

# John 7:40-52

The Seventh Chapter of the Gospel of John concludes with two conversations. The first is between the people; the other is between the chief priests and Pharisees. In both conversations, we see that there was a wide range of opinions as to who Jesus was. Nowhere in this text do we see solid proof that people had faith in Christ.

## **7:40**

What were the words that “some of the people” heard? (See 7:37-38 for help.)

What was the role of a Prophet?

Why would this make them think that Jesus was “the Prophet”?

## **7:44**

What was it that divided the crowd concerning Jesus? Was it a good thing that the crowd was divided along these lines?

What is it that divided people about Jesus today?

The Guards were dispatched to bring Jesus in, to arrest him and bring him before the chief priests and Pharisees. An arrest was not made and the Guards decided to return to those who sent them. They are immediately accosted by those who sent them and accused of being deceived by Jesus. They respond by saying that Jesus spoke differently than anyone else they had ever heard. This is a slap in the face of the religious leaders to whom they are speaking. They are spoken to by the chief priests to arrest Jesus; Jesus speaks to them and they disobey the chief priests. They are choosing to obey Jesus rather than the religious establishment.

### **7:47**

Is the statement of the Pharisees a true one? Have any of the rulers or Pharisees believed in Jesus?

### **7:49**

There is irony in this statement by the religious leaders. The people who have spoken about Jesus spoke about him while fulfilling their obligation to the Law. (See 7:37.) It was the Pharisees who misinterpreted the Law.

### **7:50**

No sooner do the Pharisees say that not one of their number has believed in Jesus than we see Nicodemus, who came to Jesus at night in the third chapter of the Gospel. While Nicodemus does not demonstrate a heroic faith, one can see a different understanding of Jesus in Nicodemus than in the rest of the Pharisees.

### **7:51**

Nicodemus not only shows that there is at least one of the Pharisees that believes in Christ but that the Pharisees are the ones who do not understand the Law. He reminds the Pharisees that they are outside the Law when they claim that Jesus is deceiving the people (v.47) without having a trial to determine what he is doing.

## **7:52**

Instead of retreating from their position, the Pharisees continue their assault on Jesus by attacking Nicodemus' defense of Jesus. They are misinformed, however, when they say that no Prophet has come from Galilee. Jonah came from Galilee. Oops!

With these facts in mind, what do you think the purpose of this passage is?

How does it advance the story of the Gospel of John?

Who are the people involved in this passage?

What does this passage teach us about them?

Where is the ministry of Jesus (popularity/ unpopularity, being understood or misunderstood) at the end of this passage?