

# John 7

## Jesus' Confrontation with His Brothers, the Multitudes, and Pharisees

**For Your Information:**

**"Period of Conflict" 7:1-11:53**

"The Period of Conflict...describes the parallel development of belief and unbelief among the hearers of Jesus, and the resultant clash of these two opposing forces. The bewilderment of some, the outspoken opposition of others, and the slow but steady development of a triumphant faith on the part of Jesus' disciples are all recorded. The difference between this period and the one preceding is that the Period of Controversy narrates mostly argument arising from unsettled attitudes, while the Period of Conflict represents fixed attitudes at war with one another."  
- Merrill Tenney (129)

### Day 1

#### Read John 7:1-10

#### Conflict with Jesus' brothers

1. What was the atmosphere in Judea? 7:1 (Cross-reference 5:18)

**For Your Information:** "Bible scholars generally agree that this time setting falls within the last six months of Jesus' life. The Feast of Tabernacles was held in early October. It was a feast of thanksgiving primarily for the blessing of God in the harvest, but it was also a time of remembering the blessings received during the wilderness wanderings, the time when God manifested Himself in the tabernacle (Lev. 23:33-44). All Jewish males within a twenty-mile radius of Jerusalem were obligated to participate in this festive event, while a multitude of devout Jews from outside the area also attended."  
- Charles Swindoll (FC 17,18)

2. How did Jesus' brothers challenge Him? 7:3,4

- How "secret" had Jesus been? John 18:20

3. How had Jesus reacted to this type of challenge before?

- John 6:15
- Matthew 4:5-10

4. How sincere were his brothers when they said these things? 7:5  
(Compare Isaiah 5:19-20)

5. What was the reason for Jesus' delay? 7:6,8 (Cf. 7:30)

**Optional Digging Deeper**

What do you learn about Jesus' family from Matthew 13:55-57?

How had some of Jesus' close friends and family felt about his ministry?  
Mark 3:20-21

How did that change after the resurrection? Acts 1:14; Gal. 1:19

**Optional Digging Deeper**

How does 1 John 2:16; 5:19 describe the way of this world?

6. Why were His brothers free to go anytime (“*your time is always opportune*”)? 7:7a

**For Your Information:** “*My Time is not yet at hand*”(7:6). “Jesus was referring to the time of His sacrifice. He knew what must transpire before His death, and anything that hastened (or delayed) that date was not allowable. He would be going up to the feast, but not in the way and time suggested by His brothers.” - Irving Jensen (59)

7. Why does the world hate Jesus? 7:7b (Cf. 3:19,20)

- By implication, why didn’t the world hate Jesus’ brothers (7:7a)? (See John 15:19)

8. When and how did Jesus attend the feast? 7:9-10

**For Your Information:** “Some have suggested that Jesus lied to His brothers, but He certainly did not. His statement didn’t preclude His going later, which He intended all along. He simply didn’t want to accompany His vainglorious brothers, who would have given His attendance a skewed perspective before the people. Instead, Jesus planned to journey more discreetly with His disciples and then to address the Judeans in the time and manner of His own choosing.” - Charles Swindoll (155)

“That Christ traveled in ‘secret’ and ‘not publicly’ (7:10) probably means that He journeyed at night along the back-roads up to Jerusalem. John tells us that the Jewish authorities “were watching” for Him all the while in order that they might at least arrest him. The specific charge that was leveled against Jesus was that He was a deceiver, or another one of the many Messianic pretenders who occasionally arrived on the scene.” - Mike Calvert

**Applying the Word:** *What are some of the best ways you have seen people deal with family tensions due to differences in belief?*

## Day 2

### Read John 7:11-24 Conflict in the Temple

9. What was the attitude of the people at the Feast of Booths?

- The Jews (religious authorities) - 7:1,11
- The multitudes - 7:12
- What tension existed between the two groups? 7:13

#### Optional Digging Deeper

See Leviticus 23:34-43;  
Deuteronomy 16:13-17 for a description of the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles.

**For Your Information:** “One might get into trouble for saying openly that Jesus was a good man. But it was also possible that the leaders would change their minds, and so it was unwise to say too loudly that Jesus was a deceiver. Everyone preferred to wait until the leadership’s stand was made public.” – Africa Bible Commentary (1267)

10. What kind of appearance did Jesus make? 7:14

- On what basis did the Jews' judge Him? 7:15 (Compare Matthew 7:28,29)

11. What did Jesus say about the source of His teaching and His credentials? 7:16

**For Your Information:** "Had He said that He was self-taught, or that He needed no teacher, or the like, He would have been discredited immediately. The age did not prize originality. The Rabbinic method was to cite authorities for all important statements. So Jesus does not claim to be the originator of His message. (Leon Morris)" - John (Life change series) (85)

12. How could people confirm or judge the source and truth of Jesus' teaching?

- 7:17
- 7:18 (Cf. John 5:30,41)

13. How did Jesus turn the tables on the Jews? 7:19a (*What law/commandment were they breaking? Exodus 20:13*)

14. What was the answer to Jesus' question in 7:19b? Cf. 5:18 (*How do you think the Jews were feeling at this point?*)

- What was the multitude thinking? 7:20

15. What "one deed" was Jesus referring to in 7:21? 7:23

**For Your Information** "The content of the ensuing argument with the Jews was evidently connected in thought with the episode of the man at the pool in 5:2-26; in fact, the entire chapter seems to be related to it. Though a considerable time had elapsed since the opening of the controversy, its occasion had not been forgotten." - Merrill C. Tenney (133)

16. What inconsistency in the people's thinking did Jesus present? 7:22,23

**For Your Information** "The antecedent of the plural pronoun "*them*" (7:21) is unclear. The content of His rebuke appears directed against the religious officials rather than the 'crowd.' Throughout the rest of the speech, however, He freely directs His rebukes to either and both, thus placing the crowd and the officials in the same category." - Charles Swindoll (156)

