JOHN 7

Joh 7:1  After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He would not go about in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him.

* As we’ve observed in our Matthew and Mark studies, Jesus spent a great deal of time in Galilee.
* John reveals part of the reason for that was due to the Jews wanting to kill Him.
  + For healing a man on the Sabbath day.
  + For His claims of equality with God.

Joh 7:2  Now the Jews' Feast of Booths was at hand.

* You can read about the Feast of Booths in Lev 23:33ff.
* The Feast of Booth (or the Feast of Tents) took place on the 15th day of the 7th month, Tisri (see Num 29:13). This would be around September-October.
* The feast lasted 7 days.
* All of the Israelites lived in tents for the 7 days of the feast.
* It was intended to commemorate the days when their ancestors lived in tents after God led them out of slavery in Egypt.
* SIDE NOTE: Nehemiah 8:17 informs us the Israelites neglected this Feast from the time of Joshua to the time of Nehemiah.

Joh 7:3  So his brothers said to him, “Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing.

Joh 7:4  For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world.”

Joh 7:5  For not even his brothers believed in him.

* We know Jesus had half-brothers and sisters from verses such as Matthew 13:55-56.
* In chapter 6, Jesus talked with a group of people who didn’t believe in Him.
* Chapter 7 reveals His brothers were in the same camp.
* If verse 5 wasn’t included, we might interpret verses 3-4 as Jesus’ brothers encouraging Him to further His ministry, but verse 5 reveals their words had a hostile edge to them.
  + They seem to have assumed Jesus was interested in popularity.
  + They told Jesus to go to the feast and make His presence known in Jerusalem.
  + “No more miracles in small town Galilee…”
  + “Go to Jerusalem, where the entire Jewish world is gathered for the feast, and prove yourself there.”
  + “If you are all you claim to be, that shouldn’t be a problem.”
  + “You may be able to trick some uneducated Galilean citizens, but go to the big city where the rabbis and the scholars live, and we will see what they make of you.”
* APPLICATION:
  + Not even Jesus’ family accepted Him.
  + Can we expect better?

Joh 7:6  Jesus said to them, “My time has not yet come, but your time is always here.

Joh 7:7  The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil.

Joh 7:8  You go up to the feast. I am not going up to this feast, for my time has not yet fully come.”

* Jesus responded by telling His brothers His “time” had not yet come.
* Jesus had said something similar to His mother in John 2 when she asked Him to solve the wine shortage issue.
* Jesus had come to earth for greater things than seeking the popularity His brothers believed He wanted.
* He wasn’t interested in chasing every big crowd to make a name for Himself.
* He had a mission on a precise timeline and He would accomplish it exactly as He planned.
* On the other hand, His brothers were thinking carnally.
  + They thought Jesus wanted popularity.
  + Why? Probably because that is what they would’ve been pursuing if they had had Jesus’ influence.
  + That is what most men pursue.
  + That is where a mind geared towards carnal things will lead you.
  + They couldn’t see Jesus’ higher purpose.
* Understanding that may help us understand Jesus’ statement, “My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil. ”
  + The designated time for Jesus’ public entry into Jerusalem had not yet come.
  + There would be a day for that (triumphal entry) but it wasn’t this day.
  + The Jews hated Jesus and wanted to kill Him because He condemned their wickedness and hard hearts.
  + But the brothers were free to go in and out of Jerusalem as publicly or privately as they pleased.
  + They had nothing to fear from the Jews because they shared their carnal mind.
  + Valued the same things the Jews valued.
* Jesus told them to go up to the feast.
* Jesus was not going to go to the feast, at least not in the public way His brothers encouraged.

Joh 7:9  After saying this, he remained in Galilee.

Joh 7:10  But after his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up, not publicly but in private.

Joh 7:11  The Jews were looking for him at the feast, and saying, “Where is he?”

* Jesus’ family left and went down to Jerusalem but Jesus didn’t go with them.
* Verse 11 tells us there were a lot of people anticipating the arrival of Jesus’ family hoping to find Jesus among them.
  + These feasts were large cultural events and families would have travelled from their homeland to Jerusalem to celebrate.
  + Not that dissimilar from modern families packing their bags and travelling together over the Thanksgiving or Christmas holidays.
* But Jesus remained in Galilee (75 miles North).

