

Who is this Man?

John 7: 1-13

Our text deals with events that happened during the Feast of Tabernacles. This was a time of celebration and thanksgiving. Along with Passover and Pentecost, the Feast of Tabernacles was one of three pilgrimages the Jews took to Jerusalem each year.

While the Feast celebration provides the setting for the text, it is certainly not the focus. At this point in Jesus' ministry, He faced continual opposition. Such a large gathering of people would have provided the opportunity many sought to confront Jesus publicly. While many believed Jesus was the Christ, the majority were unsure of who He really was. Some were curious, recognizing the power and authority Jesus possessed. Others adamantly opposed Jesus and were determined to do all they could to destroy Him. The people were challenged to determine in their hearts what they would do with Jesus.

While the Lord no longer walks among us in a physical body, this dilemma remains today. One cannot be neutral regarding Christ Jesus. You either accept Him as the Christ, Savior of humanity, or you deny Him. Indecision is an act of rejection and denial. Our relationship with Christ, or lack thereof, will determine our eternal destiny. I would encourage everyone to examine the facts regarding Christ, respond to His call for salvation, and serve Him faithfully.

Let's examine the particular [views](#) revealed in the text as we discuss the question: [Who is this Man?](#)

I. The Sentiment of the People (1-5) – Here John revealed the sentiment of many toward Jesus. Notice:

A. The Animosity of the Jews (1) – [After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.](#) At this point in Jesus' ministry, He avoided Jerusalem for the most part, choosing to minister in the outlying areas. He did not walk among the Jewish religious elite because they were determined to kill Him. They hated Jesus and wanted Him removed from society. He had gathered a following and they felt threatened by Him. Jesus did not "play by their rules;" He was committed to fulfilling the Father's plan for redemption instead of adhering to all the demands and rituals of the Pharisees. [John 1:10-11 – He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.](#) ^[11] [He came unto his own, and his own received him not.](#)

B. The Attitude of His Brothers (2-5) – Next John revealed the attitude Jesus' half-brothers had toward Him. Their attitude regarding Jesus is not what one would expect. They were filled with:

1. Selfishness (3) – His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. Totally unconcerned for the well-being of Jesus, they encouraged Him to go to Jerusalem and make Himself known among the crowds. "Go to Jerusalem and perform mighty miracles among the people so they can see who you really are!" clearly this was not for Jesus' benefit, but for themselves. They felt they had suffered reproach because of Jesus, and if He worked a few miracles, it would provide some recognition for them.

- Many are not interested in Jesus as the Christ, Savior of men's souls. They are only interested in what He can do for them personally. Sadly, many are more interested in material provisions than their spiritual condition. They have no desire for salvation or serving the Lord.

2. Arrogance (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.* Again we see their desire for self-recognition. They wanted Jesus to work miracles among the people so they could be known as the brothers of the miracle worker. They were not concerned with the work of redemption Jesus came to provide; they wanted Him to become famous and possibly wealthy.

- This attitude remains today as well. Unfortunately many use the name of Christ for personal gain and profit. They are unconcerned with the spiritual needs of humanity. They see ministry as a tool to gain fame and fortune.

3. Unbelief (5) – For *neither did his brethren believe in him.* I am convinced this statement is true, but I am amazed by it. The brothers believed that Jesus could perform miracles and yet they failed to believe He was the Christ. Their eyes were blind to the truth and they lived in unbelief. (Many continue to live in unbelief although they have witnessed the power and presence of Christ. Some of these have sat on church pews for years, and yet refuse to respond to the Lord for salvation.)

II. The Discernment of Jesus (6-9) – While being pressured by His brothers to go to Jerusalem, Jesus was aware of their attitude and the animosity of the Jews. We discover:

A. His Obedience (6, 8-9) – *Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready.* ^[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. Jesus refused to succumb to the pressure brought by those who failed to see His purpose for coming to earth. He was not going to engage in a circus type atmosphere for the pleasure of men. He knew His time had not yet come to offer Himself the sacrifice for sin, and He was not going to provide the Jews with an opportunity to create more unrest and division. Jesus remained committed to the Father's will regardless of the desires and opinions of men.

