

## John 7:25-53

The people of Jerusalem.....the local Jews.....ordinary folks.....are confused. Jesus is the talk of the town and they are trying to figure out just exactly who He is. **What was behind the people's thinking (vv. 25-26)?** The people could not understand why Jesus was allowed to teach so openly and boldly. If the rulers hated Him, why did they allow Him to speak? They felt that if He was a deceiver, He should be locked up, or if He was the Messiah, they should accept Him. Is it possible that He was the Messiah?

**Why did the people think that Jesus was probably not the Messiah (v. 27)?** *"We know where this man is from; when the Christ comes No one will know where He is from"* (a traditional belief that was not based on Scripture).

**What does that tell you about the people?** The people were ignorant of the prophecies of the Old Testament like Micah 5:2 *"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."* The common misunderstanding of Jesus' origin was that He grew up—and had evidently been born—in Nazareth. Not only did they fail to perceive His heavenly origin, but they were also wrong about His earthly origin. They really did not know Him very well.

Application: We need to be informed about the truths of Scripture. It is easy to be led astray. We need to be students of the Bible.

**How did Jesus respond to their comments (vv. 28-29)?** *"Yes, you know me!"* They knew who Jesus was in the sense that they knew His family. *"And you know where I am from."* They knew where He was from (Nazareth, in Galilee), though they seemed not to know that He was born in Bethlehem. Then Jesus basically said, "Let me tell you where I'm really from!" Jesus always pointed to His divine origin. He existed before He was born on the earth.

**They were not able to lay a hand on Him (vv. 30, 44). Why couldn't they seize Him?** We don't know exactly how, but God saw to it that Jesus was untouched. God prevented Jesus' premature arrest. Jesus' enemies were powerless until His time had come. They could not lay a hand on Him because the Father's hand was over Him.

Application: **What does that mean for us?** God has a plan for our lives also. God doesn't merely know how long we will live; He has ordained/determined the number of our days. As a Christian, there is no such thing as a premature death. We are immortal until our work on this earth is done. We can live our lives free of the fear of death.

- Psalm 139:16 "All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."
- Job 14:5 "Man's days are determined; you have decreed the number of his months and have set limits he cannot exceed."

**One other thing adding to the confusion of the people -- What were the Messianic expectations of the Jewish people?** The common understanding was that the Messiah would be a powerful human deliverer who would overthrow Roman rule and establish a political kingdom. Jesus didn't look like the Messianic model they were expecting. It was another case of Old Testament ignorance. Isaiah 53 describes the "suffering servant" – the crucifixion of Jesus. They should have known.

**How did the people respond to Jesus (v. 31)?** Some believed because of the "signs" that He had performed. Their logic was, "If Jesus wasn't the Messiah, when the real Messiah came, would He be able to do more miracles than Jesus had done?" They believed that the miracles of Jesus proved Him to be the real Messiah.

**Jesus talked about where He was from (vv. 28-29). What did He talk about in vv. 33-34 when the temple guards were coming to arrest Him?** He talked about where He was going, which was heaven, to take up a position alongside the One who sent Him. They could "not come" where He was going because of their present, unsaved condition. Because of their unbelief and wickedness, they would not be able to meet Him there. The words of this verse are especially solemn. They remind us that there is such a thing as the passing of opportunity.<sup>1</sup>

**How did the Jews respond to Jesus' comments about where He was going (vv. 35-36)?** They did not understand where Jesus was going any more than they understood where He had come from. They thought He was going on a preaching tour to the Jews who had scattered from the Promised Land and were living elsewhere in the world. In the New Testament, the word "Greeks" is synonymous with Gentiles.

**What did Jesus promise those who would come to Him (vv. 37-38)?** Streams of living water. He invited "anyone" who was spiritually "thirsty" to come to Him, and to take that which would satisfy and sustain. Thirst speaks of spiritual need. To drink means to take Him into our lives in the same sense as taking a glass of water into our bodies. Then streams of living water will flow out of the believer to minister and be a blessing to others.

Note that His invitation was extended to anyone. His gospel was a universal gospel. There was no one who could not be saved if he/she would simply come to Christ.<sup>2</sup>

But notice the condition. The Scripture says, "If anyone thirsts." "Thirst" here speaks of spiritual need. Unless a person knows he is a sinner, he will never want to be saved. Unless he realizes he is lost, he will never desire to be found. Unless one is conscious of a great spiritual lack in his life, he will never want to go to the Lord to have that need supplied.

The Savior invited the thirsting soul to come to Him—not to the church, the preacher, the waters of baptism, or the Lord's Table. Jesus said, "Let him come to Me." No one or nothing else will do

**What did He mean by streams of living water (v. 39)?** The living water was a reference to the coming gift of the Holy Spirit. There is a clear link between believing in Jesus and receiving the indwelling Holy Spirit. This would be evident at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit would descend and indwell true believers ([Acts 2](#)).

At the time Jesus spoke these words, the Holy Spirit had not yet been given. It was not until Jesus went back to heaven that the Holy Spirit descended on the day of Pentecost ([Acts 2](#)). From that moment on, every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ has been indwelt by the Holy Spirit.<sup>3</sup>

Application: **If we have streams of living water flowing from within, what will be some of the symptoms/evidence? What will that look like in our lives?** Changed hearts, transformed minds, different wants, priorities, attitudes, friends. Manifestation of the Fruit of Spirit ([Ephesians 5:22-26](#)) in our lives.

**How would you describe the attitude of the crowd toward Jesus (vv. 40-44)?** Divided. Polarized. Confused. The crowd continued to debate Jesus' identity. Some saw Him as the Prophet mentioned by Moses ([Deuteronomy 18:15, 18](#)).<sup>4</sup> Some of them were convinced that Jesus was who He claimed to be, i.e. the Christ. Others thought this was impossible because of the confusion surrounding His earthly origin. The people of today are much the same.

Application: The same holds true for us today as we witness to the unsaved. Some will be ready to receive the truth. Some will not yet be ready. Their readiness is a function of the Holy Spirit.

**The temple guards were sent to arrest Jesus (v. 32). Why did they return empty handed (vv. 45-46)?** They were amazed at the words of Jesus. They had never heard anyone speak like He did. They were dumbfounded and didn't know what to do. It may seem unusual that these officers would so weakly have failed in their mission, but they were not hardened Roman soldiers. They were Levites whose interests were mainly religious.

**How would you describe the reaction of the Pharisees (vv. 47-49)?** The religious leaders implied that the officers were ignorant and that none of the real thinkers and important people in the nation had believed in Jesus. To them, Jesus has taken advantage of the mindless masses, the common people. Those who reject Jesus think themselves too smart to be taken in by Him. Pride in one's knowledge often results in spiritual blindness.

**How did Nicodemus engage his fellow Pharisees (v. 51)?** Weakly. He questioned the correctness of the judicial process. He raised an objection to his colleagues' procedure on the grounds of fair play -- not giving Jesus a fair chance to be heard. The most we can say is that he was willing to defend Jesus' legal rights.

**What was wrong with the statement of v. 52?** Nicodemus' colleagues did not reply rationally but emotionally. They were angry....and they were wrong – Jonah, and perhaps other prophets, came from Galilee. They had already decided Jesus' case. Unable to refute the logic of Nicodemus' argument, they attacked him personally.

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<sup>1</sup> William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*, ed. Arthur Farstad (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 1511.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 1512.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Edwin A. Blum, "John," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*: J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 302.