Joh 7:12  And there was much muttering about him among the people. While some said, “He is a good man,” others said, “No, he is leading the people astray.”

Joh 7:13  Yet for fear of the Jews no one spoke openly of him.

* Just as they are today, the people were still debating the identity of Jesus.
  + Was He a good man?
  + Was He the Messiah?
  + Was He leading people away from the Law of Moses?
  + Was He a deceiver?
* Judas and James, two of the Lord’s brothers, were probably among those murmuring critical things about Jesus, but it would only be a few years before they were boldly proclaiming, in that same city, that Jesus was the Savior of the world.
* The people were very cautious not to let the Jewish leaders hear them discussing Jesus.
  + Apparently they had forbid discussion about Jesus.
  + We find out in chapter 9 they were banishing Jews from the synagogues if they confessed Christ.
  + Generally, authorities only deem discussion of something illegal if they perceive it to be a threat.
  + This tells us something about the sincerity of the Jewish leaders.

Joh 7:14  About the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and began teaching.

Joh 7:15  The Jews therefore marveled, saying, “How is it that this man has learning, when he has never studied?”

* Around the middle of the feast, Jesus finally made an appearance.
* He began teaching in the Temple.
* Jesus’ command of the Old Testament scriptures was such that the Jews were astounded.
* They couldn’t figure out how someone who had never been formally educated could exhibit His level of comprehension.

Joh 7:16  So Jesus answered them, “My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me.

Joh 7:17  If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority.

Joh 7:18  The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood.

* These words speak directly to the complaint of Jesus’ brothers and to the suspicions of those who believed Jesus was “leading people astray.”
  + Jesus didn’t come to the earth to promote Himself for personal gain.
  + He came from the Father to deliver the Father’s message for the Father’s glory.
* This was also an answer to those who marveled at His “learning” (verse 15).
  + He had not acquired His knowledge of the Law through one of the rabbinic schools.
  + He wasn’t taught by some “religious scholar.”
  + If He had been, He probably would have been just as misguided about the nature of the Law as the Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes.
  + No, He had a profound understanding of the Old Testament Law because God created the Law and He had come to deliver God’s message.
* Anyone with an honest heart could examine the scriptures and understand Jesus’ message was in line with what God had been saying for centuries through the Old Testament prophets.
* It is usually pretty easy to tell when someone is a self-promotor.
  + They claim they are the origin of some great idea, invention, or wisdom.
  + They want others to recognize them.
  + They want glory for themselves.
* But Christ came, not to make Himself known in the pursuit of earthly glory, but to make His Father known so that men would praise Him.

Joh 7:19  Has not Moses given you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why do you seek to kill me?”

* This was a bold statement.
* The Jews were still angry at Jesus for supposedly violating the Law of Moses and healing a man on the Sabbath Day (several months had past since the healing).
* Jesus throws the accusation back in their faces.
* Why would they want to kill Him for breaking the Law when they didn’t even keep the Law?

Joh 7:20  The crowd answered, “You have a demon! Who is seeking to kill you?”

* Jesus’ statement didn’t do much to calm the Jew’s temper.
* They told Jesus He had a demon and they tried to deny Jesus’ statement about their intentions.
* Isn’t that such a common response of defensive people?
  + Act like the person accusing them is overexaggerating.
  + And pretend like they are crazy for even suggesting as much (just watch the nightly news).

Joh 7:21  Jesus answered them, “I did one work, and you all marvel at it.

Joh 7:22  Moses gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath.

Joh 7:23  If on the Sabbath a man receives circumcision, so that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because on the Sabbath I made a man's whole body well?

