

The Gospel of John
Lesson 11 – John 7
Hidden and Revealed

Once again, we encounter a chapter in John that contains odd events, pronouncements, non-sequiturs, contradictions, and controversies. There are also continuing references to the Jews wanting to arrest and kill Jesus. What binds all these stories together are the concepts of hiddenness and revelation.

Jesus is hidden to his brothers (vs.1-9): We begin with the hiddenness of Jesus. His identity is hidden not only from outsiders but from his brothers. They were challenging him to reveal himself. His response is that it is not yet time to do so.

Jesus is hidden to others (vs.10-13): Everyone is looking for Jesus (who is hidden by not being present) and arguing about whether he is a good man or not. We see hiddenness in that even their conversations about Jesus had to be hidden because of fear of the Jews.

Jesus reveals true teaching (vs.14-18): Jesus reveals some of himself through his teachings. People see that he is an amazing teacher. He is in fact, the greatest teacher. The revelation continues in that he makes it clear that he can only teach what he has been given, or what God has revealed to him.

Jesus reveals hypocrisy (vs.19-24): Jesus reveals hypocrisy in that none of those around him can keep the Law of Moses perfectly, even though they claim to be able to do so. He also reveals it when he reminds them that they circumcise on the sabbath (when it is the eighth day after a boy's birth) but wanted to punish him when he healed on the sabbath (which is a greater good).

Jesus reveals who sent him (vs.25-31): Jesus makes it clear that he has been sent by God and that he knows God because he has come from God, though the people do not know God. The people want to lay hands on him (make him hidden) but because Jesus' time has not come, this is impossible.

Jesus speaks of a future hiddenness (vs. 32-36): Jesus tells the people that there will come a time when he will be hidden (he will go away), but it will not be the hiddenness of arrest at that moment. The people don't understand this future hiddenness.

Jesus reveals more about himself (vs.37-39): Jesus invites people to come and drink. This is linked to the Festival, which is the Feast of Booths. During this festival the priest would fill a golden pitcher with water from the Pool at Siloam and carry it through the Water Gate. The water would then be poured on the altar as an offering to God. By declaring himself the living water he is saying just as he was the bread that gave eternal life, he is now saying he is water that does the same...more so than what happens at the Altar.

Jesus remains hidden (vs. 40-43): The people cannot see who Jesus really is. They argue and disagree about his origins and identity. They argue so much that Jesus cannot be seen to be arrested.

The truth is present but is hidden (vs.45-52) Jesus has revealed much about himself. He has revealed enough that Nicodemus wants to hear more. He wants to give Jesus a hearing (an opportunity to reveal more of himself). The powers that-be however, cannot see Jesus at all. They argue that anyone who believes in Jesus has been deceived, or to put it another way, the truth has been hidden from those who believe. The authorities also argue that the crowd does not know the law, though as Jesus pointed out earlier, even if the authorities know the law, they don't follow it. Thus, Jesus remains hidden to those in power.

Questions:

1. Why do you think that Jesus was hidden to so many?
2. Was there ever a time when Jesus was hidden to you? How did that change?
3. How does Jesus reveal himself to you?