

Week 11 Discussion Questions

Text: John 7:1-52; 8:12

Icebreaker: What are the traditions or rituals you participate in regularly (daily, weekly, monthly, yearly?) that serve to remind you of who God is and what he has done in your life?

1. Read this week's passage. What stands out from the text or sermon?

The settings of Jesus' teachings throughout John so far have been foundational to understanding what He is trying to reveal about Himself in each encounter. As the setting of the Passover was key to understanding the cleansing of the Temple and the feeding of the five thousand, John tells us that the Festival of Booths is at hand, and this information will be helpful to understanding all Jesus says in this passage.

Read Leviticus 23:41-43 for the context of this Festival.

2. How does this passage describe what the Jews should do to celebrate this festival and what is it supposed to remind them of?

The Israelites would essentially sleep in small huts/tents for the week of this festival to remind them of the time they and their ancestors spent in the wilderness after the Exodus. This was meant to serve as a reminder of God's provision for them in the past as they looked forward to the future.

Other passages, like Deuteronomy 31:10-13 and Nehemiah 8:13-18 provide more details of this festival, including a heart of joy as they celebrate God's provision and the reading of the Law to all in attendance. Other Jewish texts describe the festival as a joyous celebration feast, including rituals involving drawing and pouring out water and lighting golden candlesticks. It is in this context that Jesus teaches in these verses.

3. Trace Jesus' activity throughout this festival. What does he do at the beginning, middle, and end of the festival?

Jesus first refuses to go to the festival in the way His brothers suggest, but he eventually joins, but in secret. In the middle, He goes to the temple and teaches, reading from the Law. At the end, Jesus cries out to those around, calling all who thirst to come and drink.

4. In what ways does Jesus use the established festival rituals and what they celebrate to reveal Himself to the Jews?

The Festival of Booths celebrates God's provision over His people, the reading of the law, a pouring out of water and lighting of candles. Jesus uses each of these rituals to make claims that he is the one who provides, he is the living water that satisfies the needs and is the source of life, and in John 8:12 also claims to be the light of

the world. Jesus once again is trying to point out how everything they already know and celebrate points directly at Him. He is making the claim that He is the one they have been waiting for.

5. What are the various ways people respond to Jesus in these verses?

The responses are divided. Some marvel and seem to genuinely want to know more about Jesus. Others are angry, wanting to kill him for the claims He's making.

6. What are the divisions over ideas of Jesus from the text?

The divisions seem to be over Jesus identity. Like they did with John, they are recalling the things prophesied in the Scriptures and laying them over the things they are seeing in Jesus. They question where he comes from and what He is doing. They all have expectations of who the Messiah would be and Jesus is both what they have expected, but he's also different.

7. What divisions have you seen about Jesus identity today?

8. What questions do you have about Jesus identity?

9. What's the most perplexing thing about Jesus for you?

10. Despite the confusion, Jesus is explicit in many of His claims in this passage. What are the things Jesus claims about Himself in this passage?

- Sent by God--"My teaching is not mine, but he who sent me." (v. 16)
- He heals—(v. 23)
- He is sent by God and knows Him (v. 29)
- He is going to the Father, to a place we cannot access on our own (v. 33-34)
- He is the source of living water (v.38)