* Of course, Jesus did many miracles, but the one the Jews held on to (marveled at) and held a grudge about was His healing of a man on the Sabbath.
* Jesus then compares what He had done to the way the Jews kept Moses’ command regarding circumcision.
  + Circumcision as a sign of God’s covenant existed before the Old Testament Law (the Law of Moses) but it had been incorporated into the Law.
  + Lev 12:3  And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.
  + Male infants were circumcised on their 8th day of life.
    - But what if that 8th day was a Sabbath day?
    - Jesus informs us the practice of the Jews was to go ahead and circumcise on the Sabbath.
  + They did it so “the law of Moses” wouldn’t be broken.
  + Jesus expresses no problem with their practice, He only asks them to be consistent.
    - Was “love your neighbor as yourself” not also part of the Law of Moses?
    - Was “kindness” not a part of their scriptures?
    - Of course they were!
  + Jesus’ healing of the sick man wasn’t a violation of the Law any more than their circumcision was a violation.
  + They were concerned with only one body part of a man’s body during circumcision. Jesus had healed a man’s entire body.
  + Their accusation was inconsistent with their own actions. Especially considering Jesus’ healing of the lame man required significantly less “work” (effort) than it required them to perform a circumcision.

Joh 7:24  Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.”

* The Jews had looked at this situation from shallow/surface level.
* They saw something they didn’t like and immediately condemned it, not realizing they practiced the same thing.
* Their judgements were tilted by their prejudices.
* The Jewish leaders needed to take a hard look at their hearts, the Law, and the spirit behind the Law and correct their judgement accordingly.
* APPLICATION:
  + We need to be very careful that we aren’t condemning someone for something we participate in.
  + It is easy, like the Jews, to judge someone’s visible actions based on surface level evaluation, while not realizing we justify some of our own actions with the same logic.
  + It is very common for people’s prejudices to interfere with their ability to judge rightly and impartially.
  + There are few ways to lose people’s respect faster than when your judgements are skewed in your own favor (especially in the Church).
  + We need to be careful that we aren’t justifying our actions with the same logic we use to condemn the actions of others.

Joh 7:25  Some of the people of Jerusalem therefore said, “Is not this the man whom they seek to kill?

Joh 7:26  And here he is, speaking openly, and they say nothing to him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Christ?

* As is the case with many politicians today, the common Jews knew their religious leaders were lying about their intentions to kill Jesus.
* They thought they could lie their way out of everything and pull the wool over people’s eyes but the people weren’t fooled (sounds familiar).
* Jesus was teaching openly in the Temple and the people were curious why their leaders weren’t doing anything about it.
  + The people are quoted as saying, “Is not this the man whom they seek to kill? And here he is, speaking openly, and they say nothing to Him.”
  + Why didn’t they say anything to Jesus?
  + Probably because of what just happened a few verses earlier.
  + Jesus had exposed their hypocrisy and they didn’t have a response.
  + They didn’t have an argument.
* The people surmised that, perhaps, Jesus had convinced the Jewish leaders He was indeed the Messiah.
  + Maybe they gave up their plan to murder Him because they were now believers.
  + In reality, while the leaders had been silenced by Jesus’ words, they were far from being believers.
* I’m not sure the Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes ever honestly asked if Jesus was the Messiah.
  + I don’t think they ever did an honest evaluation.
  + They had determined, in their minds, that whoever the Messiah was going to be, He wasn’t going to be a threat to their way of life.
  + Therefore, Jesus was immediately off the table.
  + APPLICATION:
    - We cannot determine, in our minds, who God is until God reveals Himself to us.
    - There are many people who before reading God’s word, which is where He reveals Himself to us, determine that whoever God is, He isn’t going to be a threat to their way of life.
    - As was the case with the Jewish religious leaders, that attitude can lead someone to reject the true God if there is something about Him they don’t like.

Joh 7:27  But we know where this man comes from, and when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from.”

* This verse is a bit tricky to interpret.
* We know the Jews expected the Messiah to be born in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:4-5).
* So why did they say, “no one will know where he comes from?”
  + While it was true they knew the location the Messiah was prophesied to be born, there was still mystery surrounding His arrival.
  + The prophets said Jesus would be born of a virgin and called Him the Mighty God and Everlasting Father (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6).
  + Apparently the people thought they knew everything about Jesus’ origin.
    - Luke 3 tells us many assumed Jesus was the physical son of Joseph.
    - Luk 3:23  Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli,
  + Jesus responds to their assumptions in the next few verses.

