

Lesson 5**THE DIVIDER OF MEN****(John Chapter 7)**

The key verse in John chapter 7 is verse 43: "So there was a _____ among the people because of _____ (Jesus Christ)."

Jesus Christ is the Divider of men! All people can be divided into two groups: 1) those who believe on the Son of God; 2) those who do not believe on the Son of God (see John 3:18,36). There are those who are for Christ and there are those who are against Christ. Finally when men die and pass into eternity there will still be this great division of men: 1) those who are saved and in God's kingdom; 2) those who are lost and in the lake of fire. And the difference between heaven and hell all depends on what a person believes about Jesus Christ, the only Saviour of men!

Throughout John Chapter 7 we learn about different people who were of a DIVIDED OPINION as to who Jesus Christ really was. There were some who wanted to believe on Him and there were some who wanted to kill Him! The chapter can be broken down by the following OUTLINE:

Outline of John Chapter 7

- 1A. Showman or Lord? (John 7:1-9)
- 2A. Good Man or Deceiver? (John 7:10-13)
- 3A. Sent by God or Sent by Self? (John 7:14-18)
- 4A. To Kill or Not To Kill? (John 7:19-31)
- 5A. To Believe or Not to Believe? (John 7:32-44)
- 6A. For Him or Against Him? (John 7:45-53)

SHOWMAN OR LORD?

In John 7:1 the word "Jewry" means JUDAEA (same word as in verse 3). Can you find Judaea and Galilee on a Bible map? Why did Jesus spend time in Galilee instead of spending time in Judaea (John 7:1)? _____ The time of the events that we will read about in John 7 is given in John 7:2. The feast of _____ was at hand (John 7:2). Many Jews would travel to Jerusalem (in Judaea) for this great feast. About 6 months later Jesus would be crucified (the feast of Tabernacles was about 6 months before the feast of the Passover).

The word "brethren" in John 7:3 means "brothers." Did you know that Jesus had brothers? Actually these were the "half-brothers" of Jesus. They had the same mother but not the same father. These half-brothers were the children of Joseph and Mary. What were the names of Jesus' four brothers (Mark 6:3)?

What did Jesus' brothers want Him to do? Read John 7:3-4 and circle the statements that are true:

- a. They wanted Jesus to stay in Galilee because they were afraid that if He were to go to Jerusalem He might be killed.
- b. They wanted Jesus to go into Judaea.
- c. They wanted Jesus to perform great works and miracles before the crowds that would be gathered in Jerusalem.
- d. They wanted Jesus to do His works "secretly" so that not too many people would know about it.
- e. They wanted Jesus to make Himself known to the public and to show Himself to the world.

These brothers wanted Jesus to be in the limelight. They wanted Him to be in the public view. They wanted Him to act as a "SHOWMAN," performing His mighty works before men.

Did these brothers really believe in Jesus as their LORD and SAVIOUR (John 7:5)? _____ Perhaps they were like the Jews we read about in John chapter 6 who wanted Jesus to be King so that He could feed their stomachs, heal their bodies and set them free from Roman rule. But Jesus came into the world to do something on the INSIDE of a man (see John 7:39). The brothers of Jesus needed to be born again. They each needed a NEW HEART and a NEW LIFE!

Do you have loved ones that do not believe in the Lord and who do not understand about spiritual things? Do you have family members who need to be saved? The Lord Jesus experienced this very same thing (compare Hebrews 4:15). His very own brothers did not believe on Him and did not understand why He had come into the world. They were looking for a "showman" who could make things right on the OUTSIDE. They did not want a LORD and SAVIOUR who could fix things on the INSIDE.

Something wonderful happened to the half-brothers of Jesus. Before Jesus went to the cross they were unbelievers but later they became believers. What happened to bring about such a change? In John 7:5 we learn that they were not believers but later in Acts 1:14 we learn that these same half-brothers were believers and were praying with the other disciples. One of Jesus' brothers was named James. What happened to James one day that made such a big difference in his life (see 1 Corinthians 15:4,5,7)?

_____ God used two of these brothers in a very special way. James and Jude (Juda--Mark 6:3) were both used by God to write letters which later became a part of the New Testament (the books of James and Jude).

Jesus knew that there were Jews who wanted to kill Him (John 7:1). He also knew that it was not time for Him to die because "My time is not yet _____" (John 7:6). Was Jesus loved by the world or hated by the world (John 7:7)? _____ According to John 7:7, what was Jesus' message to the world?

- a. Your works are good and right and holy.
- b. Your works are evil.

