

# The Gospel of John

## What Shall I Do with Jesus? (Part 2)

**John 7:40-52**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

### **ILLUSTRATION:**

Spring rains in Missouri call for a response from the ground. As we drive around in the country we see corn, soybeans, and wheat springing from the ground and maturing for harvest. We see other things growing as well, such as, cockle-burrs, rag weed, Canadian thistles, and Johnson grass.

Jesus' words are like the rain. He cries out in the temple on the last day of the feast of trumpets **"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink."**

As these words pour from the lips of the Savior, they call for a response. **And there is a response!** This is what we have recorded for us in our text from John through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. There are various responses from various groups of people and then notably from one individual, Nicodemus, at the end of the chapter.

Regardless of one's current belief in God and Christ, all of mankind faces an **ultimate question that MUST eventually be considered!** If the possibility exists that Jesus **is** the prophesied Messiah, then all of us must ultimately respond to this question, **"What shall I do with Jesus Christ?"** Our eternal destiny is hinged upon how we respond to that question.

Israel was given many opportunities to accept Him as the Messiah. With authority and precision, Jesus offered an invitation to everyone to believe in Him. The reactions of the people separated them into five groups:

- The convinced
- The contrary,
- The confused,
- The conceited,
- and the contemplative.

Those responses encompass the universal pattern of reactions to Jesus Christ from the first century to the present day.

### **All Stand and Read Scripture.**

### **John 7:40-52 (NASB)**

<sup>40</sup> *Some of the people therefore, when they heard these words, were saying, "This certainly*

is the Prophet.” <sup>41</sup> Others were saying, “This is the Christ.” Still others were saying, “Surely the Christ is not going to come from Galilee, is He? <sup>42</sup> Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?” <sup>43</sup> So a division occurred in the crowd because of Him. <sup>44</sup> Some of them wanted to seize Him, but no one laid hands on Him.

<sup>45</sup> The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, and they said to them, “Why did you not bring Him?” <sup>46</sup> The officers answered, “Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks.” <sup>47</sup> The Pharisees then answered them, “You have not also been led astray, have you? <sup>48</sup> No one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him, has he? <sup>49</sup> But this crowd which does not know the Law is accursed.” <sup>50</sup> Nicodemus (he who came to Him before, being one of them) \*said to them, <sup>51</sup> “Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him and knows what he is doing, does it?” <sup>52</sup> They answered him, “You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee.”

## Prayer

### BODY:

#### I. THE CONVINCED.

The first response is from the **convinced**. These are the ones who have thirsted, came to Jesus, and drank. They received the truth.

#### **John 7:40-41 (NASB)**

<sup>40</sup> *Some of the people therefore, when they heard these words, were saying, “This certainly is the Prophet.”* <sup>41</sup> Others were saying, “This is the Christ.”

What is the Prophet? This was a prophecy made by Moses concerning the Messiah Who was to come.

#### **Deuteronomy 18:15 (NASB)**

<sup>15</sup> “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him.

The Jewish people knew about the Prophet. That was familiar to them. That was part of their vocabulary - the Prophet Who is to come. The Prophet Who is spoken of by Moses. Jewish people were looking for that Prophet. We saw that early in the Gospel of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites to John the Baptist.

#### **John 1:19-21 (NASB)**

<sup>19</sup> This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent to him priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” <sup>20</sup> And he confessed and did not deny, but confessed, **“I am not the Christ.”** <sup>21</sup> They asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” And he \*said, “I am not.” **“Are you the Prophet?”** And he answered, **“No.”**

They didn’t have to qualify the word "Prophet". Everybody knew Who the Prophet was. He was the Messiah Who was to come.

There were some who were already believers. They were convinced. One of first ones was Andrew. He had heard John the Baptist preach about Jesus. He ran to his brother, Peter

to give him the good news.

### **John 1:40-41 (NASB)**

<sup>40</sup> One of the two who heard John *speak* and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. <sup>41</sup> He *\*found first his own brother Simon and \*said to him, "We have found the Messiah"* (which translated means Christ).

We see it again among the people who are following Christ and seeing His miracles.

### **John 6:14 (NASB)**

<sup>14</sup> Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."

And when Jesus was being rebuked by so many people Jesus came to the twelve disciples and asked them "You do not want to go away also, do you?"