Joh 7:28  So Jesus proclaimed, as he taught in the temple, “You know me, and you know where I come from. But I have not come of my own accord. He who sent me is true, and him you do not know.

Joh 7:29  I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me.”

* Jesus acknowledged that, in some sense, they were familiar with where He had come from.
* They knew His earthly father, mother, and brothers.
* But in a greater sense, they knew nothing of His divine origins.
* They did not know God but He knew God and had been sent from God.
* Their assumptions was wrong.
* They knew only a few earthly attributes of His supernatural arrival and even much of what they thought they knew was wrong.

Joh 7:30  So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come.

Joh 7:31  Yet many of the people believed in him. They said, “When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done?”

* The leaders of the people were seeking to arrest Jesus but they could not because “his hour had not yet come.”
  + It wasn’t the time for Jesus to die yet.
  + We aren’t given the details but somehow God prevented the arrest of Jesus.
  + It doesn’t appear God used any miraculous means to keep Jesus from going to jail, evidently it was some kind of providential working.
* APPLICATION:
  + God can do the same thing in our lives.
  + He can protect us and arrange the circumstances of our lives in order to guide us in accomplishing His will.
* There were many in the crowd who believed in Jesus.
* The abundance of miracles Christ performed was part of their reason for believing.

Joh 7:32  The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest him.

* These next few verses will explain part of the reason the Pharisees were unsuccessful in arresting Jesus.
* They sent soldiers to make the arrest, but as we will observe, they came back empty handed.

Joh 7:33  Jesus then said, “I will be with you a little longer, and then I am going to him who sent me.

Joh 7:34  You will seek me and you will not find me. Where I am you cannot come.”

Joh 7:35  The Jews said to one another, “Where does this man intend to go that we will not find him? Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?

Joh 7:36  What does he mean by saying, ‘You will seek me and you will not find me,’ and, ‘Where I am you cannot come’?”

* The soldiers arrived while Jesus was teaching.
* Jesus told the crowds He would be with them for a little while but would soon return to “him who sent me.”
  + Jesus would be on earth for a short period of time.
  + He would then ascend to God in heaven.
* He told them they would look for Him but they wouldn’t be able to find Him because He was going to a place they couldn’t come.
  + People would search for Jesus after His ascension.
  + But they wouldn’t be able to find Him, for obvious reasons.
  + His intention was not to remain on earth forever.
* Those familiar with the story of Jesus probably won’t have a hard time understanding these words.
  + But put yourself in the shoes of a Jew in the 1st Century who hadn’t had the privilege of seeing the end of Jesus’ life (death, resurrection, ascension).
  + These statements would have been much harder to understand.
  + Especially if your mind was full of misguided assumptions about the Messiah coming to establish a throne in Jerusalem and rule the nations.
* Verse 35 and 36 reveal these statements were very confusing to the Jewish audience.
  + “Where does this man intend to go that we will not find him?”
  + “Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?
    - The Dispersion is a reference to the Jews who lived outside of Judaea.
    - There were Jews in Egypt, Asia Minor, Babylon, etc.
    - Was Jesus going to leave Judaea behind and seek followers elsewhere?
    - When the term “Greeks” is used in the Bible, it typically isn’t a reference only to the citizens of Greece. It is used in a similar way to the word “gentile.”
    - A gentile was any non-Jewish person.
    - Alexander had spread Greek culture throughout the known world a few centuries before the events of this chapter, so it makes sense for the “Greeks” to be used in a general/universal sense.
  + “What does he mean by saying, ‘You will seek me and you will not find me,’ and, ‘Where I am you cannot come’?”
* There was a great deal of confusion but Jesus didn’t feel the need to give them all of the details at this point.
* Again, we see Jesus putting forward an idea, the details of which will not be understood until a later date.
* But for those who held on to these words and stored them in the backs of their minds, they would have been a powerful testament to Jesus authenticity when they were finally able to understand following Jesus’ ascension to Heaven.

