

“The Gospel Call to Holiness”
John 7:7
(Preached at Trinity, October 2, 2019)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. We've been looking at the opening verses of **Chapter 7**. It takes place about 6 months from the events of **Chapter 6**. Where the former chapter is during the Passover season John tells us it now time for the Feast of Booths.
2. Jesus was nearing the end of His Galilean ministry. Sadly, despite His clear teaching and the display of His miracles, few had been saved.
John 6:66 NAU - "As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore."
It reminds us of the words of Jeremiah:
Jeremiah 8:20 NAU - "Harvest is past, summer is ended, And we are not saved."
How few respond to God's offer of grace through Jesus Christ.
3. This chapter begins with dialogue between Jesus and His earthly brothers. They were about to go to celebrate the Feast of Booths and were instructing Jesus that He needed to take this opportunity to promote Himself in Jerusalem.
John 7:3-4 NAU - "Leave here and go into Judea, so that Your disciples also may see Your works which You are doing. ⁴ "For no one does anything in secret when he himself seeks to be *known* publicly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world."
4. Jesus' response was firm and resolute:
John 7:6-8 NAU - "So Jesus said to them, "My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune. ⁷ "The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil. ⁸ "Go up to the feast yourselves; I do not go up to this feast because My time has not yet fully come."
5. His hour had not yet arrived.
John 7:30 NAU - "So they were seeking to seize Him; and no man laid his hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come."
John 8:20 NAU - "These words He spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come."
6. But Jesus uses a different word here as he addresses His brothers. He isn't saying that His hour had not yet come. He is saying it was not the right time.
John 7:6 NAU - "So Jesus said to them, "My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune."
 - A. The word for hour is ὥρα in **Verse 30** refers to a fixed hour, an hour chosen by God. It was God's plan and unavoidable. Jesus received it without question.
 - B. But here in **Verse 6** Jesus uses the word καιρός which refers to a particular time. It can also refer to an opportunity. It refers to the best time, the opportune time, the most suitable time.

- C. Jesus is not saying here that His appointed hour had not come; He is saying this was not opportune time for Him to go to Jerusalem. It wasn't the right setting.
7. Jesus told them their time was always opportune. This is because their lives were tied to this present world. It was their home.
William Barclay wrote:
"It made no difference when Jesus' brothers went to Jerusalem. Any day would do for them, for no one would notice that they were there. Nothing whatsoever depended on their going to Jerusalem; they could go in their own time, and it made no difference. But if Jesus went it was a very different thing. Why. Because Jesus' brothers were part of the world; their sympathies were with the world; they did not make the world uncomfortable and the world had no quarrel with them. But Jesus enters with a disturbing dynamic power. His very presence is a condemnation of our way of life. His very coming is a challenge to our selfishness and lethargy. Jesus had to choose His moment, for when He arrives something happens."¹
8. In **Verse 7** Jesus described the hatred of the world for Him.
There were two reasons they hated Jesus.
- A. One was because of His teaching.
1. The religious leaders hated Him because of His teaching regarding His deity.
John 5:18 NAU - "For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God."
 2. In addition, Jesus posed a threat to their position. They were jealous of Him. He spoke with authority and it was undermining their authority.
- B. **Verse 7** gives us the chief reason men hate Jesus.
More than anything else, men hate Jesus because His holiness condemns them.
John 7:7 NAU - "The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil."
John 3:19-20 NAU - "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. ²⁰ "For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed."
1. J. C. Ryle: "These words reveal one of those secret principles which influence men in their treatment of religion. They help to explain that deadly enmity with which many during our Lord's earthly ministry regarded Him and His Gospel. It was not so much the high doctrines which He preached, as the high standard of practice which He proclaimed, which gave offense. . . The principle, we may be sure, is one of universal application. It is at work now as much as it was eighteen hundred years ago. The real cause of many people's dislike to the Gospel is the holiness of living which it demands."²

¹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John, Volume 1*, (Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1956), Pages 241-242.

² J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels, John Vol.2* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2007), Page 3.

