



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The Holy Gospel According to St. John

Chapter 7

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Introduction

- Chapter 5 introduced the beginning of the opposition to the Son of God, first in Jerusalem and next in Galilee in chapter 6
- In chapter 7 the opposition continues and intensifies
- Jesus went up to Jerusalem secretly, not accompanying His relatives and friends from the Galilee, because He knew there were men who were seeking to kill Him and His "hour" had not yet come to offer up His life, His ministry needed to continue a little longer



Introduction

- Ironically, Jesus will do as His kinsmen urged Him to do
- It is at the Feast of Shelters (also known as Tabernacles or Booths) that Jesus will indeed publicly announce Himself to the Jews who have gathered for this "pilgrim feast" from across the Roman world, that He is the promised Messiah according to the prophecies of the prophets
- During the first seven days of the feast they brought water from the pool of Siloam



Introduction

- The water was brought in a golden vessel and the high priest poured it in front of the people to declare that whoever is thirsty may approach and drink
- This indicated the rock from which water flowed for the people in the wilderness
- On the eighth day they did not bring water from the pool
- This was to show that the people would drink from the springs of Canaan, not from the water of the wilderness



Introduction

- On that day, our Lord Jesus Christ who is the Supreme High Priest and Bishop of our souls, stood up to offer Himself as the spring that flows living water into the depths of the souls of believers
- He asked the believers to drink joyfully from the wells of salvation
- The prophecy of "the living water" can be found in, Isaiah 12:3, 44:3-8, 55:1-11; Ezekiel 47:1-12; Zechariah 14:8-11; Joel 2:28-32



Introduction

Chapter Outline:

- Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve 7:1-9
- The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24
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- Jesus and the Religious Leaders 7:32-36
- The Promise of the Holy Spirit 7:37-39
- Who Is He? 7:40-44
- Rejected by the Authorities 7:45-53

Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve 7:1-9



- The Jews want to kill Him for claiming equality with God
- They believed Jesus was guilty of the crime of blasphemy for making such a claim
- Once again John uses the word "Jews" to describe those who were in authority over the Law of the Old Covenant, the Pharisees and Sadducees who controlled the religious and civil government in Judea
- Their influence was not as great in the territory of Herod Antipas in the Galilee therefore Jesus was able to continue His ministry there relatively unopposed

Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve 7:1-9



- *Feast of tabernacles*, This feast was celebrated on the fifteenth day of the month Tisri, matches the last half of September, and the first half of October
- The feast took its name from the tents which were put up about the temple, in public places, in courts, and on the flat roofs of their houses, and in gardens; in which the Jews dwelt for eight days, in commemoration of the forty years during which their fathers dwelt in the wilderness
- It was one of the three solemn annual feasts in which all the males were obliged, by the law, to appear at Jerusalem

Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve 7:1-9



- *Brothers*, This word has been misunderstood to mean that Jesus Christ had siblings
- This has never been a teaching of the Church
- All the Fathers of the Church maintained that Mary remained a virgin all of her life
- St. Athanasius says, “Let those, therefore, who deny that the Son is by nature from the Father and proper to His essence, deny also that he took true human flesh from the Ever-Virgin Mary [Discourses Against the Arians 2.70]

Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve 7:1-9



- These relatives suggest that He should go to Jerusalem and perform His wonders to reveal Himself to the world
- They seem to want Him to proclaim His miracles more publicly
- They had two aims
- The first was that His disciples who accompanied Him for two years in service, may see His glory in Jerusalem during the feast celebrations
- The second aim was that He might establish His kingdom in the capital city

Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve 7:1-9



- It may also be that they asked Him to depart not out of loyalty for Him, but with bad intention
- They were not concerned about His safety, for they knew how dangerous His appearance in Jerusalem was among the leaders who were filled with envy toward Him
- Some writers believe that they asked Him to go to Judea in order that the Pharisees and leaders may examine the miracles and wonders He performed and may so discover the deceptive tricks in them
- This would then justify the disbelief of His relatives

Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve 7:1-9



- *For no one does anything in secret* , His course of action seems to them to contradict His personal claim
- It is opposed, they think, to the common-sense conduct of mankind
- They took it for granted that Christ was influenced by the same spirit which themselves felt
- And that therefore He should use every opportunity of exhibiting Himself to the public, that He might get into repute

Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve 7:1-9



- They hoped that a part of His honor would be reflected back upon themselves
- They seem to believe that it is too little to work miracles in Galilee, in the country, and in small villages, among an ignorant and naive people, from whom He can not get much credit
- That He must go to Jerusalem, the capital, and among the educated, in the presence of the whole nation assembled at this feast, work His miracles, and get Himself a name

Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve 7:1-9



- They did not receive Him as the promised Messiah
- But, having seen so many of His miracles, they could not but consider Him as a distinguished prophet
- They supposed that, if He were the Messiah, He would wish to manifest Himself as such to the world
- And, because He did not do so, they did not believe that He was the salvation of Israel

Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve 7:1-9



- “Their words seem to come out of love, but they came out of malice. They accused Him of cowardice and of love of vainglory. The expression, “For no one does anything in secret” is addressed to cowardly people and to those who doubt that their deeds are real. Moreover, when they add “while he himself seeks to be known openly” they accuse Him of asking for vainglory”

St. John Chrysostom

Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve 7:1-9



- The time of His Passion had not yet come because this work of redemption was achieved in accordance to the divine plan
- As for His relatives, they faced no danger since they were friends of the world
- They could go anytime that they liked
- He may also intended to say that the time for Him to go up to the feast had not yet come because He had a special arrangement for going up or had things to do before going

Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve 7:1-9



- As for them, they could go to the feast at any time
- They counsel for glory; He wants the glory preceded by humility
- He desired to prepare the path for the same glory through humility
- “Behold how Christ answers them very gently. He did not say to them ‘Who are you to give Me advice and teach Me?’ He rather said, “My time has not yet come.” St. John Chrysostom

Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve 7:1-9



- The Lord did not want to go up to the feast with His relatives, lest they use propaganda and make-up excuse that it is necessary to declare Christ
- The Jewish leaders cannot hate them because they carry their same thoughts
- They desire a temporary messiah who will appoint himself an earthly king
- They are the sons and servants of the world

Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve 7:1-9



- Nothing but worldly matter preoccupies them, and the world certainly loves those who belong to it
- *it hates Me*, Because He condemn its injustice, its pride, its ambition, by His life and doctrine
- The world opposes, not its own, but those who dare to be different
- Jesus was hated, because of His opposition to the sins of the “world”

Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve 7:1-9



- *I am not yet going up to this feast,* Which lasted eight days. --- *I am not yet going* with you, nor to be there at the *first* day, nor in that public manner as you desire
- But when the *feast was half over*, about the fourth day, Jesus went in a private manner
- However, when He arrived, He spoke publicly in the temple
- Some accuse our blessed Lord of falsehood, because He said here, *I am not yet going up to this feast*, and yet afterwards He went

Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve 7:1-9



- But the key word here is *yet*
- He did not say *I am not going, but not yet going*
- As He said in John 7:6, and repeats here, His time was not yet come
- He might also be unwilling to go at that time because there would be such a great gathering of people on the road to Jerusalem, and His enemies might say that He had availed Himself of this time and multitude in order to excite agitation



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- St. Augustine thinks that Jesus' reason was that His brothers did not ask Him to go with them, in their company, but wanted Him to go alone before them
- However, according to the St. Augustine, Christ appeared as a weak man running away from the resistant as He fled from Herod into Egypt
- He, thus, let them go up to Jerusalem and the next day He followed
- *as it were in secret*, He went up, but not at His brothers' instigation, nor with the publicity they had recommended