Jesus told them the truth and the truth was exactly what they did not want to hear! Instead they wanted to get rid of the Person who was telling them the truth!

GOOD MAN OR DECEIVER?

Did Jesus end up going to the feast after all (John 7:10)? _____ Did He go openly or secretly (John 7:10)? _____ About 6 months later Jesus would enter the city of Jerusalem publicly and openly (see John 12:12-19) and the people of the world would put Him to death. But in John chapter 7 Jesus knew that it was not time for this and He entered the city so secretly that people even had trouble finding Him (see John 7:11)!

In John 7:12 we learn that people were of a DIVIDED OPINION as to who Jesus Christ really was. Some thought that He was a _____ but others said that He _____ the people. Was He a good man or a deceiver?

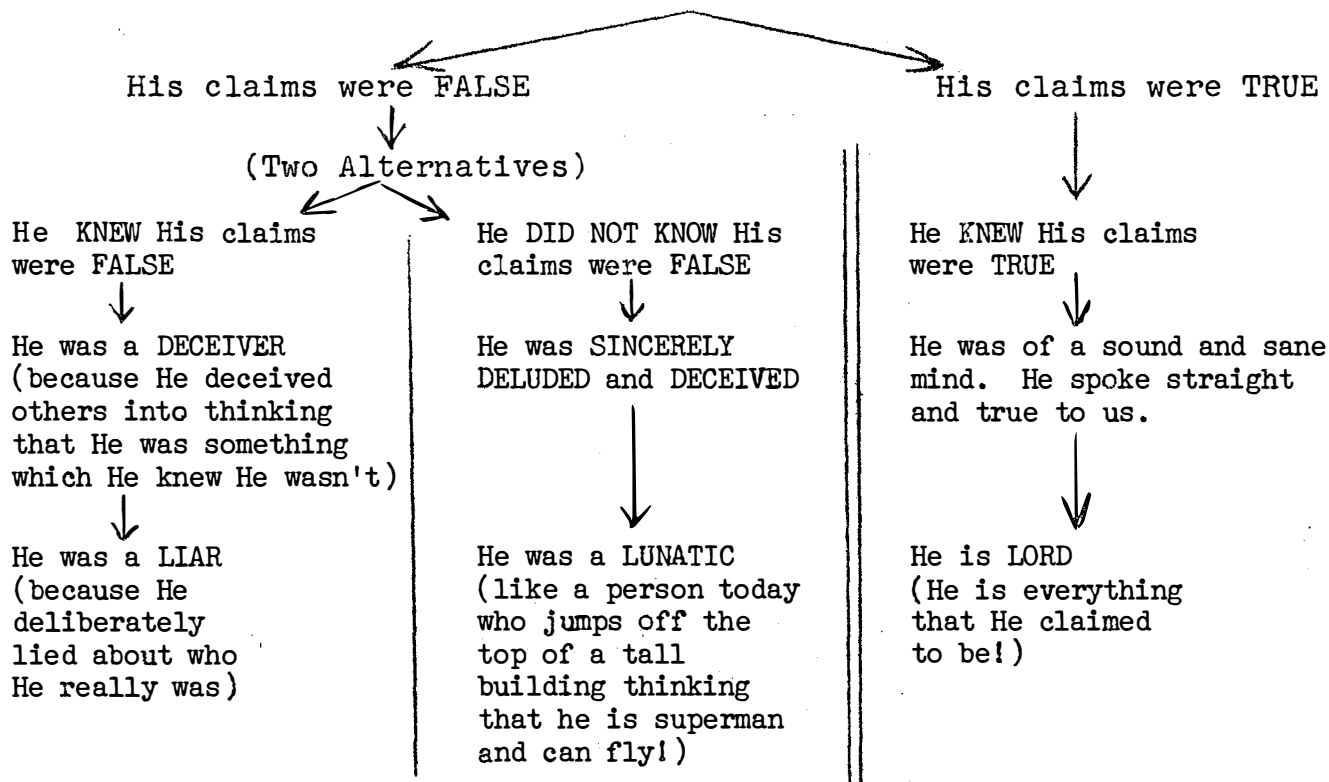
Already in our study of the Gospel of John we have seen that Jesus Christ made some amazing claims. Do the following MATCHING problem:

1. He claimed to be able to give eternal life to men.	A. John 1:49-50
2. He claimed to be Christ the Messiah.	B. John 2:19,21
3. He claimed to speak words of life.	C. John 4:14
4. He claimed to be the Son of God and the King of Israel.	D. John 4:25,26
5. _____ He claimed to be the Bread of Life, the One who had come down from heaven.	E. John 5:18
6. He claimed that He would rise again from the dead.	F. John 5:22,27,28
7. He claimed to be the final Judge of all men.	G. John 6:51
8. He claimed to be equal with God.	H. John 6:63

Every person must decide WHO Jesus Christ really is. Nothing is more important than finding out who He is. As we think about the amazing claims that Jesus made we realize that there are only three choices that a person can make: Jesus was either a **LIAR**, a **LUNATIC** or **LORD**! The following chart shows this:

JESUS CLAIMS TO BE THE SON OF GOD

(TWO ALTERNATIVES)



Was He a **LIAR**?

