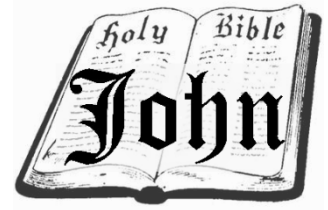




February 23, 2025
Jesus at the Festivals
THE FEAST OF BOOTHS (PART 3)
John 8:12 and 28-32



1. **Opening Discussion Questions:** (in a group setting, you may not want to use all of these)
 - a. Have you ever been in a situation where you needed light but didn't have any (perhaps during a power failure when you couldn't find a flashlight)? Describe the experience. What object lessons did you learn about light from the experience?
 - b. Do you have a green thumb, or do plants you are given (attempt to grow) face a very uncertain future? What are the two or three keys to successfully growing an indoor plant? Which of these factors do you struggle with most?
2. **Sermon Outline/Key Points**
 - a. Jesus Is the Light of the World
 - i. The Feast of Booths ended with a torchlit celebration of God's leadership
 - ii. Jesus is the True Light in a world darkened by sin
 - b. Abide in Christ's Word!
 - i. Remain in Christ's Word to truly follow Jesus, the Light of the World!
 - ii. Are you abiding in Christ's Word?
 - c. Live Free In Christ!
 - i. Both the first Exodus and the new Exodus lead to freedom
 - ii. Freedom from slavery to sin
 - iii. Freedom from guilt and shame
 - iv. Freedom from the sting of death
3. **Study/Discussion Points:**
 - a. **Sunday Afternoon** – As soon as possible after listening to the sermon, set aside some time to ponder these questions prayerfully:
 - i. What one thing stood out most to you in this sermon?
 - ii. What new truth did you learn, or what truth were you reminded of?
 - iii. After listening to the sermon, is there a Scripture passage you feel led to meditate on or commit to memory this week?
 - iv. What is one thing God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
 - v. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?
 - b. **Monday:**
 - i. Begin the week by meditating on the focal passage.
 1. First, read John 8:12-32 to get the setting and context. You may want to go back and review Chapter 7 as well.

2. Then read the focal passage, John 8:12 and 28-32, slowly thinking about each phrase's meaning.
3. Make a list of the key terms or concepts that are mentioned in these six verses. Which do you find easiest to understand? Most difficult?
4. What do these six verses mean to you? How do the teachings in these verses impact your life and faith?

- ii. In addition to the Water Ceremony described in last week's sermon, the Feast of Tabernacles had a Light Ceremony during which four giant, 60-foot tall lamps placed in the Court of Women (see artist's conception) were lit and maintained by the young priest. These were said to be so bright they illuminated the entire city (which was small by our standards). These lamps commemorated the pillar of fire that led the Israelites in the wilderness.



1. Read Numbers 9:15-23, Exodus 13:21-22 & 40:38, Deuteronomy 1:33, Nehemiah 9:12, Psalm 78:14 and 105:39.
2. What two functions did the pillar of fire perform?
3. Do you think that seeing that pillar of fire each night would have resulted in the Israelites having a better appreciation for what Moses told them in Deuteronomy 4:24 than do most Christians today?

c. Tuesday:

- i. Focus on Jesus' second "I am" statement in John 8:12. If you have not previously memorized this verse, begin to do so now.
- ii. What does Jesus' first sentence, "I am the light of the world" mean to you? Do you think Jesus was speaking literally, symbolically, metaphorically, or in some combination?
 1. What do Isaiah 60:19-20, Revelation 21:23-25, and 22:5 suggest would be the right answer?
 2. What do passages like Psalm 27:1, Isaiah 49:6, John 1:4-9 and John 3:19-22 suggest the answer would be? How do these passages point to Jesus as God rather than just a good person who is a messenger from God?
- iii. John writes a great deal about "light" in his Gospel. In addition to those passages from John listed in the above paragraph, read John 9:4-5, 11:9-10, 12:35-36, and 12:46.
 1. What is Jesus claiming in these passages?
 2. Why (how) is this claim central to our Christian faith?

d. Wednesday:

- i. Continue focusing on John 8:12. If you are memorizing the verse, try saying it aloud rather than reading it.
- ii. How would the first few words of Jesus' second sentence have brought His audience back to the events of the Feast of the Tabernacles?

