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Email: woody@dtgministries.org; Website: <http://www.dtgministries.org>

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John 7 - Part II

Believers and Unbelievers

Divisions concerning Christ: John 7:25-31, 40-43: 25. *Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? 26. But, lo, he speaks boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? 27. How be it we know this man [from where] he is: but when Christ comes, no man knows [from where] he is. 28. Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know [from where] 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. 31. And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ comes, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?.... 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 comes of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? 43. So there was a division among the people because of him.*

Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? When teaching the Godhead, I have had similar questions: “Does the church teach this?” “Is this a salvation issue?” When asked, many do not explain their understanding of the Father and Son the way their church doctrine reads; and still others do not even know what their church teaches. I have also known people who saw light in what was being taught, but later rejected the light after consulting with their pastor, who would not accept it. Verse 27 is a statement of Jewish beliefs taught the people: **John 6:41-42:** 41. *The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. 42. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he says, I came down from heaven?* Because many were believing on Jesus, church leaders wanted to remove him out of the way by killing him. They saw Jesus as a threat to their status in the church and with the people. Their understanding of the law required a “blasphemer” to be put to death - physically.

Generally, church leaders reject Christ: John 7:32-36: 32. *The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him. 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, you cannot come. 35. Then said the Jews among themselves, Where 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, you cannot come?*

What did Jesus mean when he said, *Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, you cannot come?* None of the Jews understood the statement. In the previous verse, Jesus said: *I go unto him that sent me.* This could be understood as literal or spiritual. However, when verse 36 is added, *Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me,* Jesus was emphasizing the spiritual - because they did not believe the words of Jesus, they could not enter the heavenly way of thinking, nor would they be able to find the true Anointed One, the same problem that still exists. The Christ most people understand today does not exist, and they cannot receive spiritual things because they have been taught to look at most things from an earthly (man’s) point of view (John 3:12).

Living Water: **John 7:37-39:** 37. *And in the last day of the great feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. 38. The (one) believing into Me, as the Scripture said, Out of his belly will flow rivers of living water. 39. But He said this concerning the Spirit, whom the ones believing into Him were about to receive; for (the) Holy Spirit was not yet (given), because Jesus was not yet glorified (LITV).* Jesus continued to push the spiritual with words which he spoke that were holy spirit, or, living water. Words which the leaders rejected, and with which the people were struggling to understand. Is it any different today? Are most of the people only following church leaders?

There is light in Zophar's answer to Job: **Job 20:2-3:** 2. *Therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer, and for this I make haste. 3. I have heard the check of my reproach, and the spirit of my understanding causes me to answer.* He spoke his thoughts, or the spirit of his understanding. We use idioms today like, "I will give them a piece of my mind," or, "He spoke his mind..." It is the spirit of the mind that needs changing: **Ephesians 4:21-24:** 21. *if so be that ye heard him, and were taught in him, even as truth is in Jesus: 22. that ye put away, as concerning your former manner of life, the old man, that which is corrupt after the lusts of deceit; 23. and that ye be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24. and put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth (ASV).* It is critical to understand that the spirit of a person cannot exist separate from the human body. This is not hard to understand if you think of it as a persons thoughts, their mind. Jesus, speaking of the holy Spirit said: *the spirit it is that is giving life; the flesh doth not profit anything; the sayings that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life (Jn 6:63, YLT).* It is the understanding of Christ giving life.

Uncommitted leaders: **John 7:44-53:** 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. 47. Then answered the Pharisees, Are you also deceived? 48. Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? 49. But this people who knows not the law are cursed. 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 does? 52. They answered and said unto him, Art you also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee arises no prophet. 53. And every man went unto his own house.*

The Pharisees made a true statement when they said: *this people who know not the law are cursed.* However, they also condemned themselves. **Galatians 3:10:** *For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse.* The curse of the law is to be governed by the law, being in bondage under it. Jesus, as he did for the Jews, attempts to deliver us from our own opinions of law-keeping. Could some of the leaders, like Nicodemus, have asked Jesus, or his mother where Jesus was born? Would knowing that he was born in Bethlehem and not Galilee made any difference? Nicodemus capitalized on the comment of the Pharisees in reference to the law, indicating that they were contradicting themselves by their interpretation of the law. Is it any different in our generation?

Why would Nicodemus, as well as other Jewish leaders, not stand on what they believed about Jesus? **John 12:42-43:** 42. *Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: 43. For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.* When a person commits to follow Christ, they separate themselves from the world. But when they commit to the whole truth, they separate themselves from many other Christians as well. This is a hard thing to which the majority will not commit. **Luke 13:24:** *Strive to enter in at the strait (narrow) gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. Amen.*