2. This is why men hate Jesus. He makes demands of which they are not willing to submit. Coming to Christ demands repenting from sin. It demands forsaking our idols. The demands of Christ are beyond what the lost man is willing to do.
William Barclay – “When a man’s ideals clash with the ideals of Christ, either the man must submit and surrender, or he must fight Christ and seek to destroy Him.”³
9. The preaching of holiness today has fallen on hard times. Too many well-meaning pastors complain that preaching holiness is legalistic. They complain that it goes against grace. Tonight I want us to consider this for a few minutes.
- I. The Gospel call is a call to holiness
 - A. God is holy and demands that His people be holy – We are to imitate Him.
1 Peter 1:15-16 NAS - "but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior; ¹⁶ because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."
 1. Adam’s fall into sin was a fall from his original righteousness. He lost communion with God. He was unable to approach God. Adam’s fall into sin affected all of humanity.
 2. In redemption Jesus Christ restores us to place of righteousness. He makes atonement for our sins and imputes His righteousness to us. This is God’s work of justifying grace.
 3. Salvation also involves sanctification. The word sanctification is from the Latin word sanctus which means holy.
 4. We are saved unto holiness
Ephesians 1:3-4 NAU - "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, ⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him."
Ephesians 5:27 NAU - "that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless."
 5. Christians are followers of Christ. Over and over Jesus commanded people, “follow Me.” The Christian is the one who has seen Christ as all glorious and worthy of trusting and following. The Christian delights in obeying Christ.
Holiness is a life set apart unto Christ and a desire to conform to His holiness.
 - B. The Kingdom of Christ is a holy Kingdom because it is ruled by a holy King
 1. Christians are referred to as a holy people.
The Bible often refers to Christians as saints – Over 60 times in the NT. The Greek word is ἅγιος – it simply means holy. It is a word used to define Christians. They are holy.

³ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John, Volume 1*, (Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1956), Page 243.

2. In the New Covenant we find the ultimate expression of God's covenant people. They are described as chosen, holy, God's own possession.
1 Peter 2:9-10 NAU - "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."
3. **Verse 7** describes the great contrast between the holiness of Christ and the world.
 - a. The brothers of Christ shared the universal corruption of this world. The world loves sin. The lost man is comfortable in his sin and is content in this world of sin. There is a mindset consistent with the sinfulness of this world. It is a mindset that seeks to dethrone God.
 The world embraces those who share this mindset.
 Jesus told His brothers the world could not hate them because they were a part of the world.
 - b. Jesus, on the other hand, was distinctly different from this world. He is holy, separated from the corruption of this world and condemns it. Because of this the world hates Him.

II. Because the world hates Christ, it will also hate us

- A. Jesus Christ was despised and hated
 1. The world hates His person. They hate His person because He is infinitely holy. He is Holy, Holy, Holy.
 They hate his holy character because it condemns them.
 2. The presence of Christ calls for a decision. Will you follow Him and be joined to Him?
 No one takes a neutral position on Christ. We will either love Him or we will hate Him.
- B. Christians are united with Christ
 1. We reflect Him – we are to shine forth His holiness
Matthew 5:16 NAU - "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."
 2. Just as Jesus stands apart from the corruption of this world, so do those who are united with Him.
 3. As we reflect Christ, we will experience the displeasure of this world.
 J. C. Ryle – "True Christians must never be surprised if they are hated like their Lord. In fact, the more like Christ they are, the more likely to be hated. What the world hates about Christians is neither their doctrines, nor their faults, but their holy lives. Their lives are a constant testimony against the world, which makes the men of the world feel uncomfortable, and therefore the world hates them."⁴

⁴ J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels, John Vol.2* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2007), Page 10.

Conclusion:

1. The world will smile upon its own. This doesn't mean there is nothing but harmony in this world. To the contrary, Paul describes fallen humanity:
Romans 1:29 NAU - "filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice"
2. But they share together in their hatred for Christ. In this they are in harmony. In one accord they are seeking to dethrone Christ.
 While they seek to dethrone Christ, we are seeking to enthrone Him.
*All hail the pow'r of Jesus' Name!
 Let angels prostrate fall;
 Bring forth the royal diadem,
 And crown Him Lord of all!*
3. In this the world hates us—because they despise our King.
John 15:18-19 NAU - "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before *it hated* you. ¹⁹ "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you."
4. The brothers could go up and mingle with the people of the world at any time without fear of hostility. They had never given testimony against the sins of the world. On the other hand, we bear testimony against sin, both with our words and with our lives. And in this they hate us.