"If it is permitted (even commanded) to do a negative work (such as cutting away the flesh in circumcision) on the Sabbath, why not a work that brings wholeness?" - David Guzik

17. What was wrong with the peoples' judgment? 7:24

**IT'S GREEK TO ME** "**right/righteous**" (7:24) Strong's #1342 *dikaios*, equitable (in character or act); innocent, holy  
 –Strong's Concordance

"The 'appearance' to which Jesus referred was the symbolic show of righteousness that was undoubtedly impressive in the temple. He called for Jews to ignore fancy robes and big hats in order to discern who is telling the truth by comparing his or her deeds to the commands of Scripture. The deeds of Jesus reflected the grace of God and did not violate the Sabbath. The religious officials condemned this act of mercy of the lame man because it violated their manmade rules, which they themselves violated each time they circumcised a newborn on the Sabbath."  
 - Charles Swindoll (157)

**Applying the Word:** What are some of the ways that the truth of Scripture has been confirmed for you?

### Day 3

#### Read John 7:25-36

#### Confusing opinions about Jesus

18. Why were people confused about the rulers' reaction to Jesus? 7:25,26

19. What misperception did the people have about Jesus? 7:27 (John 6:41,42; 9:29)

**For Your Information:** "Another tradition in Jewish theology (still common today) apparently interpreted 'suddenly' in Malachi 3:1 to mean the Messiah would appear mysteriously and perhaps magically."  
 - Charles Swindoll (157)

"The Jewish people seem to have expected the Messiah to appear suddenly from nowhere. They reasoned that since they knew where Jesus came from, He could not be the Messiah. They were ignorant of the Scriptures, for Micah had predicted the Messiah would come from Bethlehem (see Micah 5:2)."  
 - The Nelson Study Bible (1775)

#### Jesus' appeal to His origins

20. Although the people knew of Jesus' earthly origins, in what way were they ignorant? 7:28

- Why do you think Jesus repeatedly stressed His origins? (Cf. 8:42)

21. How did Jesus know the Father? 7:29 (Cf. 1:18; 6:46. See also Matthew 11:27)

22. Why were the Jews' seeking to kill Jesus? 7:30 (Note the "therefore.")

- Once again, what prevented them from carrying out their plans? (Cf.8:20; 13:1)

23. How did many in the multitude react to Jesus? 7:31 (Contrast 7:20)

- What reaction did this cause? 7:32

24. What did Jesus indicate about where, when and to whom He was going? 7:33,34 (See John 16:28)

- On what level did the Jews understand His statements? 7:35,36

**Optional Digging Deeper**

Why did Jesus speak to the people in figurative language such as parables or metaphors (e.g. "I am the bread of life") or in words that could be taken literally or spiritually (7:33-34)? See Matt. 13:10-13; John 12:16

**Applying the Word:** Consider the misunderstanding people had about Jesus. Do you see any similarities to the misperceptions that many today have about Jesus?

**Day 4**  
**Read John 7:37-53**  
**Living Water**

25. In His invitation in 7:37-38, what did Jesus identify as:

- People's need:
- Response needed:
- The blessing:

**Optional Digging Deeper**

For the symbolism of living water in the Old Testament, see Jeremiah 2:13, 17:13.

**For Your Information:** "One ritual observed each day of the Feast of Tabernacles involved a solemn procession in which a priest carried a goblet of water from the Pool of Siloam through the Water Gate, and into the inner temple court. As the congregation sang a hymn based on Isaiah 1:3, the priest poured the water on the altar, commemorating the Lord's provision of water in the wilderness."  
- Charles Swindoll (158)

26. To what was Jesus pointing? 7:39 (Compare Isaiah 44:3,4)

**For Your Information: "Because Jesus was not yet glorified" (7:39)**  
"John speaks of Jesus' coming ordeal at the cross as being glorified, and that it must come before the power of Pentecost [the Holy Spirit]. Calvary is the necessary prelude to Pentecost, and the cross is seen as glory, not shame."  
- David Guzik

**Optional Digging Deeper**

What did God give the Israelites in the desert? Exodus 17:6; Numbers 20:7-11

What did this water symbolize? I Corinthians 10:4

27. List the different reactions of the multitude to Jesus.

- 7:40
- 7:41a
- 7:41b,42
- 7:44

28. What didn't the people understand about Jesus' origins? 7:41b,42 (Compare Luke 2:4-7 and 2:39,40) *For prophecy about Jesus' birth in Bethlehem of Judea, see Micah 5:2*

29. What happened to the Pharisee's plan to seize Jesus? 7:45-46 (Compare Matt 7:28-29; Luke 4:22)

30. Why did the Pharisees think that their opinion was superior to the multitude's? 7:47-49 (Compare Jesus' opinion of them. 7:19)

31. How did Nicodemus defend Jesus? 7:50-51 (See Ex. 23:1-3,7) *Consider the irony in light of 7:19.*

- What was the Pharisees' only defense? 7:52

32. Where did everyone stay the night? 7:53 Where did Jesus stay? 8:1 (See Luke 21:37; Matt 8:20)

**For Your Information:** "In fact, a prophet *had* risen from Galilee. Jonah, who was a type of Jesus Christ came from Gath Hopher, which was three miles north of Nazareth in Lower Galilee (2 Kings 14:25)." - David Guzik

**Applying the Word:** *How do you think Jesus felt when He faced the hostility of a world He loved and came to save? Which attack would you have found the hardest to face?*

**Optional Digging Deeper**

What other events happened or will happen on the Mount of Olives?

- Luke 22:39-42

- Acts 1:9-12

- Zechariah 14:3,4