Joh 7:37  On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.

Joh 7:38  Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’”

Joh 7:39  Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

* We now skip ahead a few days to the last day of the feast.
* Jesus stood up and said, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”
* We’ve seen this theme running through the first 7 chapters of this book.
  + Jesus is spiritual water for the thirsty.
  + Jesus is spiritual food to the hungry.
* Jesus invites the thirsty to come to Him and drink.
* Secular history tells us the Jews kept a tradition on the last day of the Feast of Booths.
  + The priests would take a golden vessel, fill it with water from the pool of Siloam, and, with a great expression of joy, pour it on the altar of burnt offering in the Temple.
  + This tradition wasn’t commanded in the Old Testament but it may have originated from their interpretation of Isaiah 12:3 (Lightfoot).
  + Isa 12:3  With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.
* Was Jesus referencing this tradition when He spoke the words in verse 37?
  + Perhaps.
  + But, from my research, the details of the tradition aren’t clear enough for us to make a connection with absolute certainty.
* Nonetheless, the explanation of Jesus’ words is given in the text.
* Jesus invites those who are unfulfilled, who recognize their need for God, those who are searching for salvation, to come to Him, drink their fill, and find satisfaction.
* He tells His listeners He can make their hearts flow with living water.
  + Jesus can fill a person’s heart with what it thirsts for.
  + If your heart is a fountain satisfying all your thirst, you won’t need to go anywhere else searching for satisfaction.
* How was this to be accomplished?
  + Through the Holy Spirit who was to dwell within “those who believed in him…”
  + God was going to send His Spirit to accomplish this soul satisfying work.
* The Spirit of God had been promised in the Old Testament (Isa 44:3; Joe 2:28).
  + It was given to Christians follow Jesus’ ascension.
  + As we observed in John 1 and John 3, the Spirit of God played a role in the new birth of all believers.
  + The Spirit of God would give miraculous gifts to some in the early Church.
* APPLICATION:
  + This is an important lesson for modern readers.
  + Perhaps you’ve found yourself thirsty, not in a physical sense, but in a spiritual sense.
  + You know there is something more to life than just living 80 years and dying but you aren’t sure what it is.
  + You’ve searched for satisfaction in many things, jumping from one to the next, believing it is the next thing that will finally bring contentment to your soul… only to be repeatedly disappointed.
  + Where can you go for answers?
  + Who can help you find what you’re missing?
  + Who better than your Creator?

Joh 7:40  When they heard these words, some of the people said, “This really is the Prophet.”

Joh 7:41  Others said, “This is the Christ.” But some said, “Is the Christ to come from Galilee?

Joh 7:42  Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the offspring of David, and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David was?”

Joh 7:43  So there was a division among the people over him.

Joh 7:44  Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

* The people were conflicted as to Jesus’ identity.
* His words were enough to convince some He was “the Prophet.”
  + Probably the one Moses spoke of in Deuteronomy.
  + Deu 18:18  I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.
  + It’s possible they could have been referring to another prophet who was expected to come before the Messiah.
  + Mat 16:14  And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”
* Some were willing to confess their belief in Jesus being the Messiah.
* But their confession was met with an objection.
  + As mentioned previously, the Jews knew the prophesied location of the Messiah’s birth, Bethlehem (Micah 5:2)
  + Evidently, some assumed that because Jesus had spent a lot of time in Galilee, He must have been born in Galilee (which wasn’t the case).
  + They brought up this perceived inconsistency and it created a division among the crowd.
* As we observed in a previous chapter, the people are willing to debate this point, but there is no indication they ever ask Jesus for clarification.
* Some wanted Jesus arrested but the officers from the Pharisees weren’t ready to make the arrest.

Joh 7:45  The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, “Why did you not bring him?”

Joh 7:46  The officers answered, “No one ever spoke like this man!”

Joh 7:47  The Pharisees answered them, “Have you also been deceived?