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- *the Jews*, Some writers believe that this refers to the Jewish crowds or people
- For, they yearned to see the Person who performed unique wonders
- He was the subject of their conversation, even though they were divided into two groups concerning their perception of Him
- It appears, from the following verses, that many of the people liked Him, but they did not dared to own it publicly for fear of the Jews



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- However, the general opinion shared by the early church fathers and the contemporary scholars is that the word “Jews” here as in John 7:13,15, means the Jewish leadership including the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees
- They kept seeking Him at the feast, where they naturally expected that He would be, and kept asking, without naming Him, *Where is He?*
- Their question points out that their hostility had gone as far as a definite plot against Him, and that the knowledge of this was widely spread



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- The Greek word is translated here as “complaining” but in Latin it means “murmur”
- The multitude were divided in their opinions concerning Him
- Those who knew Him best said, *He is good*
- Those who spoke according to the character given Him by the priests, etc., said, *He deceives the people*
- Those who spoke evil of Him spoke out, because they had the rulers on their side
- But those who spoke good of Him were obliged to do it in private, because they feared these rulers



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- He went to Jerusalem about the middle of the feast and as usual He went up into the temple and began to preach openly
- Even so, it was a bold thing to do, knowing the rulers wanted to kill Him
- St. John does not record Christ's sermon
- His profound insight astonished the Jewish leaders who had thought that such learning must be confined to those who were trained in a theological school



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- As they marveled at His knowledge, He declared to them that His doctrine does not originate from a school on earth, or from the rabbis and lawyers
- His doctrine comes from the heavenly Father, since He is the Christ who saves the world
- The answer carries them once more to the words uttered by Him, John 5:19,30



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- Then He had again and again referred to the Father who sent Him, John 7:24,36-38, and claimed as His own work the doing of the Father's will, John 7:30
- In the Capernaum synagogue, in the hearing of some of these Jews, He had declared that all who were taught of God, and heard and learned the lesson, would come to Him, John 6:45
- There is, then, no ground for their present wonder
- Jesus gave them a sure rule by which they may judge of His doctrine



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- As if He is saying, “If you really wish to do the will of God, begin the practice of it and take my doctrine, and apply it to all that you know God requires of man”
- He explained a necessary requirement for someone to know whether or not His teaching came from God
- Contrary to what the people were wondering, the real issue here was not how Jesus learned these things
- The real issue was whether or not He was teaching what God said



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- Was it from God or not?
- If someone wants to know whether or not a teaching is true, he must will to do God's will
- Jesus is here saying that, if you are not totally determined to do God's will, you may never even really know the truth
- It is not deed, which is the outcome of faith, but will, which precedes it
- This human will to do the divine will is the condition of knowing it



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- He sought the will of Him that sent Him, and therefore was true, in harmony with the eternal will of God
- The effect of the submission of His will to the Father's, and His seeking in word and work the Father's glory, was that there was no possibility of unrighteousness in Him
- This emphasis laid upon truth and righteousness has reference to the charges which they are plotting against Him, and which have already been expressed in the murmuring of the multitude, John 7:12



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- Not only must the hearers of God's word have proper motives, so also must the teachers
- Instead of seeking their own glory, exaltation, and other selfish goals, they must seek the glory of the one who sent them
- At times Jesus recognized the need to defend His own life, motives, and conduct in order to keep false accusations from leading people to reject what He taught
- Having defended His doctrine and motives, Jesus proceeded to point out the real reasons people were rejecting His teaching



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- It was not, as they pretended, because of any lack of qualifications in Him
- Jesus had already proved that Moses testified about Him, so if they truly were following Moses' law they would have accepted Jesus, 5:46-47
- But they were not keeping the law given through Moses
- This was their real problem and reason for rejecting Jesus
- They did not obey even the law that they admitted was from God



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- What are the chances they would obey further revelation when it came?
- In citing Moses' law, Jesus was laying the groundwork to return to a discussion of their earlier criticisms of Him, claiming that He had broken the Sabbath
- They claim that they keep the law, but they break the law when they kill the innocent
- Here, the LORD denounces them openly inside the temple touching their dearest claim, which is that they keep the law