Was He a deluded **LUNATIC**?

Or, was He everything that He claimed to be: **LORD OF ALL**?

These are important questions that everyone must think about. Have you decided **WHO** Jesus Christ really is? Remember, if His claims are true, then each person has but two alternatives:

JESUS CHRIST IS LORD

(You have two alternatives)

- 1) You can **BELIEVE** and live
- 2) You can refuse to **BELIEVE** and perish

(See John 3:16,18,36)

SENT BY GOD OR SENT BY SELF?

When the feast was halfway over Jesus entered the temple in Jerusalem and He taught (John 7:14). The Jews M_____ (John 7:15) at His teaching. They were amazed at the way He taught. Where did this Man get His learning and His education from? Remember, Jesus grew up as a Carpenter (Mark 6:3) and never had any formal kind of education and had never attended any kind of rabbinical school. Where did Jesus' teaching or doctrine come from (John 7:16)?

- a. Joseph taught Him
- b. He taught Himself
- c. God sent Jesus and God is the One who taught Him

Jesus learned from the best Teacher of all--GOD HIMSELF! Have you enrolled yourself in God's school? Are you letting God be your Teacher? Are you letting God's Word, the Bible, be your main Textbook for how to live and what to believe? The world is always amazed by those who have gone to God's school (see Acts 4:13)!

TO KNOW OR NOT TO KNOW?

What is the secret of knowledge? How can a person really know what is true and what is not true? There are many people today who want us to believe many things. How can we know what is true and what is false?

In John 7:17 Jesus gives us the secret of how a person can really know: "If any man will do His will, HE SHALL _____." The first part of this verse should be translated as follows: IF ANYONE **DESIRES TO DO HIS WILL** . . . If a person really wants to do God's will, then he shall know! The problem is that most people do not want to do God's will. Most people care very little about what God wants. Those who really want to do God's will shall know! God will not leave them in the dark! God delights in making known His will to those who are willing to do it! How did Philip and Nathanael and Peter and Andrew *know* that Jesus was really the Son of God? These were men who really wanted to do God's will! They were those who determined in their hearts that they would go in God's direction, and God made sure that they knew the truth!

TO KILL OR NOT TO KILL?

In John 7:18 Jesus was speaking about Himself and He said, "and no _____ is in Him." In John 7:19 He spoke to the Jews and said, "_____ of you keepeth the law." Jesus was saying this:

- 1) I am perfectly RIGHTEOUS (John 7:18).
- 2) All of you are guilty LAWBREAKERS (John 7:19).

Then Jesus said something that condemned these people even more. He said, "Why go ye about to kill Me?" (John 7:19). These sinful lawbreakers were seeking to kill the sinless Son of God! Did they really try to kill Jesus (see John 5:16,18)? _____ To make things even worse, the people then accused Jesus of being demon possessed (John 7:20--the word "devil" should be translated "demon").

Why were the people angry with Jesus (John 7:23)?

We learned about this man who was healed in John 5:1-16. Jesus made a man perfectly whole and healthy! Is this a crime worthy of death? _____ Would a judge be a righteous judge if he were to condemn a man to death for doing such a good deed? Jesus wanted these Jews to learn to be righteous judges (John 7:24).

Some of the people who were listening to Jesus were wondering if He could really be the Christ (Messiah) that they knew would someday come into the world (see John 7:26-27). In John 7:28-29 Jesus spoke and made it very clear WHERE HE HAD COME FROM! "For I am from _____ (God) and He (God) hath _____ Me" (John 7:29). When the Jewish leaders heard this, did they want to take Jesus and lay their hands on Him (John 7:30)? _____ Did they do this (John 7:30)? _____ Why not (John 7:30)? _____

Can any man take His life from Him (John 10:17-18)? _____ The time had not yet come for Jesus to lay His life down!

Did many of the people believe on Jesus (John 7:31)? _____ What was it that convinced them that He must be the true Messiah (John 7:31)? _____

TO BELIEVE OR NOT TO BELIEVE?

