you think about how to teach this lesson:

Jesus continued to minister in Galilee, but didn't go into Judea because there were people wanting to kill him, there. He knew it wasn't time for Him to die, yet, so He stayed away.

The Feasts of Booths, celebrated sometime in September, is a time of remembering the Jews' deliverance from Egypt, living in booths in the wilderness. During the feast the Jews build rough booths and live outside in them for seven days. It also celebrates the end of harvest. It is a time of rejoicing and thanksgiving.

The great divide between those who are truly open to God and those who are rejecting Jesus becomes very evident in this chapter.

Those who reject Him are the Pharisees and leading Jews protecting their "empire."
Those who reject Him are among his immediate family.

Those who receive Him are those who are really WANTING to know God.
Those who are thirsty for the living water.

The living water statement was probably made in reference to a ritual daily procession led by the priest during this feast, to the Pool of Siloam to draw water and take it as an offering into the temple. It was poured out on the altar along with wine, as the people quoted Psalms 113-118 – The Hallel.

STORY TEACHER:

There is a lot to talk about in this chapter, but the teacher can choose what to emphasize. Ultimately, there is the invitation by Jesus to COME. And this is an excellent final point.

John 7:1-24, 37-39

Jesus at the Feast of Booths

After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He would not go about in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him. ² Now the Jews' Feast of Booths was at hand. ³ So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing. ⁴ For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world." ⁵ For not even his brothers believed in him. ⁶ Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. ⁷ The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil. ⁸ You go up to the feast. I am not going up to this feast, for my time has not yet fully come." ⁹ After saying this, he remained in Galilee.

¹⁰ But after his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up, not publicly but in private. ¹¹ The Jews were looking for him at the feast, and saying, "Where is he?" ¹² And there was much muttering about him among the people. While some said, "He is a good man," others said, "No, he is leading the people astray." ¹³ Yet for fear of the Jews no one spoke openly of him.

¹⁴ About the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and began teaching. ¹⁵ The Jews therefore marveled, saying, "How is it that this man has learning, when he has never studied?" ¹⁶ So Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. ¹⁷ If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority. ¹⁸ The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood. ¹⁹ Has not Moses given you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why do you seek to kill me?" ²⁰ The crowd answered, "You have a demon! Who is seeking to kill you?" ²¹ Jesus answered them, "I did one work, and you all marvel at it. ²² Moses gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from

the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. ²³ If on the Sabbath a man receives circumcision, so that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because on the Sabbath I made a man's whole body well? ²⁴ Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment." ...

³⁷ 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. ³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" 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.

Lessons that can be drawn from this story:

There were people who believed in Jesus and there were people who didn't understand Jesus at all. There were people who hated Jesus so much they wanted to kill him – but Jesus still stood up and called to all of them, "Come to me if you're thirsty for God. I've got living water that will satisfy your heart."

If you really have a heart that wants Jesus, He will make you His own child. Every day, you can drink from His love and feel His presence.

Small Group Lesson

Small Group Teachers pick and choose activities:

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Questions for older children

Why do you think the “Jews” wanted to kill Jesus?

He didn't accept their way of looking at things. They made up laws that weren't biblical and he “called them on it.” He claimed to be God. He was very popular and could start a revolution – messing with their power.

If Jesus was going to die, anyway, why didn't he just let the Jews kill him when this story took place?

There was a definite plan for Jesus' life. He had a “time” already set for when he would die. This wasn't it. It wasn't “his time.” – this is something Jesus refers to throughout the gospels.

Who did Jesus hope would hear him when he cried out at the feast? Who was Jesus calling?

He was calling those who were thirsty. People who think they are fine aren't even able to hear Jesus' call.

Questions for younger children

This discussion will be more meaningful if you have gone over the memory verse FIRST.

Can you show me what you do when you're really, REALLY thirsty?

Do you want to go outside and play when you're thirsty? What do you want to do?

Getting a drink is the most important thing.

What do you think Jesus meant when he said, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.”?

If you really want God... you're thirsty for God.

What did Jesus promise would happen if they came to Him thirsty?

“Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’”

PRAYER:

Dear Jesus, we thank you for loving us whether we are good or bad. In our hearts, we want so much to be good... We need you to do that. We are thirsty for you. Please fill us with your living water, that will make us make the right choices. We love you. Amen.

MEMORY VERSE:

John 7:37

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.

Point out that this verse answers 3 questions:

When did this happen? "On the last day of the feast, the great day"

What did Jesus do? "He stood up and cried out."

What did Jesus say? "He said, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.'"

Repeat the verse together 3 times, then see who can quote it by themselves. A reward is always a good motivator – but applause works, too.

ACTIVITIES:

Begin by reading John 7:37=39

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Living water – that fills our hearts:

Supplies:

- One classroom jar

- Slips of paper and pencils for each child

- A jar for every four children

- A large pitcher of water

- A tub to place under the jars

(This is a very wet project, so outside is the best place for it.)

Need one medium jar:

Fill the jar with slips of paper on which the children write things that they like to do that takes up their time. After they're all finished point out that there is a lot of empty space in the jar still. They're still thirsty.

Give each four children one jar of the same size as the "paper jar." Give each child an Alka-Seltzer tablet. Fill the jar with water and allow the children to, all four of them at the same time, place their tablets in the water.

The water will overflow the jar and make a mess, but you can talk to them about the truth that Jesus fills our hearts and satisfies us that way.

ART:

This is a great Sunday to pull out green, blue and purple poster paints, if you don't mind a mess.

Lay out a long butcher paper mural on the floor or across two tables end-to-end on top of some old plastic tablecloths. Ask children to create a picture of living water.

Let them work together to hang it on the wall with Command Poster strips.

When it is dry, attach letters that say, "Jesus Gives us Living Water" (See Resources.)