

## INTRODUCTION

1. God has a purpose and time for everything.
2. The writer of Ecclesiastes says in **Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (NASB)** <sup>1</sup> There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven— <sup>2</sup> A time to give birth and a time to die; A time to plant and a time to uproot what is planted. <sup>3</sup> A time to kill and a time to heal; A time to tear down and a time to build up. <sup>4</sup> A time to weep and a time to laugh; A time to mourn and a time to dance. <sup>5</sup> A time to throw stones and a time to gather stones; A time to embrace and a time to shun embracing. <sup>6</sup> A time to search and a time to give up as lost; A time to keep and a time to throw away. <sup>7</sup> A time to tear apart and a time to sew together; A time to be silent and a time to speak. <sup>8</sup> A time to love and a time to hate; A time for war and a time for peace.
3. In verse 17 he concludes by saying, “I said to myself, ‘God will judge both the righteous man and the wicked man,’ for a time for every matter and for every deed is there.” **Ecclesiastes 3:17 (NASB)**.
4. The writer of Hebrews captures a similar thought when he says in **Hebrews 9:27 (NASB)** <sup>27</sup> And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this *comes* judgment.

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5. Just as there “is an appointed time for everything,” there was an appointed time for Christ’s arrival, death, and resurrection.
6. **Galatians 4:4 (NASB)** speaks of His birth by saying, <sup>4</sup> But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law.
7. **John 12:23-28 (NASB)** speaks of His death by saying, <sup>23</sup>And Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. <sup>24</sup>"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. <sup>25</sup>"He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal. <sup>26</sup>"If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him. <sup>27</sup>"Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. <sup>28</sup>"Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."
8. On the day of Pentecost, Peter told those who were listening to His explanation of the death of Christ in **Acts 2:22-24 (NASB)** <sup>22</sup>"Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know—

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<sup>23</sup> this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death. <sup>24</sup> "But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

9. All of these things had a fixed time for their occurrence.
10. When Jesus was at the wedding in Cana, He told His mother in **John 2:4 (NASB)** <sup>4</sup>My hour has not yet come."
11. He also said this to His brothers in **John 7:6, 8 (NASB)** <sup>8</sup>"My time has not yet fully come."
12. When He was in the treasury teaching, **John 8:20 (NASB)** says, <sup>20</sup>No one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come.
13. In His preparation to eat the Passover with His disciples, He told them in **Matthew 26:18 (NASB)** <sup>18</sup>And He said, 'Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, 'My time is near; I *am to* keep the Passover at your house with My disciples.'
14. The time for Jesus to die was appointed by the Father and it was at that exact time when it would occur.
15. That is the subject of John 7:1-13.

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16. Jesus was on a *divine timetable*.
17. When His time was near He began to prepare His disciples.
18. **John 13:1 (NASB)** says, <sup>1</sup> Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.
19. After He washes their feet, He speaks of His betrayal by Judas Iscariot, and then tells them in **John 13:33 (NASB)** <sup>33</sup> "Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, now I also say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.'
20. In **John 14:19 (NASB)** He says again, <sup>19</sup> "After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you *will* see Me; because I live, you will live also.
21. He even tells them in **John 14:28 (NASB)** <sup>28</sup> "You heard that I said to you, 'I go away, and I will come to you.' If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.
22. As we come to John chapter 7, verse 1 gives us *the setting*.

**I. The Setting (v.1)**

The setting begins with...

**A. The Time Gap Between Chapter Six and Seven (v.1a)**

Verse 1 says, “After these things.”

After what things? The events described in chapter 6, which took place around the time of Passover in April (6:4). Since chapter 7 opens at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles in October (7:2), there is a gap of about six months between chapters 6 and 7.<sup>1</sup>

John also mentions...

**B. Jesus’ Ministry in Galilee (v.1b)**

He says, “Jesus was walking in Galilee.”

John records nothing about Jesus’ activity during this six month period other than saying Jesus spent it “walking in Galilee,” i.e., He was traveling and ministering.

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<sup>1</sup>John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 278.

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It's important to note that John's gospel is not an exhaustive biography of Jesus but a presentation of Him as "the Christ, the Son of God" (20:31).

The other gospel writers note that during those six months, Jesus traveled the length of Galilee, from Tyre and Sidon, northwest of Galilee (Matt. 15:21–28) to Decapolis, in the southeast (Mark 7:31–37). During that time He performed miracles, including healing (Matt. 15:29–31; Mark 8:22–26), casting out demons (Matt. 15:21–28; 17:14–18), and feeding the four thousand (Matt. 15:32–38).

