

As you read...

Jesus has secretly made His way down to Jerusalem for the festival of shelters (John 7:1-36). Originally, Jesus shared with His disciples that He would not be going but this was due in large part to them wanting Jesus to continue publicly performing miracles. Jesus disagreed, saying, “My time has not yet arrived, but your time is always at hand” (John 7:6). So He went down to Jerusalem in secret but soon found Himself openly teaching in the temple.

Our reading today begins on the last day of that festival. It’s there that Jesus shares words that we have heard Him say throughout His ministry so far, “The one who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, will have streams of *living* water flow from deep within him” (John 7:38). In other words: if you want to find *life*, believe in Jesus.

We also greet a familiar face in this reading, Nicodemus, who spoke to Jesus in John 3. Here Nicodemus echoes a reality to the Jewish leaders that we’ve also seen witnessed in John’s gospel so far: *listen* to Jesus before you form your opinion about Him.

The chief priests and Pharisees hear a similar response from the crowds that come to them at the end of our reading. They also find Jesus’ words to be powerful and persuasive. When asked why they didn’t bring Jesus to them, they say, “No man ever spoke like this!”

No truer words were ever spoken than those of the crowds when they said this. No man has truly ever spoken like Jesus. How? We find our answer in words we heard yesterday: Jesus has the words of eternal *life*. Where else would we go to find life? Only to Him.

Read [John 7:37-52](#)

### ***The Promise of the Spirit***

<sup>37</sup> On the last and most important day of the festival, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.” <sup>38</sup> The one who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, will have streams of *living* water flow from deep within him.” <sup>39</sup> He said this about the Spirit. Those who believed in Jesus were going to receive the Spirit, for the Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

### ***The People Are Divided over Jesus***

<sup>40</sup> When some from the crowd heard these words, they said, “This truly is the Prophet.” <sup>41</sup> Others said, “This is the Messiah.” But some said, “Surely the Messiah doesn’t come from Galilee, does he? <sup>42</sup> Doesn’t the Scripture say that the Messiah comes from David’s offspring and from the town of Bethlehem, where David lived?” <sup>43</sup> So the crowd was divided because of him. <sup>44</sup> Some of them wanted to seize him, but no one laid hands on him.

### ***Debate over Jesus’s Claims***

<sup>45</sup> Then the servants came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, “Why didn’t you bring him?”

<sup>46</sup> The servants answered, “No man ever spoke like this!”

*<sup>47</sup> Then the Pharisees responded to them, “Are you fooled too? <sup>48</sup> Have any of the rulers or Pharisees believed in him? <sup>49</sup> But this crowd, which doesn’t know the law, is accursed.”*

*<sup>50</sup> Nicodemus—the one who came to him previously and who was one of them—said to them, <sup>51</sup> “Our law doesn’t judge a man before it hears from him and knows what he’s doing, does it?”*

*<sup>52</sup> “You aren’t from Galilee too, are you?” they replied. “Investigate and you will see that no prophet arises from Galilee.”*

## Questions

1. In verse 48 the Pharisees ask an interesting question: “Have any of the rulers of the Pharisees believed in Him?” Two verses later we greet Nicodemus for a second time. What do you think? Does Nicodemus believe in Jesus at this point? If so, why would he believe? If not, what’s holding him back?”
2. Jesus says, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink” (verse 37) Reflect on a time when you knew what it meant to be spiritually thirsty—it might even be now. These would be times when you were not yourself—angry, spiritually tired, anxious, and so on.

Being thirsty often tells us something about ourselves. What do you think that “spiritual thirst” was or is trying to tell you?

3. Take a look at how Jesus finishes His thought about spiritual thirst in verses 38-39. As a baptized child of God, *you* have the promise that the Holy Spirit lives within you. He brings with Him the ability to believe and that well of living water that rises up within you.

Think of a time today—maybe even now!—where you will intentionally take time to become aware of the Holy Spirit’s presence in your life by taking a five minutes to be quiet, reflect on these verses, and pray.

A moment to pray.

Holy Spirit, I know that You are with me wherever I go. Make me aware of your presence today. Provide for me peace and patience, moments of joy and goodness, and work within me to be self-controlled and loving in all that I say and do. Quench my thirst today and surround me with Your protection. In Jesus’ name. Amen.