

15- Debate, Controversy and Division: 7:1-53

Today there is a big debate in the world over just who Jesus was and is. Many scholars have developed a different picture of Jesus than the Bible reveals. The debate will continue to go on as long as time exist I suppose. Also there is a lot of controversy and division in the world over Jesus. These certainly are not just a modern era phenomenon. It has been going on since Jesus walked on earth around 2000 years ago.

The events of our text today take place some six months or so after the healing of the man on the Sabbath. Jesus has been in the area of Galilee. The Jewish leaders are trying to kill him if the opportunity affords itself to them. *Joh 7:1 After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.*

This section is full of debate, controversy and division about exactly who this man named Jesus was.

I- Reveal Thyself:

No where was the debate about who Jesus was raging larger than among His brothers. They did not believe on Him until much later. Listen and you can almost hear their sarcasm in *Joh 7:2 Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. 3 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. 4 For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. 5 For neither did his brethren believe in him.*

They were unknowingly trying to goat Him into doing something out of God's time and God's will.

Joh 7:6 Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready. 7 The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. 8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come. 9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee.

He tells His brothers to go on to the feast. No one was trying to kill them. They were part of the world that was beginning to hate or at least debate Jesus.

II- Jesus Arrives Without Fanfare:

He goes up a few days later to the feast. He slipped into the throng of people who would have been compassing Jerusalem at the time of this feast.

Joh 7:10 But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. 11 Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?

Some were looking for Him at the feast and wondering where He was.

III- The Debate:

Joh 7:12 And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people. 13 Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.

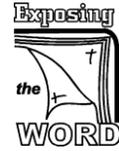
This is in one sense the whole debate about Him at this time as well as ours about



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who Jesus was. Some see Him only as a good man, a man who did good things. Still others saw Him as dangerous and a deceiver.

IV- Jesus Teaches in Temple:

If Jesus went up on the first day of the feast then no one noticed Him the first two days. He may have arrived later and not the first day. Regardless, He is in the temple in the middle of the feast.

Joh 7:14 Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.

Jesus spoke unlike no other man before or after him. Notice the educated class of elites were amazed that He was so well spoken without being educated as they were.

Joh 7:15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? Letters here is the Word of God.

Jesus tells them why. ***Joh 7:16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. 17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. 18 He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.***

He told them that the reason was His doctrine was from the Father. He sought only to please Him. If they would do the will of God then they would know it was true.

Remember it has been a long time since Jesus healed the man on the Sabbath but the Jewish leaders still wanted to kill Him for it. He bring this to their attention in a wonderful way. He asked why they wanted to kill Him for supposable not keeping the law that they themselves did not keep. ***Joh 7:19 Did not Moses give you the law, and***

yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

Notice they accuse Him of being of the devil. ***Joh 7:20 The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?***

Joh 7:21 Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel. He is referring to the healing of the man on the Sabbath.

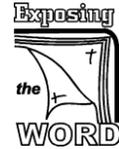
Now notice He uses the work of circumcision to show that they did work an ***22 Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man. 23 If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day? 24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.***

Jesus was arguing if caring for part of the body was OK on the Sabbath then certainly healing the whole body should be.

V- Confusion About What Leaders Believe:

Remember the Jews wanted to kill Him so the common people in Jerusalem were a little confused about just what their leaders believed about Him. Notice this is evidenced by ***Joh 7:25 Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? 26 But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? 27 Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.***

Jesus taught them in very strong words about who He was.



Joh 7:28 Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. **29** But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me. **30** Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

The fact that it was not His time is voiced many times throughout the Bible. God's timetable for the death of Christ was very precise.

As a result of His teaching in the Temple we see that He was verified as Messiah in the hearts of many. **Joh 7: 31** And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?

They recognized that the things He was doing and saying were things that they had been looking for.

VI- Officers Sent to Arrest:

Joh 7: 32 The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

Jesus tells them of His going away and other things they did not truly understand.

Joh 7:33 Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me. **34** Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come. **35** Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles? **36** What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come? **37** In the last

day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. **38** He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. **39** (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

The response of the people showed the debate and division that His words were causing.

Joh 7:40 Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. **41** Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? **42** Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

VII- Witness to His Powerful Words:

Remember Jesus is speaking not of Himself but as the Father would have Him to do. The officers return without Him.

Joh 7:43 So there was a division among the people because of him. 44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him. 45 Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? 46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

They asks their guards if they are also deceived by Him. Then they make a statement in question form that was not true.

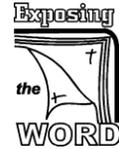
Joh 7:47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? 48 Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? 49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.



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They were the intelligent elite and thought more of their intelligence than they should have. They accused the people of being ignorant of everything. They explained away their belief as ignorance. Boy does this sound familiar in our educated elite today.

VIII- Nicodemus Reasons:

Joh 7: 50 Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) 51 Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? 52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet. 53 And every man went unto his own house.

Nicodemus asked a question to the Sanhedrin. Are we going to judge this man before we hear what He has to say?

They said that He could not be the Messiah because He was from Galilee. This showed their ignorance about who Jesus was and where He had come from.

They knew Messiah was to come from Bethlehem accord to *Micah 5:2*. He did indeed come from there then into Egypt, as foretold, and then Nazareth, as foretold also. They knew not what they spoke about.

We see the hatred of some that had already formed against Jesus. We also see some that are struggling within their own

hearts for the truth. Today we see many of the same emotions around the Messiah.

The debate over who Jesus was in this text is very diverse.

Some thought He was a good man *Joh 7:12 And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.* We see here also some thought him a deceiver.

Some thought that He was a prophet. *Joh 7:40 Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.* And some thought he was a demon possesses mad man *Joh 7:20 The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?*

Some were of the opinion that He was a man of great courage. *Joh 7:26 But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?* Many could not get past the power of the words He spoke and His dynamic personality. *Joh 7:46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.* Some reacted with fear some with faith.

Still the most important question for you personally is where do you stand in your relationship to God in Christ. Are you still debating about Who He is or have you settled the question?