

The Water that Divides

John 7:25-52

The Continental Divide is a line that runs from the icy northern reaches of Canada to the Strait of Magellan in southernmost Chile. It runs along the highest peaks of the Rocky Mountains in North America and the Andes in South America. Rain or snow that falls on these peaks will eventually reach the Pacific Ocean in the west or the Atlantic Ocean in the east.

John 7 is a dividing line in the ministry of Jesus. People debate and divide over his authority, his origin and destiny, and his offer of salvation. In John 7:37-39, ***Jesus offers living water to thirsty souls.*** The offer is divisive as some believe the message while others do not. While there are many opinions about Jesus' nature, people agree that no one ever spoke like he did.

Jesus' Origin & Destiny (25-36)

While many of the Jewish pilgrims to the Feast of Tabernacles were not aware of the antagonism towards Jesus (20), some of the locals were aware (25-26). They marveled that Jesus was speaking publicly and no one was opposing him. This led some to wonder if the officials believed who Jesus said he was.

Many hesitated to believe because they thought the Messiah's earthly origins would be unknown (27).

Jesus proclaimed that people knew where he came from, or at least they thought they knew (28-29). Jesus said he was sent by the Father, the one who is true. Unfortunately, the people did not know the one who sent Jesus, even though they thought they did.

The Jewish leaders wanted to arrest Jesus, but were not able to do so (30) since it was not yet his time.

Some believed Jesus because of his miracles and concluded that he was the Messiah (31). The Pharisees heard what the crowd was saying and moved quickly to arrest Jesus (32).

When Jesus' hour passed, he would return to the Father (33-34). People would search for him, but not find him. Time was running out for the Jews to believe in Jesus.

Jesus' hearers thought he was talking about physical matters and earthly places (35-36). The "Dispersion" was the term that described the Jews who had scattered from Palestine and were living elsewhere in the world. People thought Jesus was going to minister to Jews and Gentile proselytes living outside Israel.

The Invitation of the Messiah (37-44)

The Feast of the Tabernacles lasted seven days. The last day of the feast, the great day, was either the seventh or eighth day (37). Jesus used the occasion to make another important announcement.

The living water (38) refers to the Holy Spirit. When we believe in Jesus, the Spirit wells up within us and gives us satisfying spiritual refreshment.

John helped his readers understand that Jesus was referring to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (39). This happened on the Day of Pentecost.

Jesus' spectacular offer led some people to conclude that he was the promised Prophet (40). Some doubted Jesus because of his apparent Galilean origins (41). The Jews were seemingly not aware that Jesus was born in Bethlehem (42). People were divided in their opinions about Jesus (43-44).

Rejection of the Messiah (45-52)

The Jewish leaders were upset that the temple guard did not arrest Jesus (45-46). The guards went to arrest Jesus but Jesus arrested them with his words.

The Pharisees implied the officers were ignorant (47-48), that none of the real thinkers in the nation had accepted Jesus.

The Jewish leaders claimed knowledge of the Law that was superior to that of the common people (49). They condescendingly judged the officers' opinion of Jesus as worthy of the uneducated (accursed).

Nicodemus spoke up questioning how Jesus could be condemned without first listening to him (50-51). Nicodemus' colleagues replied emotionally, not rationally (52). They had already decided against Jesus with hearing him. They allowed prejudice to blind themselves to the truth.

Principles to Practice

Come to Jesus and drink of his living water.

Don't reject Jesus based on false impressions.