1. According to the passages read Monday (especially Numbers 9:15-23 and Deuteronomy 1:33), what were the Israelites to do regarding the pillar of fire?
 2. How does this compare with what Christ expects of us (see Matthew 4:19, John 12:26 & 21:19)?
 3. During their time in the wilderness, when would the Israelites have walked in darkness?
- iii. Jesus ends this verse by telling us the results of following Him.
1. What does Jesus mean when He says we will not walk in darkness if we follow Him? What does “darkness” mean to you?
 2. What do these verses tell us about “darkness”: John 12:35 & 46, Romans 13:12, 2 Corinthians 6:14, Ephesians 5:11, Colossians 1:13, 1 Peter 2:9, 12 John 1:6 and 2:11?
 3. Not only will we not be in the darkness, but we will have the “light of life.” What does that mean to you? Read Matthew 5:14-16. What is implicit in having the light?
- e. **Thursday:**
- i. Read John 8:13-27 and then carefully meditate on John 8:28-30. If you are memorizing verse 12, take time to say it aloud.
 1. What is the primary subject of the discussions between Jesus and the Jews recorded in verses 13-27?
 2. On what basis did the Pharisees reject Jesus’ statement that He was the light of the world? How did Jesus respond in verses 14-18? In referring to Numbers 35:30, what does Jesus reveal about the Pharisee’s true intentions?
 3. By referring to His Father, Jesus clarifies His claim that He came from God. How does this heighten the tension between Jesus and His opponents?
 4. Jesus then makes a significant statement in verse 24: “I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins” (compare with John 3:16-18).
 - a. Read Isaiah 41:4, 43:10, 43:13, 43:25, 46:4, and 48:12. Who is Jesus telling them they must believe Him to be?
 - b. What does our contemporary culture find so objectionable about this claim?
 - ii. What does Jesus say that must happen before they know who He really is (verse 28)? Compare this verse with John 3:14-15 and 12:32-33. Collectively, what do these verses tell us about Jesus’ mission?
- f. **Friday:**
- i. Read and meditate on verse 31.
 - ii. To Whom are Jesus’ words addressed? Why should that make them particularly important to us?
 - iii. What does the word “abide” mean to you?
 1. The first part of Jesus’ sentence is translated as “If you abide (ESV),” “If you hold to (NIV),” and “If you continue in (CSV).” Considering these various translations, what is Jesus telling us to do when He says to “abide”?

2. Is Jesus emphasizing immediate, instantaneous actions (like going forward during an alter call) or a long-term lifestyle?
3. Read John 15:1-17. What additional insights does this passage provide? What teaching (command) must we obey?
- iv. What is the “word” Jesus is talking about? If we are going to abide in His word (teachings) what must we do? How can we know His word? Consider Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:1-2, and 2 Timothy 3:16.
 1. Is Jesus telling us that we must do specific things (works) in order to be one of His disciples (consider Ephesians 2:8-9)?
 2. Conversely, (without judging) what might be concluded about a “Christian” who has a Bible but hasn’t ever read it?

g. Saturday:

- i. Read and meditate on John 8:31-32.
- ii. What two things does Jesus tell us will occur if, as His disciples, we abide in the word?
 1. What is “truth”? See John 14:6. 1:14 & 17, and 1 John 5:20. Where must we go to find truth? What bearing does this have on the popular worldview that rejects Christ’s claim to be the only way to the Father?
 2. What is freedom, and from what will the truth set us “free”? Consider John 8:37, Romans 6:11-18, Romans 8:1-2, 1 Corinthians 6:14 & 15:12-26.
 3. What would the Jews listening to Jesus have thought they most needed to be freed of? How did that taint their reactions to what Jesus taught and who Jesus was? How do we tend to do the same in our age?
- iii. Jesus didn’t leave His disciples (or us) alone to figure out the truth. Read John 16:12-15. How should that reassure us as we read and study the Bible?
- iv. Conclude the week by rereading John 8:12-32.

4. Application:

- a. The most important question we can ever answer is who we believe Jesus is. If you have not settled that in your own mind, meet with one of the pastors, deacons, or other Christians and seriously consider what they show you from the Scriptures.
- b. If you are a Christian but are convicted by what Jesus said in John 8:31, consider joining one of the discipleship Thrive groups available at LRBC or the next Vines and Branches group that will be forming in the May/June timeframe.
- c. The fact that we as Christians have received the “light of life” (John 8:12) incurs an obligation to share it with others (see Matthew 5:13-16). The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) commands apply to us, and we are not “abiding” in His word if we ignore them.

5. Prayer Points:

- a. Adoration – Psalms 8:1 and 29:1-2
- b. Confession – Proverbs 28:13 and 1 John 1:8-10
- c. Thanksgiving – Psalms 95:1-2 and 100:4-5
- d. Supplications –Matthew 21:22 and John 16:19