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- They know that the rulers were seeking Him, John 7:11, but maybe they were not aware of their intention to kill Him
- The rulers and those with them may have denied having a plot to kill Him, in order that they may not arouse the people
- And lest they appear as transgressors of the law for seeking to kill a man without trial or to kill an innocent person, when the Lord asked them, "Why do you seek to kill Me?"
- As for the accusation *You have a demon*, this is often repeated when they find nothing to blame Him for or to oppose Him



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- *I did one work*, That of curing the paralytic man, already referred to in John 5:9
- This answer is addressed to the multitude who said *You have a demon*
- This work on the Sabbath day, which provoked the deadly hostility of the hierarchy, John 5:16,18, was cause of wonder to them all
- They, too, though not in the same degree, were led by it to take a hostile position



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- The commandment of circumcision was given a long time before Moses, since the time of Abraham, Genesis 17:9-10
- It was then incorporated in the Law of Moses as part of it, even though there is no commandment in the Law of Moses concerning circumcision
- The Jews kept the circumcision ritual on the eighth day even if it fell on the Sabbath
- If that was the case concerning the practice of circumcision literally, how much more important was to heal the paralytic who was lying down on his bed for 38 years?



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- Circumcision was believed to be the "healing" of the newborn by bringing him out of the "world" and into the sacred Covenant
- Jesus' argument is that if it is lawful to "heal" part of the body how can it be unlawful to heal the whole body when the need arises on the Sabbath?
- What Jesus had done in healing on the Sabbath was no more a violation of the Sabbath than circumcision would be



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- He has put the case before them in its true light and from their own point of view
- *judge with righteous judgment*, There was another Positive Precept of Moses which these judges were forgetting, though it, too, formed part of the first section of the Law read at Tabernacles, Deuteronomy 1:16-17; John 7:19
- Let them who profess to judge Him by the Law obey it, and form a just and honest opinion, and not be biased by the appearance of a mere technicality.



The Heavenly Scholar 7:10-24

- Even if His work did fall under the condemnation of what they held to be the letter of the Mosaic law, John 5:10, they knew perfectly well—and their own practice as to circumcision proved this—that it did so in appearance only
- Attend to the law, not merely in the letter, but in its spirit and design
- Learn that the law, which commands men to rest on the Sabbath day, is subordinate to the law of mercy and love which requires them to be ever active to promote God's glory

Could This Be the Christ?

7:25-31



- In the opinion of the Jews Jerusalem was the source of spirituality and the true divine knowledge
- However, the people in Jerusalem were confused because of the attitude of their religious leaders
- Do they really seek to kill Him as one who blasphemes and deceives the people?
- Those who came from outside did not know that the leaders were full of envy and hatred and opposed the Lord Christ

Could This Be the Christ?

7:25-31



- We observe three different groups in this scene:
 1. The rulers, priests, and Pharisees, declared enemies of Christ
 2. The inhabitants of Jerusalem, who knew the sentiments of their rulers concerning him
 3. The strangers, who from different quarters had come up to Jerusalem to the feast, and who heard Christ attentively, being ignorant of the designs of the rulers, etc., against him

Could This Be the Christ?

7:25-31



- The people observed that He was speaking openly and boldly and nothing was being done to stop Him
- So, they wondered if even the rulers knew He was the Christ
- The implication is that, if they could prove He was not the Christ, they would stop Him, probably by killing Him as they intended
- Since the rulers did nothing, could that mean they thought He might be the Christ?

Could This Be the Christ?

7:25-31



- Jesus' origin seemed to create serious problems for some people
- They knew He was from Nazareth, and they knew His family
- This caused some of them to stumble, because they did not see how such a great leader could come from such humble origin
- Others knew the Christ would be a descendant of David from Bethlehem, so they rejected Jesus because He was from Galilee and they despised Galileans

Could This Be the Christ?