Most of the six months, however, was spent discipling the Twelve.

The Lord taught them extensively (Matt. 16:13–27; 17:19–23; 18:1–35), including telling them for the first time of His impending rejection, crucifixion, and resurrection (Matt. 16:21; cf. 17:22–23).

He also revealed to the inner circle (Peter, James, and John) a glimpse of His divine glory (Matt. 17:1–8).<sup>2</sup>

It is also important to note that Jesus only spent two days with the large crowd (approximately 20,000

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<sup>2</sup>John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 279.

people) mentioned in chapter six but six months with the disciples.

His primary focus was on discipleship, not mass meetings. He devoted His time and effort to the small core group of men who would carry on His ministry after He was gone.

1. **2 Timothy 2:1-2 (NASB)** <sup>1</sup> You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.<sup>2</sup> The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Timothy was to take the divine revelation he had learned from Paul and teach it to other faithful men—men with proven spiritual character and giftedness, who would in turn pass on those truths to another generation. From Paul to Timothy to faithful men to others encompasses 4 generations of godly leaders. That process of spiritual reproduction, which began in the early church, is to continue until the Lord returns.<sup>3</sup>

2. **Matthew 28:19-20 (NASB)** <sup>19</sup> "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in

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<sup>3</sup>John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997, c1997). 2 Ti 2:2.

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the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,<sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

The heart of the commission is in the one word μαθητεύσατε. This imperative, of course, means, "to turn into disciples," and its aorist form conveys the thought that this is actually to be done. The verb itself does not indicate *how* disciples are to be made, it designates only an activity that will result in disciples.<sup>4</sup>

*Mathēteúō* means not only to learn, but to become attached to one's teacher and to become his follower in doctrine and conduct of life. It is really not sufficient to translate this verb as "learn" but as "making a disciple," in the NT sense of *mathētēs*.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel* (Minneapolis, MN.: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961). 1172.

<sup>5</sup>Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary : New Testament*, electronic ed. (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000, c1992, c1993). G3100.



Kittle points out that In the NT *mathētēs* occurs only in the Gospels and Acts. It is attested some 250 times, almost always for those who follow Jesus. Acts has it in the absolute for a disciple of Jesus. Occasionally we read of the disciples of the Baptist and of Paul. In Mk. 2:18; Mt. 22:16 we read of *mathētaí* of the Pharisees and in Jn. 9:28 of *mathētaí* of Moses.

In each instance we find attachment to a person. Jesus as the head of the group is expected to give the ruling in Mk. 2:18ff., 23ff. It is he who, like the Baptist, teaches his disciples to pray (Lk. 11:1ff.). The destiny of the disciples is bound up with his.<sup>6</sup>

So Jesus was pouring His life into the twelve and then John notes...

C. Jesus' Avoidance of Judea (v.1c)

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NT New Testament

<sup>6</sup>Gerhard Kittel, Gerhard Friedrich and Geoffrey William Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 1995, c1985). 559.

John says Jesus “was unwilling to walk in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him.”

Feelings of hostility toward the Lord, at least in **Judea**, had already reached the point where the Jewish leaders wanted Him dead (cf. 5:18). Jesus was therefore **unwilling to walk** (that is, to conduct His life and ministry) openly there, because the time was not yet right in God’s plan for the events leading to His death.<sup>7</sup>

John Calvin said, “While Christ avoided dangers, he did not turn aside a hairsbreadth from the course of duty.”<sup>8</sup>

Now in verse 2 John gives us...

## **II. The Occasion (v.2)**

He says, “Now the feast of the Jews, the Feast of Booths, was near.”

This was also called “The Feast of Tabernacles” or “Ingathering.”

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<sup>7</sup>John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 279.

<sup>8</sup>John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries: John*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; Calvin's Commentaries (Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1998). Jn 7:1.

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It was one of the three most important festivals of the Jewish year and was celebrated for eight days in Jerusalem.<sup>9</sup>

During the feast, the people built and lived in shelters made of branches (Lev. 23:42), as their ancestors had done after leaving Egypt (v. 43).

City dwellers built their booths on the roofs of their houses, and in the streets and squares (Neh. 8:14–17).

According to the first-century Jewish historian Josephus, the Feast of Tabernacles was the most popular of the three major Jewish feasts. It was marked by celebrations and parties, and featured water-drawing and lamp-lighting rites (cf. John 7:37–38; 8:12).<sup>10</sup>

This Feast fell at the end of September and the beginning of October. It was one of the obligatory festivals and every adult male Jew who lived within fifteen miles of Jerusalem was legally bound to attend it.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Craig S. Keener and InterVarsity Press, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary : New Testament* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1993). Jn 7:2.