* When the officers, who were tasked with the arrest, returned to the Pharisees, Jesus wasn’t with them.
* When asked why, they responded, “No one ever spoke like this man!”
  + They were amazed at Jesus’ teaching.
  + I would have loved to be a fly on the wall to observe the reaction of the Pharisees.
* They asked the officers if they, like many of the common people, had been deceived.
* The Pharisees then give a reason why no one should believe in Jesus.

Joh 7:48  Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him?

Joh 7:49  But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed.”

* The Pharisees told the officers they shouldn’t believe in Jesus because none of the “authorities” (chief priests, Pharisees, scribes) believed in Him.
* They imply the authorities have knowledge of the Law of God and the only reason the simple people accept Christ is because they are ignorant about the Law.
* This argument shouldn’t have been very convincing considering Jesus had just take the Jewish authorities to school earlier in the feast on the question of Sabbath restrictions (verses 21-24).
* APPLICATION:
  + Watch out for this same argument in the religious world today.
  + Man-made credentials don’t ensure a person understands God-made principles.
  + If you’ve done an honest evaluation of the facts in order to discover truth, don’t let some well credentialed person tell you you are wrong without giving you reasons.
  + Credentials should enable a person to present evidence with greater clarity.
  + Credentials should never be allowed to stand in the place of evidence.
  + “Believe me because I said so and I have credentials” isn’t a case anyone should find compelling.

Joh 7:50  Nicodemus, who had gone to him before, and who was one of them, said to them,

Joh 7:51  “Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?”

Joh 7:52  They replied, “Are you from Galilee too? Search and see that no prophet arises from Galilee.”

* We haven’t seen Nicodemus since his night meeting with Jesus in chapter 3.
* He doesn’t come out and confess Jesus before His peers in verse 51, but he does stick his neck out a bit in Jesus defense.
* The Pharisees had never questioned Jesus formally.
  + He had never had His day in court.
  + It wasn’t right for them to condemn a man to death before that process was allowed to play out.
* But the Pharisees weren’t interested in justice or doing the right thing.
* They insulted Nicodemus by asking if He was a Galilean?
  + This was probably an insult on His intelligence.
  + Galileans weren’t known for being the best educated people.
  + Ridicule is not argument, and there is no demonstration in a gibe (insulting or mocking remark); but, unhappily, this is the only weapon which the proud and haughty often use in opposing religion (Barnes).
* After insulting Nicodemus, they pronounce the case closed and state as a fact that Jesus couldn’t be the Messiah because He had been born in Galilee.
  + If my calculation is correct, this is now the 3rd time confusion has arisen as to the birthplace of Jesus.
  + And this is the third time we don’t hear of any action being taken to clear up the issue.
  + I can think of at least two ways this could have been cleared up:
    - 1. Ask Jesus.
      * This is the obvious solution.
      * But we have no record of the Jewish authorities asking Jesus.
      * Maybe if they had given Jesus His day in court they could have gotten this cleared up.
    - 2. Find and ask someone who was alive when Jesus was born.
      * Jesus was in His early thirties.
      * They could have found someone who knew Him.
      * Asked if anyone in Nazareth had been there at His birth.
      * Asked anyone in Bethlehem if they had been there at His birth.
      * It isn’t inconceivable to imagine them running into someone who could tell them about the star in Bethlehem.
      * Especially considering they were Jewish religious leaders and Herod had gathered the “chief priests and scribes” (religious leaders) to ask about the star the wise men were following in Matthew 2.
      * Some of those men were probably still alive!
  + But have you ever been afraid to look up the facts about something, because you know if you do, you might be wrong and have to change something? Or it might be damaging to a position you supported in the past?
  + Yeah… me too!
  + People assumed Jesus was from Galilee and they were going to roll with that assumption because it supported their case.
  + APPLICATION:
    - This text should be a lesson to us about the danger of doing that.
    - We’ve got to look up the facts no matter where they lead us.
  + APPLICATION:
    - Popular opinion and popular assumption isn’t always true.
    - Just because everybody around you believes something doesn’t make it true.
    - The real question should be, how many fact checkers are you surrounded by?
    - I think the truth is, in most situations in life, you have a lot of people who have opinions and assumptions about things, but you have very few people who have put in the time to educate themselves on those things.