7:25-31



- Still others seemed to think that, according to Isaiah the prophet *Who shall declare His generation?*, Isaiah 53:8, Christ would just appear to take leadership with no known origin at all
- His generation is indeed unknown with regard to His divinity
- They did not comprehend the writings of the holy prophets about Him
- These writings are in two divisions

Could This Be the Christ?

7:25-31



- Sometimes the prophets indicate that He will come to the world in the flesh
- They announce His birth in flesh of a virgin, *Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son*, Isaiah 7:14
- They even announce where He will be born, Micah 5:2
- However, when they introduced, as much as possible, His incomprehensible birth, they said, as mentioned before, *who shall declare His generation?* Isaiah 53:8

Could This Be the Christ?

7:25-31



- St. John is impressed with the fact that it was in the very Temple itself, in the presence of the priests and rulers, in the act of public teaching, that He uttered these words
- Our Lord takes them up on their own declaration and argues from it
- Jesus' feeling has been roused by another instance of their misapprehension because they think of the outward appearance only, and therefore do not grasp the inner truth
- They know where He is from; they had been taught that no man should know the Messiah's origin, and therefore they think He is not the Christ

Could This Be the Christ?

7:25-31



- They knew about His earthly home and early life, John 7:27, but all this was far short of the real knowledge of Him
- Jesus dealt briefly with the issue of His origin, though He had told them about this before
- He said, in a sense, they did know where He came from
- They knew His physical family, and He had also told them before of His ultimate heavenly origin
- But the real problem was they did not believe in His heavenly origin

Could This Be the Christ?

7:25-31



- They did not realize that He had not come from Himself – i.e., by His own authority
- He had come from the Father
- But they rejected Him, because they did not know the Father
- In contrast with their ignorance, is His own full knowledge which belonged to One only
- Jesus knew the Father, because He had been with Him from the beginning, John 1:1 and had come from Him
- He had given the evidence for this the last time He had been in Jerusalem, 5:16-47, but the Jews had rejected it

Could This Be the Christ?

7:25-31



- Jesus' sayings stirred some people up to oppose Him, as had happened the last time He had been in Jerusalem, chapter 5
- But they could not capture Him, because His time had not come
- "He did not therefore mean an hour when He would be forced to die, but one when He would allow Himself to be put to death. For He was waiting for the time in which He should die, even as He waited for the time in which He should be born." St. Augustine
- But some people in the crowd did believe in Jesus

Could This Be the Christ?

7:25-31



- And on what basis?
- His miracles! They were impressed by His signs and did not believe that even the Christ could do more or greater miracles than Jesus had
- John here again gives us testimony of Jesus' miracles based on the admission of the people
- Note that the people here testify that Jesus had done great miracles

Jesus and the Religious Leaders

7:32-36



- These events came to the ears of the Pharisees – the ones most determined to destroy Jesus
- No doubt, they were especially upset by the fact some people were coming to accept Him
- Nothing upset them more than when they feared they would lose influence and honor in the eyes of the people
- This was the main reason they viewed Jesus as a threat, Matthew 27:18
- They decided to take action and sent officers to arrest Him

Jesus and the Religious Leaders

7:32-36



- Whether Christ spoke these words to the officers sent to apprehend Him, or to the people in the temple, is not clear
- He by *them* plainly declares, that all their endeavors against Him were vain and foolish; for He should yet live with them *a little while longer* and then He should go and willingly lay down His life for the sins of the world, rise again from the dead, and ascend unto His Father who sent Him into the world
- The time was at hand when He would return to the Father, and His bodily presence would be unapproachable

Jesus and the Religious Leaders

7:32-36



- The people could not go there because they were not dead yet
- Besides, if they were not faithful, they could not go there when they died unless they repented
- “He did not say, ‘where I shall be’, but said, “where I am [34] because Christ has always been in that place when He was on His way back. He came in a manner through which He did not leave that place (heaven)” St. Augustine