<sup>10</sup>John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 280.

<sup>11</sup>*The Gospel of John : Volume 1*, ed. William Barclay, lecturer in the University of Glasgow, The Daily study Bible series, Rev. ed. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 2000, c1975). 231.

**Deuteronomy 16:16 (NASB)** <sup>16</sup> "Three times in a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God in the place which He chooses, at the Feast of Unleavened Bread and at the Feast of Weeks and at the Feast of Booths, and they shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed.

After John gives us *the setting* and *occasion* he then mentions...

### **III. The Request (vv.3-5)**

**John 7:3-5 (NASB)** <sup>3</sup> Therefore His brothers said to Him, "Leave here and go into Judea, so that Your disciples also may see Your works which You are doing. <sup>4</sup> "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." <sup>5</sup> For not even His brothers were believing in Him.

#### **A. It Came from His Brothers (v.3a)**

- 1) They are identified in verses 3, 5 and 10 as "His brothers"
- 2) Their names are not given here but Matthew 13:55 list them as "James, Joses, Simon, and Judas."

#### **B. They Requested He Go to the Feast in Jerusalem and Manifest His Works Openly (v.3b)**

Staying in Galilee, they believed, was a waste of His efforts.

He should manifest Himself on the great world-stage in Jerusalem.

Their reasoning was by doing this His **disciples** from both Galilee and Judea would **see the works which** He was **doing**—works which demonstrated that He was in fact the Messiah. Further, some of the disciples who had recently abandoned Him (6:66) might be won back.<sup>12</sup>

C. Their View of Jesus was No Different than the Crowds (v.4)

Verse 4 indicates they were looking for a political Messiah just like the crowds. They said, “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.”

If He were a political Messiah their statement would make perfect sense. For Him to remain relatively secluded in Galilee would be inconsistent with His messianic claims.

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<sup>12</sup>John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* : *John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 280.

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Their statement, “If you do these things, show yourself to the world,” reveals their doubt and unbelief.

The word **if** foreshadows the mocking unbelief that Jesus faced on the cross (Matt. 27:40), and is reminiscent of Satan’s challenge (4:3, 6) during Christ’s temptation.

The apostle John’s footnote, **For not even His brothers were believing in Him**, explains why they spoke to Him the way they did. Earlier in His ministry, their unbelief had led them to think He had lost His mind (cf. Mark 3:21, 31–34).<sup>13</sup>

This is why this chapter has been labeled by many commentators and “disbelief and division” (Wilmington).

It wasn’t until after the resurrection that His brothers believed. **Acts 1:14 (NASB)** records them with the 120 that were assembled in the upper room. It says, <sup>14</sup>These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with *the* women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and **with His brothers**.

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<sup>13</sup>John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 281.

The Lord used two of His brothers in writing the New Testament. James, wrote the epistle that bears his name as well as Jude.

Following His brothers *request* Jesus gives...

#### **IV. The Response (vv.6-13)**

He first says...

##### **A. My Time is Not Yet Here (v.6a)**

Jesus would not allow His brothers skepticism dictate His actions.

His course of action was determined by the sovereign Father who orchestrated everything in His time.

We read earlier in John 2:4 where Jesus told His mother at the wedding at Cana, "My hour has not yet come."

Jesus rejected any pressure from His family to reveal Himself before the Father's time.

In its fullest sense, the divine time would not come until the next great feast, Passover, the following spring.

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Though He would minister in Judea for most of the intervening months (cf. Luke 9:51–19:11), the Lord would not enter Jerusalem publicly and openly declare Himself to be the Messiah until then (Matt. 21:1–11; cf. Luke 19:37–40).

And just as He had predicted (Matt. 16:21; 17:22–23; 20:17–19; 26:2), that final manifestation would lead to His death.<sup>14</sup>

In contrast to Jesus' divine appointment...

### B. Their Time is Always Opportune (vv.6b-9)

Leon Morris says, "In this respect the brothers joined with the world. Since the world (and the brothers) have cut themselves off from the divinely appointed 'time' all times are alike to them."<sup>15</sup>

They did not recognize God and His purposes. They did not listen to His Word or recognize God's schedule not could they perceive that the incarnate Word was before them.

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<sup>14</sup>John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 282.

<sup>15</sup>Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, *The International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids; Eerdmans, 1979). 398.



Unlike Jesus the world could not hate them, since they were part of it, and it loves its own (15:19).

