

### The Gospel of John John 7

**Memory Verse:** *Thus the people were divided because of Jesus* (John 7:43 NIV).

#### Background Helps:

Chapter 7 begins a lengthy passage in the Gospel of John whose main setting appears to be a visit of the Lord Jesus to Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths (7:10–10:21). Do some background study on the Feast of Booths especially in connection with Jesus' words in John 7:37-39. Notice the following geographical-chronological outline:

1. Jesus in Galilee: Conversation with his brothers (7:1-9)
2. Jesus in Jerusalem (7:10–10:39)
  - a. At the Feast of Tabernacles (7:10–10:21)
    - i. Division among the people over Jesus (7:10-52; 8:1-59)
    - ii. [The woman caught in adultery (7:53–8:11)]
    - iii. Healing of the man born blind (9:1-41)
    - iv. The Good Shepherd and his sheep (10:1-21)
  - b. At the Feast of Dedication or Hanukkah: The Good Shepherd and his sheep (10:22-39)
3. Jesus on the east side of the Jordan River (10:40-42)

As you can see, the chapter divisions in our Bibles may obscure the fact that much of John 7–10 takes place during the eight day celebration of Tabernacles or soon thereafter. For example, notice these links: specific references to the Feast in 7:2, 8, 10, 11, 14, 37; references to division among the people because of Jesus in 7:43; 9:16; 10:19; references to Jesus as the Light of the world in 8:12 and 9:5; references to the healing of the blind man in chapter 9 and 10:21. You may have occasion in your teaching over the next four weeks to draw attention in class to the continuity between these chapters. (Notice also the apparent reference in 7:21-23 to the miracle Jesus performed during his previous visit to Jerusalem for earlier feast: see 5:1-18.)

#### Lesson Helps:

A key feature of John 7 is the division of the people over who Jesus is. Your entire lesson could be built around the memory verse: John 7:43. (See also 9:16 and 10:19.) A possible lesson aim: My students will learn about the division of the people over Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles, so that they will decide for themselves who Jesus is.

1. Hook: Give a contemporary example (from your own experience?) of people becoming divided over differing viewpoints of who Jesus is.
2. Book: In class work your way through John 7, listing (on the board?) the different opinions about Jesus.
3. Look: What different opinions or viewpoints of Jesus do people have today? What ideas about Jesus have you heard personally?

4. Took: What is your view of Jesus? Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ? For those who do believe, Jesus gives them the wonderful gift of the Holy Spirit (7:37-39).

In children's classes, the teachers could ask the brainstorm question: Who is Jesus? Then notice the different answers to this question people give in John 7: a good man (v. 12); a deceiver or liar (v. 12); a demon-possessed man (v. 20); the Christ or Messiah (vv. 26, 31, 41); the Prophet (v. 40). Each time ask: Is this true about Jesus? Be ready to explain each of these ideas. Then ask, Who do you believe Jesus is?

**Home Assignment:**

 Read: John 8

 Memorize: John 8:36

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