- The world around us applies constant pressure on believers, hoping we will conform to their desires. We need the resolve of Jesus to remain committed to Him and obedient unto His will. We must always remember that the world does not seek our benefit. Those who pressure you to conform are seeking a means to accuse the faith and gain personal satisfaction.

B. His Opposition (7) – *The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.* Jesus well understood the dynamics of the situation and the reason He was opposed. Performing more miracles in the presence of the Pharisees would not gain their favor. He was hated because of who He was, and who He claimed to be. The majority, including many in His own family, denied that He was the Christ. He would not deny the Father nor His deity.

- He was also hated because of His preaching. He was not afraid to confront the corruption and iniquity associated with the religious practices of the day. He preached the Word unto them, and His preaching brought conviction. Jesus refused to abandon biblical doctrine for the approval of men.

- These two aspects remain a major point of contention today. The world doesn't mind religion or religious practices. However, they hate Jesus Christ and will do anything they can to hinder the spread of the Gospel. The world has drawn a red-line when it comes to Jesus. They also despise biblical preaching because it confronts their sinful lifestyle. As long as you preach a message of love and acceptance for all, regardless of their behavior, you will face little opposition. If you preach the Word without compromise, you will be opposed. I have not been called to please men and justify their sin; I have been called to preach the whole counsel of God.

III. The Impediment of the Crowd (10-13) – Jesus did go to Jerusalem, but remained out of the public eye. John disclosed the hindrance of many regarding Jesus. Consider:

A. The Contempt (11) – *Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?* Thinking that Jesus would have been in Jerusalem for the Feast, the Jews sought Him feverishly. They weren't seeking Jesus out of desire for Him or to receive anything from Him; they sought Him in an attempt to kill Him.

- This attitude of contempt continues to hinder many today. The majority want nothing to do with Jesus. They have no desire for Him, and want nothing to do with the Gospel. Sadly these have rejected the sole means of salvation and reconciliation to God. Apart from Christ there is no other way of salvation.

B. The Confusion (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.* Although most had no idea Jesus was in Jerusalem, He remained the main topic of discussion. Unfortunately most were confused regarding Jesus. Some thought He was merely a good man. These would have gladly received something from Jesus, and some likely desired Him to perform a miracle for them. However, these did not see Jesus as the Christ. They only saw Him as a man who did good deeds among men. Others accused Jesus of deceiving the people. While their attitudes toward Jesus wasn't as harsh as the Pharisees, they wanted nothing to do with Him.

- This confusion remains today. Many will admit that Jesus lived and died. They agree He was one who possessed great authority and was a great teacher and prophet. They affirm that He was compassionate and often did good deeds for others, but they stop short of believing He was the Christ, Savior of humanity. Other continue to view Christ as one who simply creates division among the world. They want nothing to do with Him.

- Believing Christ lived and died is great. Affirming that He was a good man who knew the Word of God is wonderful, but these alone are not enough. Jesus was a good man, but He was so much more! You must see Him as Savior and Lord, the sole means of salvation! I will agree that Jesus does create division. There are not many ways. One is either saved by His grace or lost and condemned in sin. Those who have received Christ will be received in heaven and those who have rejected Him will be cast into hell, eternally separated. I must ask – who is this Man to you?

C. The Constraint (13) – *Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.* The atmosphere in Jerusalem created an attitude of fear among the people, and no one spoke openly of Jesus. They feared reprisal from the Jews. This fear silenced their voices regarding Jesus.

- I fear we are now experiencing such an environment around the world. The hatred and animosity for Jesus has created an attitude of fear among many and the Christian voice is growing eerily silent. That is exactly what the enemy desires. He wants to create an atmosphere of intimidation, where believers are no longer willing to publicly identify with Jesus. I pray we will remain bold in our witness and continue to proclaim the Gospel of Christ to a lost and dying world.

Conclusion: This passage challenges the reader to consider Jesus. Those within Jerusalem had to make a decision regarding Jesus. Few recognized Him as the Christ. Who is Jesus to you? What have you done with Him? I pray you have submitted to Him in salvation. If not, I urge you to

come to Him while there is time and opportunity. He bore your sin and endured the judgment you deserved, so that you could be forgiven and receive eternal life. If the Lord is dealing with you regarding salvation, come to Him today!