Jesus says in **verse 7**, "The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil."

1. He demonstrated that in **John 2:14-16 (NASB)** when He drove the money changers out of the temple.

<sup>14</sup> And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated *at their tables*. <sup>15</sup> And He made a scourge of cords, and drove *them* all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; <sup>16</sup> and to those who were selling the doves He said, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a place of business."

2. In **John 3:19-21 (NASB)** He said, <sup>19</sup> "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. <sup>20</sup> "For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. <sup>21</sup> "But he who practices the truth comes to the

Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."

3. He later states in **John 15:22-25 (NASB)** <sup>22</sup> "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. <sup>23</sup> "He who hates Me hates My Father also. <sup>24</sup> "If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated Me and My Father as well. <sup>25</sup> "But *they have done this* to fulfill the word that is written in their Law, 'They hated Me without a cause .'

So Jesus tells His brothers to "Go up to the feast yourselves; I do not go up to this feast because My time has not yet fully come" (v.8).

When Jesus did lay down His life, six months later, it would be at the very moment God had predetermined (cf. v. 30; 8:20). Thus, **having said these things to His brothers, He stayed in Galilee** for a little while.<sup>16</sup>

In verses 10-13...

#### C. Jesus Goes to the Feast Secretly (vv.10-13)

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<sup>16</sup>John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 283.

Verse 10 says, “But when His brothers had gone up the feast, then He Himself also went up, not publicly, but as if, in secret.”

Jesus’ response was a marked contrast to the course of action His brothers had urged Him to take.

According to verse 14, He did not arrive in Jerusalem until the middle of the feast.

By the time He left Galilee most people would have already arrived in Jerusalem, and the roads would have been relatively deserted.

1. The Jews were seeking Him at the feast (v.11)

They were asking, “Where is He?”

The phrase “the Jews” does not refer to the common people but the Jewish leaders who were seeking to kill Him (5:18).

2. The Jews were not the only ones seeking Him (v.12)

**Verse 12** says, “There was much grumbling among the crowds concerning Him; some were saying, ‘He is a good man’; others were saying, ‘No, on the contrary, He leads the people astray.’”

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The people had a distorted view of Jesus. These two statements in verse 12 were incorrect.

Actually, both views of Jesus were incorrect. He was not merely **a good man**, since good men do not claim to be God (5:18; cf. 8:24, 28, 58; 10:33).

Nor was **He** one who **leads the people astray**, because deceivers do not perform the supernatural and authenticating miracles that Jesus did (10:25, 37–38; 14:10–11; cf. 3:2; 5:36).<sup>17</sup>

John ends this section in **verse 13** by stating, “Yet no one was speaking openly of Him for fear of the Jews.”

John MacArthur makes this comment: Though it was clear that the authorities rejected Jesus, the Sanhedrin had not yet rendered a formal judgment regarding Him. Thus, the people were careful to guard their words, speaking neither for Him or against Him until they knew what the official response to Jesus would be. In any case, the crowds certainly did not want to publicly contradict their religious leaders. The consequences for doing so were severe and could

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<sup>17</sup>John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 284.

include excommunication from the synagogue (9:22; cf. 16:2). That dreaded punishment cut a person off from all of Jewish life.

As this account in John's gospel illustrates, Jesus followed God's timetable perfectly. He always performed God's will exactly as the Father wished.<sup>18</sup>

### **CONCLUSION**

1. As true followers of Christ, we have the ability to follow God's revealed will because we have both the Word of God and the Spirit of God.
2. Unbelievers do not have the capacity to understand God's Word.
3. **1 Corinthians 2:14 (NASB)** says, <sup>14</sup> But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.
4. **Romans 8:5-9 (NASB)** says he doesn't have the ability to obey His Spirit.

<sup>5</sup> For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. <sup>6</sup> For the mind set on the

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<sup>18</sup>John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* : *John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 284.

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flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,<sup>7</sup> because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able *to do so*,<sup>8</sup> and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.<sup>9</sup> However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

5. When is the right time to come to Jesus?
6. **2 Corinthians 6:2 (NASB)** says,<sup>2</sup> for He says, "At the acceptable time I listened to you, And on the day of salvation I helped you." Behold, now is "the acceptable time," behold, now is "the day of salvation."
7. If you are without Christ today, my prayer is that you will surrender your life to Him now.
8. Recognize that you have broken His Law, repent and turn to Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin.
9. **Romans 10:9-10 (NASB)** says,<sup>9</sup> that if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;<sup>10</sup> for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.
10. Let's pray.