Jesus and the Religious Leaders

7:32-36



- *Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?*, Some think it meant here Jews scattered among the Gentiles, or living in distant parts of the earth
- It is well known that at that time there were Jews dwelling in almost every land
- There were multitudes in Egypt, in Asia Minor, in Greece, in Rome, etc., and in all these places they had synagogues
- Others suppose that the Gentiles themselves are meant
- And others think that the ten tribes which had been long lost are here intended

Jesus and the Religious Leaders

7:32-36



- The question which they asked was whether He would leave an ungrateful country, and go into those distant nations and teach them
- “In saying “*What is this thing that He said, ‘You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come’?*” they offend Him with disgrace as though He had transgressed the law; as though He broke the divine commandments and disregarded all things.”
St. Cyril the Great
- It is remarkable that Jesus returned no answer to these inquiries
- He rather chose to turn off their minds from a speculation about the place to which He was going, to the great affairs of their own personal salvation

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

7:37-39



- The *last day* was called the great day because of certain traditional observances
- Jesus extended His invitation openly to all *and cried out*,
- *If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink*, If any man stand in need of any spiritual good, righteousness, strength, comfort, &c., it is to be found in Me
- Let him come to Me by faith acknowledging, receiving, and embracing Me as the Mediator and Savior of the world, and he shall have from Me whatsoever spiritual influence of grace he stand in need of

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

7:37-39



- The Jews drank water from the rock in the wilderness
- The rock followed them and overflowed with water to quench their thirst
- But he who believes in the Lord Christ carries the Rock inside himself and the flood springs not from the outside, but inside him, in his inner self where the kingdom of God is
- Our Savior told the woman of Samaria He is living water, John 4:10,14

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

7:37-39



- The condition on our parts is expressed under the notion of thirsting
- It is the natural appetite to refresh the man under his drought
- It is expressive of an exceeding great passion, and so made use of both in the Old Testament and the New to signify a soul's passionate desire of spiritual things, Isaiah 55:1; Matthew 5:6
- By this living water, are signified the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which were promised to the faithful

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

7:37-39



- *He who believes in Me*, He who receives Me as the Messiah, according to what the Scripture has said concerning Me
- *out of his heart*, In his soul shall this Spirit dwell
- As a true spring is ever supplied with water from the great deep, with which it has communication, so shall the soul of the genuine believer be supplied with light, life, love, and liberty, and all the other graces of the indwelling Spirit, from the indwelling Christ
- He becomes a spring that has abundance of the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, freedom, and enlightenment

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

7:37-39



- These are the words of the evangelist, explaining the figurative expressions of Christ; showing, that by rivers of living water, He meant the Spirit in His gifts and graces
- Jesus was referring to the great outpouring of the Holy Spirit after His ascension at the second great Pentecost
- This is not to suggest that God the Holy Spirit had not been active in salvation history prior to Pentecost
- When the prophets of the Old Testament speak they are inspired by the Holy Spirit, 2 Peter 1:21 and there are countless other passages in which we see the activity and power of the Spirit

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

7:37-39



- However, that abundant outpouring of His graces spoken of by Joel, Joel 2:28, which particularly characterized the Gospel times, was not granted till after the ascension of Christ
- Because this Spirit in its abundance was to come in consequence of His atonement and therefore could not come till after His crucifixion
- It was to supply the place of Christ to His disciples and to all true believers; and therefore it was not necessary till after the removal of His bodily presence from among them
- Our Lord's own words on the Holy Spirit, John 14:16-18,26, 15:26, 16:7-15



Who Is He? 7:40-44

- Jesus' teaching caused considerable stir and difference of viewpoint among the people
- Different people expressed different views of Jesus, just as the disciples had described to Jesus in Matthew 16:13
- Some people said He was the prophet, probably the one predicted by Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15
- Others said He was the Christ



