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Is It Time Yet?

JOHN 7:1-13

Introduction

1. All of us who are parents have had one of these questions asked of us by our children when they were young:
 - a. "Is it time yet?"
 - b. "What time is it?"
 - c. "How much longer?"
2. Their young minds have very little concept of time and its passing.
3. They mark time by a coming event. So did Jesus.

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4. In the Greek language of the N.T., there were typically three words used to mark time:
 - a. *Chronos* — a period or length of time
 - b. *Hora* (hour) — a specific time
 - 1) Often utilized by Jesus (13 times in John's gospel)
 - a) "My hour has not yet come" (John 2:4)
 - b) "An hour is coming" (John 4:21, 23; 5:25, 28; 16:2, 25, 32)
 - c) "The hour has come" (John 12:23; 17:1)
 - 2) When used this way by Him, it means "the destined hour of God".
 - a) "Such a time or hour was not movable nor avoidable." (Barclay)
 - b) "It had to be accepted without argument and without alteration because it was the hour at which the plan of God had decided that

something must happen.

- c. *Kairos* — an opportunity
 - a) The best time to do something.
 - b) “The moment when circumstances are most suitable, *the psychological moment.*” (Barclay)
5. This is the word which Jesus used here in John’s gospel.
6. As a matter of fact, it is the only time that John records Jesus has having used this word.
7. Tonight, I would like for us to look more in depth at what Jesus is saying to his brothers and what we may learn from it.

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I. What Prompts These Words?

A. THE CIRCUMSTANCES

“After these things Jesus was walking in Galilee, for He was unwilling to walk in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him” (John 7:1).

1. “After these things”
 - a. The feeding of the 5,000 and the crowd’s proclamation, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world” (John 1:14).
 - b. The declaration that He is “the bread of life” (John 6:35, 48).
 - c. Many of His disciples had withdrawn and “were not walking with Him anymore” (John 6:66).
2. “Jesus was walking in Galilee”
 - a. He continued His ministry in Galilee.
3. “He was unwilling to walk in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him”

- a. In John 5, we read of an invalid at the Pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem who Jesus healed on a Sabbath day during one of the feasts.
- b. In verses 16-18, John records for us the reaction of the Jewish rulers to Jesus' healing of this man:

“For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath. But He answered them, “My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.” 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” (John 5:16–18).

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B. THE COMING FEAST

“Now the feast of the Jews, the Feast of Booths, was near” (John 7:2).

1. This feast is also known as the Feast of Tabernacles (KJV, NIV84) and the Festival of Ingathering (Exodus 23:16; 34:22).
2. It fell at the end of our September and the beginning of October.
3. The festival came at the end of the harvest season, and was one of the three annual festivals at which every male was required to appear. (Ex. 23:14-17; 34:23; Dt. 16:16).
4. The designation ‘feast of booths (tabernacles)’ came from the requirement for all those born as Israelites to live in booths made of boughs of trees and branches of palm trees for the 7 days of the feast (Lv. 23:42).

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C. THE BROTHERS' URGING

“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. 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.”” (John 7:3–4)

1. Jesus’ brothers tried to force Jesus into going to Jerusalem.
 - a. In verse 5, John lets us know that Jesus’ brothers — James, Joses, Judas and Simon (Mark 6:3) — did not believe in Him.
 - b. The fact that they grew up with Him in the same family made no difference.
 - ❑ Proximity does not guarantee faith.
2. We might even say they dared Him to go up to the feast.
3. From a human standpoint they were right:
 - a. Jesus’ miracles had been taking place in Galilee:
 - 1) The changing of water to wine (John 2:1ff.).
 - 2) The healing of the nobleman’s son (John 4:46).
 - 3) The feeding of the five thousand (John 6:1ff.).
 - b. The only miracle which had taken place in Jerusalem to this point was the healing of the invalid at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5:1ff.).
4. In their minds, if Jesus was to succeed in winning others to His cause, He could not do so by hiding in a corner — “no one does anything in secret when he himself seeks to be known publicly” (v. 4).
5. He must act in such a way that everyone could see what He was doing — “show Yourself to the world” (v. 4).
6. The only way to do that was to go to Jerusalem.
7. The Galileans were known for being hot-headed — i.e, James and John, “sons of Thunder” (Mark 3:17).
8. It wasn’t difficult to attract followers in the excitable atmosphere of Galilee.
9. Jerusalem was a different situation — it would be the true test.

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II. Jesus' Words To His Brothers

A. MY TIME VS. YOUR TIME

"My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune" (John 7:6, NASB95).

1. Jesus told His brothers that His time differed from their time.
2. They could come and go without any significance — for them any time was right.
3. He, on the other hand, always pleased His Father, God, so His time movements were those that His Father desired.
4. If He went up with His brothers at the beginning of the feast He would not get the opportunity He sought.
5. It was better for Him to wait till the crowds assembled so that He could suddenly come among them.
6. Jesus was carefully choosing His time so as to get the most effective results.
7. In this we find an important lesson: *It is impossible to force Jesus' hand.*
 - a. Jesus does not operate on our time, but in God's time.
 - b. As someone has said, "God is never early. He is never late. He is always right on time."
 - c. It does no good for you and I to be impatient with God.
 - d. We must learn to wait on His wisdom.

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B. THE WORLD SEES YOU DIFFERENTLY THAN IT SEES ME

"The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil" (John 7:7, NASB95).

1. Earlier (v. 4), Jesus' brothers had challenged Him to "show [Himself] to the

world.”

2. Jesus now used their own word, ‘world’ (κ ό σ μ ο ς), but in a different sense.
3. When Jesus used the word, “world,” He meant everything that is hostile to Him.
4. As such, the world did not hate them because they belonged to it (cf. John 15:18-19).
5. However, the world did hate Jesus because He continually testifies that its deeds are evil.
6. As one person put it, “The evil-doer does not care to have his sin rebuked, and the hatred of which Jesus speaks is the inevitable result” (Leon Morris, p. 397).
7. This brings us to our second lesson, which is, *“it is impossible to treat Jesus with indifference.”*
 - a. You and I are either committed to Jesus or we want nothing to do with Him, He will accept no middle position.
 - b. Later, when He did go up to this feast, He said to those same religious leaders who were seeking to kill Him, “unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins” (John 8:24).
 - c. Part of the message which our glorified Lord would have John write to the Christians in Laodicea addressed this very issue: “I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth” (Revelation 3:15-16).

Conclusion

1. As we conclude this lesson tonight, let me take you back to one of the other

words used by Jesus in John's gospel for time — the word *hora* or hour.

2. You may remember how this term is used by Jesus:
 - a. It meant "the destined hour of God."
 - b. That time or hour which is neither movable nor avoidable.
 - c. It is that hour at which the plan of God has decided that something must happen.
3. The return of our Lord is such an hour.

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4. During the week before His crucifixion, Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives with His disciples, looking at the Temple. In speaking of His return in judgment, He said, "But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time will come" (Mark 13:23-33).
5. Neither you nor I can move that hour nor avoid it.
6. As Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:10, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."
7. The question is, "Are we ready?"