

Small Group Bible Study Questions

- A) There are so many different opinions about who Jesus Christ was/is in our world today. "He was a great teacher." "He was a revolutionary." "He was the Son of God." "He was a prophet." "He was a political mastermind." "He was a pacifist." "He was a fringe religious fanatic." In the midst of so many voices, who do you think Jesus Christ was/is?
- B) As in Jesus Christ's own time, many people have a warped picture of who Jesus really is. Many people are convinced, even passionately, that their view is the right view. Why is our view any different than any other "right view?"
- C) Many people reject Jesus Christ because of their warped view. In fact, in speaking with many people and asking them what they believe about Jesus Christ, I have often commented, "I wouldn't believe in a Jesus like the one you've described, either!" How can we encourage people to "search and see" (John 7:52) for themselves who Jesus Christ really is?
- D) Sometimes, when people who are supposed to have the answers, don't have the answers, they can get pretty mean-nasty (John 7:45-49). Have you (or someone you've heard about) ever gotten hostile with someone while talking about Jesus? How do we avoid exasperation which leads to foolish comments when we are sharing about Jesus Christ?
- E) Since we are in the middle of the Holiday Season here in America, it goes without saying that we will have some opportunity to interact with some family members who "see" Christ in their own unique way. Perhaps you even have a specific family member who really "gets to you" when it comes to your faith in Jesus Christ. Share with your group who this person is, and join together in this next month (leading up to Christmas) for the interactions you will have with this person. Be honest and pray for one another!

Authority

Long Beach Alliance Church • November 28th, 2004 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**THE PHARISEES THEN ANSWERED THEM, "YOU HAVE NOT ALSO BEEN LED ASTRAY, HAVE YOU? "NO ONE OF THE RULERS OR PHARISEES HAS BELIEVED IN HIM, HAS HE? "BUT THIS CROWD WHICH DOES NOT KNOW THE LAW IS ACCURSED."
~ JOHN 7:47-49 (NASB)**

1) Division Of The Crowd

- A) As often happens when Jesus Christ reveals Himself, the crowd to which He was speaking become divided as to Jesus Christ's authenticity (John 7:40-43).
- B) A first group conjectures that Christ is "the Prophet" (Deuteronomy 18:15-19). Their testimony is passionate, they "certainly" (ἀληθῶς/alæthoes -- truly, with certainty) believe that He is the Prophet (7:40).
- C) A second group conjectures that Christ is "the Messiah" (the Christ/the anointed -- 7:41).

- D) Still another group objected to the idea that "the Christ" was going to come from the Galilean region (7:41). They state two compelling reasons that Jesus must not be "the Christ," they ironically reason:
- 1) "The Christ" was going to be from the line of David, thus Jesus Christ could not be the Messiah (7:42). This was based on 2nd Samuel 7:12-16; Psalm 89:3-4; Isaiah 9:6-7.
 - ai) The irony, of course, was that Christ was actually of the line of David (Matthew 1:1-16), but this would not have been known to anyone who neglected to inspect the census (Luke 2:1-7).
 - 2) The Christ was going to be from Bethlehem, this Jesus Christ (who was from Nazareth) could not be the Messiah (7:42).
 - bi) The irony, of course, was that Christ was actually born in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1), but this would not have been known to anyone who neglected to inspect the census (Luke 2:1-7).
- E) Because Jesus Christ was claiming to be from God (John 7:29), they are divided as to what to do with Him. The people "want" to arrest Jesus, but do nothing (7:43-44).

2) Abusive Authority: Pharisaiism Exposed

- A) The officers of the Sanhedrin (see notes from last week for an explanation of this group), which had been sent to arrest Christ returns empty-handed (John 7:45). The absence of Christ exasperates the Jewish leadership (Why didn't you...?).
- B) For their part, the officers are amazed at Christ's words (7:46), challenging the motivation of their own Jewish leaders

(the Sanhedrin). The officers seem to wonder aloud "do you leaders really know what you are doing?"

- C) The accusation sends the leadership into a defensive "tizzy-fit" of manipulation, pride and condemnation.
 - 1) **Manipulation...** "You have not also been led astray, have you?" (7:47).
 - 2) **Pride...** "No one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him, has he?" (7:48).
 - 3) **Condemnation...** "But this crowd which does not know the Law is accursed" (7:49).

3) Nicodemus: Part Deux

- A) Ironically, Nicodemus (a Pharisee himself, John 3:1), speaks up and points to Deuteronomy 1:16, or perhaps a rabbinical teaching of the time which explained Deuteronomy 1:16, appealing for fairness on Jesus Christ's behalf (John 7:50-52).
- B) Nicodemus' Pharisee colleagues respond with venomous contempt and prejudice at his words, essentially saying "Nicodemus, are you from the same inferior stock as this Galilean?" (7:52).
- C) In a highly ironic afterthought, the Pharisees challenge Nicodemus with "Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee" (7:52). "Search for yourself. Go and check God's Word, see where the Messiah is supposed to come from. Go and check his lineage, see for yourself that He is from Galilee." Imagine what Nicodemus' search revealed...