Who Is He? 7:40-44

- Some seem to have thought that one of the ancient prophets should be raised from the dead, and precede the appearing of the Messiah
- Actually, He was both, since the prophecies all referred to the same person
- As the prophets had declared that the Messiah was to come from the tribe of Judah, and from the family of David, and should be born in the city of Bethlehem, these Jews, imagining that Christ had been born in Galilee, concluded that He could not be the Messiah



Who Is He? 7:40-44

- Had they examined the matter a little farther, they would have found that He had His birth exactly as the prophets had foretold
- But they continued in unbelief, and rejected the Lord that bought them
- Here is another example of the Jews' making unrighteous judgments, 7:24
- They did not have the facts of the case, but they could easily have learned them had they put forth the effort to do so



Who Is He? 7:40-44

- Instead, they just made a judgment that satisfied their desires and rejected Jesus
- Many still lose their souls nearly in the same way
- They suffer themselves to be led away by common report, and become prejudiced against the truth, refuse to give it a fair hearing, or to examine for themselves
- It is on this ground that deism and irreligion have established themselves, and still maintain their posts



Who Is He? 7:40-44

- These verses describe the end result of the interaction between Jesus and the people
- They were divided because of Him
- They were divided in sentiment, and separated into parties
- This is the true notion of schism
- “Because of their division they did not know the Christ. They did not understand the accuracy of the Scripture. For, if they believed that Jesus was the Prophet mentioned in the Law, they would not have fallen into this unbecoming discussion.” St. Cyril the Great



Who Is He? 7:40-44

- They wished to seize him
- And this they would have done, and destroyed Him too at that time, had they been in complete agreement
- But their being divided in opinion, John 7:43, was the cause, under God, why His life was at that time preserved
- “No one laid hands on Him, not because they honored Him, but because only His power stopped them.” St. Cyril the Great

Rejected by the Authorities

7:45-53



- The rulers, being upset by what they heard about the effects of Jesus' teachings, had earlier sent officers to capture Jesus, v32
- Here the officers returned having failed to arrest Him
- When asked their reason, they said that no one had ever spoken like Jesus!
- Note that they had failed, not because they feared that Jesus or His disciples would overpower them, or even because they feared the people might get upset
- Rather, it was Jesus' own teaching that hindered them

Rejected by the Authorities

7:45-53



- Here are the chief priests and the Pharisees who thought that they had more wisdom than others
- They came to the Christ and saw His wonders
- They read the Scripture, but nothing profited them
- They were blind
- But their officers heard with the multitude one speech of the Lord Christ and they became captives
- They went to Him to arrest Him, but they returned bound and amazed at Him
- We admire their understanding, for they did not need signs, but only His doctrine

Rejected by the Authorities

7:45-53



- The Jewish rulers asked the officers if they were being deceived by Jesus like other people were
- This response demonstrated their arrogance and false standard for determining right from wrong
- On what basis did they conclude Jesus was a false deceiver?
- On the basis that none of them believed in Him!
- *The rulers and Pharisees* did not accept Him, so how could He be right?
- They viewed themselves as the educated, informed, spiritual leaders

Rejected by the Authorities

7:45-53



- They were the authorities to determine right from wrong for everybody else!
- Other people should just accept their word that their conclusions were right
- If they believed a thing to be untrue, then everyone else should believe the same
- They did not regard the people's belief in the Lord Christ as important, but they thought the people did not understand the law and were, therefore, accursed

Rejected by the Authorities

7:45-53



- *this crowd*, They fall under the curses of the law, by being seduced and led away by false preachers
- If Christ was of the world, the world would love its own
- The teaching of Christ has been in general rejected by the rulers of this world
- A life of mortification, self-denial, and humility, does not comport with the views of *the rulers or the Pharisees*
- It has ever been a mark of the truth of God that the great, the mighty, and the wise have in general rejected it