Did the Jewish leaders continue their efforts to take Jesus and arrest him (John 7:32)? _____ Were they successful (John 7:44)? _____

In John 7:33-34 Jesus said something that really puzzled His enemies. They could not figure out what He meant (see John 7:35-36). Actually, what He said was not very difficult to understand. Let's see if we can figure it out:

John 7:33

"Yet a little while am I with you"

Jesus would not be on earth much longer. In about 6 months He would die and rise again and return to heaven.

"then I go unto Him that sent me"

Who is the One that sent Jesus (John 5:23,30)?

_____ Jesus would soon go back to heaven to be with the Father.

John 7:34

"Ye shall seek Me and shall not find Me"

His enemies will not be able to find Jesus. All they will find is an EMPTY TOMB!

"where I am, thither ye cannot come"

Jesus will be in heaven, a place where His enemies will not be able to go!
There is only one way to get to heaven (John 10:9; 14:6)!

Finally on the last day of the feast Jesus stood and gave a great INVITATION to all men: "If any man _____ let him come unto _____ and _____" (John 7:37). Once again Jesus promised to provide LIVING WATER for those who are truly thirsty, just as He had promised to the Samaritan woman in John chapter 4.

In John 7:38 the word "BELLY" refers to a person's INNERMOST BEING or a person's HEART. What must a person do in order to have this LIVING WATER (John 7:38)?

_____ The living water given to believers becomes a SPRING which bubbles up and flows out to others. In the next verse (John 7:39) we are told exactly what Jesus was talking about. Ten days after Jesus went back to heaven He sent the Holy Spirit to dwell within His believers (the Holy Spirit first came on the day of Pentecost--Acts chapter 2). Who would receive the Holy Spirit (John 7:39)? They that _____ on Him (Jesus). **THOSE WHO BELIEVE SHALL RECEIVE!** Today every true believer receives the gift of the Holy Spirit (compare Romans 8:9). We will learn more about the coming of the Holy Spirit when we study John chapters 14-16.

After Jesus spoke these words the people still had to make a decision as to who Jesus really was:

LIAR? LUNATIC? or LORD?

Some believed He was the P _____ that Moses said would someday come into the world (see John 7:40 and compare Deuteronomy 18:15-19). Others said, "This is the _____ (John 7:41). The word "CHRIST" means the same as "M _____" (John 1:41). Others were confused because they knew that Jesus was from Galilee and they also knew that Micah 5:2 said that the Messiah must come from B _____ (see John 7:42). Some wanted to get rid of Him once and for all (John 7:44)!

Do people today still have differing opinions about who Jesus Christ really is? Who do YOU say that Jesus Christ is (compare Matthew 16:13-16 and then write out your own answer)?

FOR HIM OR AGAINST HIM?

If Jesus is not a **LIAR** and if He is not a **LUNATIC**, then He must be **LORD!** And if Jesus is really the **LORD**, then each person must decide whether he is **FOR HIM** or **AGAINST HIM**. Jesus said, "He that is not _____ Me is _____ Me" (Matthew 12:30). A person cannot sit on the fence and be neutral. Every person is either **FOR HIM** or **AGAINST HIM**. Neutral you cannot be!

In John 7:45 we learn that the officers that were sent to arrest Jesus came back empty-handed! They had been really impressed by the way Jesus taught: "Never man spoke like this _____" (John 7:46).

Most of the Jewish leaders were **AGAINST JESUS** (John 7:47-49). But there was at least one man among the leaders of the Jews who was not against Jesus. What was his name (John 7:50)?

_____ Have we met this man before? _____ We learned about this man in John Chapter _____ Nicodemus believed that Jesus deserved a fair hearing before being condemned to death (John 7:53.). In their unbelief the Jewish leaders had convinced themselves that Christ could not be the true Messiah (John 7:52). What they were saying was something like this: **MY MIND IS ALREADY MADE UP, SO DON'T CONFUSE ME WITH THE FACTS!** This kind of person will never know the truth.

The true **SEEKER** says, **I NEED TO KNOW AND DESIRE AND DO GOD' S WILL NO MATTER WHAT IT IS** (John 7:17)! **LORD, HELP ME TO KNOW THE TRUTH!**"

Are you a true seeker?

Oh, Jesus! on the mountain
Beside Thee I would stand,
Drink from no other fountain,
Feed from no other hand,
Gaze on no other glory,
Lean on no other breast;
Thus, thus would I adore Thee,
My Everlasting Rest!

—Theodore H. Epp