

## John 7

### Bible study questions and application

#### 1. Review the article below by RC Sproul on the feast of Booths...

“You shall dwell in booths for seven days ... that your generations may know that I made the people of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God” (vv. 42–43).

- [Leviticus 23:33–43](#)

Few of the feasts that were a part of old covenant worship were as joyful as the Feast of Booths. Also known as the Feast of Tabernacles or by its Hebrew name, Sukkot, this celebration was the last of the fall festivals and was held at the end of the agricultural year when the grapes and olives were harvested in Israel. This was a time to thank God for all of the preceding year’s provision and to pray for a good rainy season, which lasted from October through March.

Primarily, however, Sukkot was designed to remember the wilderness journey from Egypt to Canaan, when God made the people live in booths ([Lev. 23:33–43](#)). During the time of the feast, each Israelite family was supposed to construct a booth, or *sukkah*, and live in it for a week (vv. 42–43). These booths were small, temporary shelters with thatched roofs of palm fronds and other plants, and according to one interpretation of verse 41, they were decorated with different kinds of fruit that grew in Palestine. Later generations obeyed the command to rejoice with fruit and foliage (v. 40) by having men carry an *etrog*, or citron, and a *lulav* in joyful processions. A citron is a citrus fruit native to the Middle East that looks something like a large lemon, and a *lulav* is a branch of palm with two myrtle branches bound to one side of it and three willow branches to the other. Furthermore, in keeping with Sukkot’s purpose to remember the wilderness journey, later Israelites added a water-pouring ceremony to recall those occasions when the Lord gave Israel water in the desert ([Ex. 17:1–7](#); [Num. 20: 1–13](#)). The officiating priest would draw water from the pool of Siloam and pour it into the basin near the altar in the temple. Moses often warned the Israelites not to forget the God who redeemed them from slavery once they were fat and happy in the Promised Land (Deut. 8). This reveals another purpose of Sukkot. It could be tempting for the Israelites to sit in their houses after a great harvest and say, “Look at what we did and how we have profited.” Living in booths for a week reminded them that their success in Canaan was wholly on account of the Lord’s grace. He had brought them to the good land and could just as easily take them out of it. A tangible reminder of His provision in the wilderness during Sukkot showed the Israelites they must always trust Him alone for their supply.

At each Feast of Booths, the Israelites gave up the comforts of their homes in order to commemorate God’s salvation. This is a reminder that in order to be redeemed, the people of the Lord must surrender certain things. We must give up self-reliance and selfishness. We must turn

from our idols and the “comforts of our sin.” Unless we repent, turning from such things unto the Redeemer, we cannot be saved.

2. In the sermon the context of the feast was considered in contrasting the reaction of most of the people to Jesus. It was meant to be a time of rejoicing and thanksgiving and yet they rejected the ultimate provision of God. Discuss how we in our society and context can be guilty of this kind of blindness.
3. When Jesus makes his presence in Jerusalem known, people begin to challenge the origin ( and, therefore the authority) of his teaching. According to Jesus, how can we verify the truth of his teaching (vv16-18)?
4. What other opinions or questions do people have about Jesus in vv20-36?
5. On the last day of the feast of Tabernacles, large vats of water were poured out on the pavement of the Temple as a reminder of God’s provision of water in the wilderness. With that custom in mind, how would you explain the significance of Jesus remarks in verses 37-39?
6. Consider the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer with reference to Ephesians 5:18.
7. Discuss the emphasis on “timing” in the passage distinguishing between the intentions of the opponents of Jesus on the one hand and the precise control Jesus exercises.
8. Elaborate on the meaning of *Proverbs 21:1 The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will.*
9. Read James 4:13-17 discussing implications of that passage for us in our planning in this life and the hereafter.
10. Discuss *Hebrews 9:27 And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment,*