

John 7:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

Analysis

But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. The conjunction 'but' (de) signals contrast—while refusing public journey with the brothers, Jesus does attend the feast. 'When his brethren were gone up' (hōs de anebēsan hoi adelphoi autou) indicates their departure. 'Then went he also' (tote kai autos anebē) shows Jesus attending according to His own timing. The negative 'not openly' (ou phanerōs) contrasts with the brothers' advice (verse 4: 'show thyself to the world'). The qualifying phrase 'as it were in secret' (hōs en kruptō) doesn't mean Jesus hid, but He traveled quietly without public fanfare. This demonstrates wisdom—entering Jerusalem openly would provoke premature arrest or mob attention. Jesus controls the revelation's timing and manner. Reformed theology emphasizes that God's methods often contradict human wisdom—He works through hiddenness and weakness rather than worldly power displays.

Historical Context

Pilgrims traveling to Jerusalem for festivals typically journeyed in large groups for safety and fellowship. Jesus's solitary or small-group travel avoided attention. His mid-feast arrival (verse 14) rather than opening-day presence further controlled exposure. This parallels His earlier pattern of avoiding premature publicity—commanding healed persons and disciples not to reveal His identity until the proper time (Mark 1:44, 3:12, 8:30). First-century Jewish festivals were massive gatherings—Josephus estimates up to 2.5 million people at Passover. Tabernacles,

though smaller, still drew enormous crowds. Jesus's quiet entrance demonstrates strategic wisdom. The early church learned similar principles—Paul occasionally traveled secretly to avoid opposition (2 Corinthians 11:32-33), and persecuted believers met secretly. Faithfulness sometimes requires discretion.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How do we distinguish between faithful discretion and faithless hiding or shame?
2. When is it appropriate to avoid publicity in ministry or witness?
3. What does Jesus's strategic approach teach about wisdom in hostile environments?

Interlinear Text

ὥς	δὲ	ἀνέβη	οἱ	ἀδελφοὶ	αὐτὸς	τότε	καὶ	αὐτὸς
as it were	But	up	G3588	brethren	his	then	also	his
G5613	G1161	G305		G80	G846	G5119	G2532	G846

ἀνέβη	εἰς	τὴν	ἐορτήν	οὐ	φανερῶς	ἀλλ'	ὥς	ἐν
up	unto	G3588	the feast	not	openly	but	as it were	in
G305	G1519		G1859	G3756	G5320	G235	G5613	G1722

κρυπτῶ
secret
G2927

Additional Cross-References

Amos 5:13 (Parallel theme): Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time; for it is an evil time.

Matthew 10:16 (Parallel theme): Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

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