

"No One Ever Spoke Like This Man!"

John 7:40-52

Thought for the Day: Jesus does not give us the option of casual indifference toward Him; we must decide whether we believe in Him, or not.

John chapter seven is the "Chapter of Decision." Throughout the chapter, a number of significant questions are raised, and we are challenged to decide for ourselves: Who is Jesus of Nazareth? Where did He really come from? By what authority did He teach and make the claims that He did? Did He speak the truth? Or was He a liar and a deceiver? How should we respond to Him? These are questions that each of us must answer for ourselves. I believe, according to the Word of God, that our eternal destiny will be determined by our answers.

"If Jesus of Nazareth was not the Christ, the fulfillment of the Old Testament promise and prophecy, the Son of God, and the Savior of the world and he knew it, He is a *liar* of the worst sort; and we should scorn him and ignore him. On the other hand, if he was not who he thought he was, given his tragically deluded self-understanding, we should pity him and dismiss him for a *lunatic*. It is rather difficult, however, on this position, to explain the remarkable teaching that flowed from his mouth. If he is simply a *legend*, something of a heroic make-believe character along the lines of the ancient Hercules or Santa Claus, we might admire the biblical stories for their wonderful charm, but we would certainly not view this person as the most significant individual to walk the earth, much less worship him. But if he is *Lord*, the Son of God, the Messiah, the risen and ascended and exalted King of kings, we are confronted with a completely different decision altogether." (*Daniel Akin, A Theology for the Church, p. 435-36*). Then we must decide: Will we accept Him as the Lord of our life, or not?

40 When they heard these words, some of the people said, "This really is the Prophet."

- Some who listened to Jesus were convinced that He was the Prophet of whom Moses spoke in Deuteronomy 18:15-18.
- There were two views concerning the identity of the Prophet of whom Moses spoke:
 - The correct view was that the Prophet would be the Messiah.
 - A second view was that the Prophet would be a forerunner of the Messiah.

41 Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Is the Christ to come from Galilee?"

- There was no prophecy in the Old Testament that the Christ would come out of Galilee.

42 Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the offspring of David, and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David was?"

- If they had taken the time to dig deeper, they would have discovered that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and that He was a direct descendant of David through Mary.

43 So there was a division among the people over him.

- This verse summarizes the entire chapter well: There was a great deal of confusion, controversy, consternation, but also conviction concerning the identity and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- "And, it is still the same today. Men and women are divided on the subject of Jesus Christ. Some say He was simply a Man like the rest of us. Others are willing to admit that

He was the greatest Man who ever lived. But those who believe the Word of God know that 'Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God' (Jhn 20:30-31)." (*MacDonald, p. 1473*)

- Jesus did not come to bring peace, but division (Luke 12:51-53). Jesus divides believers from unbelievers; those who walk in the light from those who walk in darkness; the sheep from the goats; and the children of God from the children of the devil. Everyone is either for Him or against Him; there is no middle ground. (*MacArthur N.T. Commentary*)

44 Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

- This is now the third time that they sought to arrest Jesus, but again, it was not God's timing for Him to be taken.
- "As long as a person is walking in the will of God, there is no power on earth that can hinder him. 'We are immortal until our work is done.' The Lord's time had not yet come, and so men were unable to harm Him in any way." (*MacDonald, p. 2129*)

45 The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why did you not bring him?" 46 The officers answered, "No one ever spoke like this man!"

- (Cp. vs. 32) These officers were religiously trained Levites. They had heard many rabbis teach the Scriptures, but they had never heard anyone speak like Jesus!

47 The Pharisees answered them, "Have you also been deceived? 48 Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him?"

- "What a terrible argument this was! It was very much to their shame that leading men in the Jewish nation had failed to recognize the Messiah when He came. These Pharisees were not only unwilling to believe on the Lord Jesus themselves, but it is clear that they did not want others to believe on Him either. So it is today. Many who do not want to be saved themselves do everything in their power to prevent their relatives and friends from being saved also." (*MacDonald, pp. 2129-30*)

49 But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed."

- In pronouncing a curse on the crowd, the Pharisees were actually pronouncing a curse on themselves because they failed to recognize the Messiah sent by God.
- "The Pharisees viewed themselves as the spiritual elite; men who were above the possibility of being wrong about religious matters. In their minds, only those who were gullible, uneducated, and simple-minded could be deceived by Jesus' claims. Such people were accursed, according to the Pharisaic perspective, for their ignorance of God's law." (*The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*)

50 Nicodemus, who had gone to him before, and who was one of them, said to them, 51 "Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?"

- "Nicodemus' point was that the Jews had not given Jesus a fair chance. The Jewish law did not judge a man before it heard his case. And yet that was what the Jewish leaders were doing at this very point. Were they afraid of the facts? The answer was obviously that they were." (*MacDonald, p. 2130*)

52 They replied, "Are you from Galilee too? Search and see that no prophet arises from Galilee."

- Jonah and Elijah, and possibly Nahum and Hosea, came from the region of Galilee.