### **John 6:68-69 (NASB)**

<sup>68</sup> Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. <sup>69</sup> We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God."

These are those who entered through the narrow gate and went the narrow way as Jesus put it in the Sermon on the Mount. They thirsted. They came. They drank.

## **II. THE CONTRARY.**

### **John 7:41b-44 (NASB)**

<sup>41</sup>...Still others were saying, "Surely the Christ is not going to come from Galilee, is He? <sup>42</sup> Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?" <sup>43</sup> So a division occurred in the crowd because of Him. <sup>44</sup> Some of them wanted to seize Him, but no one laid hands on Him.

The second group is – we can call them the "contrary," the rejecters of Jesus. We have seen them before. These are the ones who do not want to be confused by the facts.

### **John 1:46 (NASB)**

<sup>46</sup> Nathanael said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip *\*said to him, "Come and see."*

The Jews had nothing but scorn for Galilee and the region of Galilee and the town of Nazareth. These are the ones who repeatedly, constantly mocked Jesus: Pharisees, scribes, rabbis, religious leaders, and the people who followed them. It's a statement of mockery.

They actually knew and quoted from Micah 5:2 that Jesus was going to be a descendant of David and that He would be born in Bethlehem.

If they had just been willing to do a little research, they would have known that Jesus had met both of those qualifications. But Jesus was not meeting their expectations, so the facts just got in their way. Their mind and heart was set on rejecting Jesus as the Prophet and the Messiah.

### III. THE CONFUSED.

#### John 7:45-46 (NASB)

<sup>45</sup> The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, and they said to them, "Why did you not bring Him?" <sup>46</sup> The officers answered, "Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks." <sup>47</sup> The Pharisees then answered them, "You have not also been led astray, have you?" <sup>48</sup> No one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him, has he? <sup>49</sup> But this crowd which does not know the Law is accursed."

There's a third group here, and we'll call those the "confused." The convinced, the contrary, and now the confused. The convinced **receive the truth**. The contrary **reject the truth**. And the confused **wrestle with the truth**.

#### ILLUSTRATION.

##### Dead or Alive

Harry Truman enjoyed telling about the man who was hit on the head at work. The blow was so severe he was knocked unconscious for an extended period of time. His family was convinced that he was dead so they called the funeral home and asked the local undertaker to pick him up at the hospital, which he did.

Early the next morning the man suddenly awoke and sat straight up in the casket. Confused, he blinked several times and looked around trying to put his situation into perspective. He thought, "If I am alive, what in the world am I doing in this soft, satin-filled box? And if I am dead, why do I have to go to the bathroom?"

There will be times in our lives when we will be pulled from two sides. We will have to determine which way to go. Remember back in verse 32, the temple police were sent to take Jesus prisoner? So now they come back to the chief priest and Pharisees, and they don't have Jesus. And they said to them, "**Why did you not bring him?**" The officers answered, "Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks."

You must realize that these guys know what it is to be under authority! They are police, they are under the authority of temple leaders. They know what it is to take orders. They know the consequences of violating those orders. They are used to people with authority, but they were **not** used to hearing anybody speak like Jesus. This is a level of authority that was far beyond their ability to respond. Literally their knees buckled under the sheer power of his authoritative words.

They had been commissioned by the Pharisees and chief priests to set their hands on Jesus and arrest him and put Him in chains. But they come back empty-handed. Because Jesus' time had not yet come. They couldn't touch Him. They might as well have ordered the sun to stop shining. They had no power over Him. No one could do anything before God's prescribed time. That is still six months away.

But their answer is not because of God. Their answer is, "**We never heard anybody talk like this.**" So now we have a testimony of the Messiah coming from Bethlehem and the line of David, and that is true of Jesus. And that testimony comes from those who hate him. And now from these confused soldiers comes the testimony that his words are the most overwhelming, overpowering words they've ever heard. They're in a state of amazement and confusion.

These men are literally paralyzed by the words of Jesus. They don't know what to do. Jesus says, "Take me. Receive me. Believe in me. And drink of the living water." Their leaders say, "Arrest him so we can kill him." Jesus says, "Receive me, and I'll give you life." Their leaders say, "Arrest him so we can give him death." They have pressure coming from both sides, and they do nothing. They are just bewildered and confused.

