

June 15

Scriptures: Read John 7

Key Verse: “So there was division among the people because of Him.” (John 7:43)

Overview

The setting for this chapter is Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles. As you read it, you get a fascinating insight into the uproar surrounding Jesus in the public sector: He really rocked the boat.

For instance, He was an amazement to people simply in terms of His ability as a teacher—“How did this man get such learning without having studied?” they asked (v.15). Some were sure He was demon-possessed (v.20); others couldn’t believe how immune He was to arrest, “Isn’t this the man they are trying to kill? Here he is, speaking publicly, and they are not saying a word to him.” So, some reasoned maybe He is who He says He is, “Have the authorities really concluded that He is the Christ?” (vv.25, 26).

Then there were those who tried to figure out Jesus’ teaching, but succeeded only in becoming more confused. “Where does this man intend to go, that we cannot find Him? Will he go where our people live scattered among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks? What does he mean when he said, ‘You will look for me, but you will not find me,’ and ‘where I am, you cannot come’?”

So some thought Jesus a prophet; others the Christ. Still others saw Him as a dangerous revolutionary, the sooner dead the better. But whatever your opinion of Jesus, you couldn’t stay neutral anymore than today—“the people were divided because of Jesus” (v.43).

Even the temple guards and the Pharisees were divided, and the Pharisees attributed any credence imputed to Jesus as nothing more than ignorance, “Has any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in him? No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law—there is a curse on them” (vv.48, 49).

There was only one clear voice in this “mob”, only one clarion note in the chaos: the man Nicodemus. After his talk with Jesus by night, he had become a believer (albeit secret, at this point), and he was prepared to publicly give Jesus the benefit of the doubt (vv.50, 51)

Jesus still rocks the boat today. He is divisive. He’s an either/or kind of person—there’s no middle ground. You either accept Him or reject Him. He refuses to let us “halt between two opinions”.

Prayer

Lord God, we pray that Jesus will be revealed to the whole world and please grant us the greatest opportunity human beings can ever have, the opportunity to be so filled with the Spirit of Christ that He is revealed through us.