Rejected by the Authorities

7:45-53



- Nicodemus was a Pharisee and one of the rulers of the Jews
- He had earlier had a private meeting with Jesus in which he had stated faith in Him, John 3:1
- Nicodemus objected to the false steps they took against Jesus
- He said that they acted against the law
- By condemning Jesus without a proper trial, they demonstrated that they, not Jesus, were the ones disobeying and disrespecting Divine law

Rejected by the Authorities

7:45-53



- Although Nicodemus did not leave his membership in the Sanhedrim to follow the Lord Christ as His disciple, he testified for Him in the middle of the assembly in the darkest moments
- *Are you also from Galilee?*, They knew very well that he was not
- But they spoke this by way of reproach
- As if they had said, you are no better than Him if you take His side
- They based their discussion on several mistakes besides their envy and wickedness

Rejected by the Authorities

7:45-53



- Here again is another example, of refusing to judge righteous judgment, 7:24
- They thought that Jesus was from Galilee, although He was born in Bethlehem of the house of David
- They thought that most of His disciples were Galileans, yet He had many disciples from Judea
- Moreover, they claimed that no prophet had arisen out of Galilee, but Elijah the prophet was from Gilead

Rejected by the Authorities

7:45-53



- Jonah was from Gath-hepher, a town in lower Galilee not far from Nazareth, 2 Kings 14:25
- Elijah was from the inhabitants of Gilead, which was east of the Jordan from Galilee, 1 Kings 17:1
- Nahum and Malachi may also have been from Galilee, Nahum 1:1
- *Search and look*, They imply that he should go and learn

Rejected by the Authorities

7:45-53



- That is to say, Nicodemus did not know all that was written in the Scriptures
- So once again these rulers and supposed experts in the law demonstrated that their conclusions did not even have the facts straight!
- Their argument ignores the proof repeatedly presented and well known to all these people that Jesus had done miracles and had fulfilled prophecy

Rejected by the Authorities

7:45-53



- The rulers ignored facts of major relevance and based their case on what amounts to regional bigotry!
- Their response does not answer Nicodemus' point but rather ignores it
- He had pointed out that they were refusing to let Jesus present His own evidence and were reaching a conclusion without considering what facts He might be able to produce
- So how did they respond?
- They proceeded to do exactly what he had accused them of!

Rejected by the Authorities

7:45-53



- They refused to consider anything Jesus had to say and proceeded to reach a conclusion based on ignorance and prejudice
- Had they called Jesus and asked a few simple questions (such as where He was born), they could have eliminated their whole objection
- The fact is, of course, these men did not want to be convinced to believe in Jesus
- They had their minds made up to oppose Him, not because of evidence, but because of envy

Rejected by the Authorities

7:45-53



- Jesus was a threat to their popularity in the eyes of the people, and the facts of the case did not matter
- The authority and influence of Nicodemus, in this case, was so great that the Sanhedrin broke up without being able to conclude any thing
- As the feast was now ended, they were not obliged to continue any longer in or about Jerusalem; and therefore all returned to their respective
- Their opportunity to capture Jesus had ended



Discussion

- What feast was approaching, and where was Jesus at this time?
- Why did Jesus' brothers suggest He go to Jerusalem? Do you think it was a kind of challenge?
- What reason did Jesus give why the world hated Him? Does the world hate Christians these days? Why?
- What amazed the people about Jesus' teaching, and why did this amaze them?



Discussion

- What work had Jesus done that caused them to marvel (v21)?
How this had led them to seek to kill Him?
- Whenever anyone uses the Bible to prove someone else is wrong spiritually, some people object saying Jesus said, "Judge not."
How should we respond?
- Where did Jesus say He was going, and what did He mean by this?



Discussion

- Why did some people reject Jesus as Christ, and what facts were they missing?
- What reasons did the officers give why they did not capture Jesus? What does this tell us about Jesus' teaching?
- Who tried to get Jesus a fair hearing, and what argument did he make?
- How did the Pharisees respond to him, and what was wrong with their "argument"?