#### IV. THE CONCEITED.

##### **John 7:47-48 (NASB)**

47 The Pharisees then answered them, "You have not also been led astray, have you?  
48 No one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him, has he?"

Consider the conceit, arrogance, and pride of these chief priests and Pharisees (the Sanhedrin). They, of all people, are the ones that should have been able to discern the coming of the Messiah. They are not able to do so because of their hardness of heart, their misunderstanding of the scripture, and their darkness. **They are blinded!** They think Jesus is leading them astray, when, in fact, He is trying to lead them into **salvation** unto **their** God. They believe **they** are the **standard** for accepted doctrine. That **they** have the truth! When, in fact, they are the ones who are **critically** in darkness.

##### **John 7:49 (NASB)**

49 But this crowd which does not know the Law is accursed."

**Do you see the irony?** Who is it that really does not know the law? Who is it that is **really** accursed? Is it not these Pharisees and chief priests? They are blinded to the very scripture that points to Jesus, their Messiah. They accused the crowd as being cursed, when in fact, **they** are the ones who are blinded and hate the savior. I cannot think of a more cursed condition! **Can you?**

#### V. THE CONTEMPLATIVE.

Then there is Nicodemus. With him we have a spark of light. I am going to label him as the **contemplative**.

There are some people who are in process. The convinced **receive the truth**. The contrary **reject the truth**. The confused **wrestle with the truth**. The conceited are **blinded to the truth**. The contemplative **search for the truth**.

##### **John 7:50 (NASB)**

<sup>50</sup> Nicodemus (he who came to Him before, being one of them)...

Nicodemus was a member of this Sanhedrin, this elite ruling body, but he had spent some time with Jesus.

Remember John 3? Nicodemus came to Jesus by night and Jesus taught him about the new birth and entering the Kingdom of God.

We haven't heard anything about Nicodemus since then. Where has he been for the last couple of years? He's been in process – complying with what he knew – yielding. There is a genuine search for the truth.

With all of the opposition, all of the darkness, and all of the rejection, you have Nicodemus who is slowly, slowly, slowly beginning to understand Who Jesus is. And so

he speaks up,

### **John 7:50-52 (NASB)**

<sup>50</sup> Nicodemus (he who came to Him before, being one of them) \*said to them, <sup>51</sup> “Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him and knows what he is doing, does it?” <sup>52</sup> They answered him, “You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee.”

He wants to defend Jesus. He doesn't want this to happen. He has processed enough about Jesus to know it's not going to be right to kill him. He is going to hold them to the integrity of their own laws. You cannot arrest and execute a man until he has had a trial. So he defends Jesus in this legal way.

Maybe what they said in verse 48 wasn't true, “**No one of the rulers of Pharisees had believed in him.**” Maybe they didn't know about Joseph of Arimathea, who was a secret disciple. Maybe they did not have a clue that Nicodemus was on the path of coming to faith in Christ. But for now, all he can do is sort of stop the lynch mob by upholding the law, and in that way, defending Jesus. And they scorn him.

### **John 7: 52 (NASB)**

<sup>52</sup> They answered him, “You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee.”

Well, that's selective history. Did you forget Jonah? Did you forget Nahum? Did you forget Hosea? All of whom came from Galilee. But again, this is all selective data that they're throwing around here. So they mock one of their own – one of their own elite Sanhedrin members. They heap scorn on him, “**You're not from Galilee, are you?**”

## **CONCLUSION:**

Why do I say he is contemplating and searching for the truth?

### **John 19:38-39 (NASB)**

<sup>38</sup> After these things Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but a secret *one* for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate granted permission. So he came and took away His body. <sup>39</sup> Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds *weight*. <sup>40</sup> So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. <sup>41</sup> Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.

We see Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus taking the body of Jesus and burying Him. They are described as “**disciples**” of Jesus. Jesus is now their Lord and Savior. Some people **believe**. Some people **reject**. Some people **remain in limbo**. Some people are **blinded to the truth**. But some people **are in process**, aren't they? And that was Nicodemus, honestly seeking. God says, If you seek me with all your heart, you will – **WHAT?.....“You will find me.”**

We all must make the final decision for ourselves, “**What shall I do with Jesus Christ?**”

**God Be With You.**