

CHRIST, THE DIVIDER OF MEN

JOHN 7:43 • TV-050A

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John 7:43

“So there was a division among the people because of him.”

I’m turning for our Scripture reading today to the book of **John chapter 7:43**. I’d like for you to take your Bible and open it with me to this particular Scripture.

My subject is: **“CHRIST, THE DIVIDER OF MEN.”**

Now listen to **John 7:43**: *“So there was a division among the people because of him.”* And then in **John chapter 10:19** John writes again about this division. There was a division among the Jews for these sayings, many said; *“He hath a devil and he’s crazy. Why do you listen to him?”*

Now, when our Lord walked this earth in human flesh, *“He was despised and rejected of men.”* In fact, Isaiah predicted in **Isaiah 53; verse 2 and 3** that this would happen. He said in **Isaiah 53**, *“There’s no beauty that we should desire Him; He’s despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.”*

And our Lord made this statement in **John 15:18**; *“If the world hate you, you know that it hated me before it hated you.”* And then in **John 15:23** He said; *“He that hateth me hateth my Father also.”* And then in **John 15:25** our Lord said, *“They hated me without a cause.”*

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So when our Master was here on the earth they did not love Him and they did not receive Him. He said, "*He came to His own and His own received Him not.*" He said, "*Let another come in his own name and him you will receive. I have come in my Father's name and you receive me not.*" "*He was in the world and the world didn't know Him.*"

And Isaiah said; "*When He comes He will be despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.*" In fact, they cursed Him; they called Him a winebibber and glutton. They called Him a devil. They asked Him to leave their cities. They tried to stone Him on three occasions. They spat upon Him and they tried to throw Him from a cliff.

Finally, they hired false witnesses to testify against Him at a mock trial. And then they took Him outside the city walls and crucified Him between two thieves. They hated the Master; they hated the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now here's the question that I want to ask you; would our Lord fare better today? Would He be hated today if He came and preached the same thing that He preached then? He would be. Would He fare any better? No!

Now we like to say, "Why no, we wouldn't hate the Lord. We wouldn't hate the prophets. We wouldn't stone the prophets that are sent unto us." Our Lord said; "*O Jerusalem, thou that stoneth the prophets and killest them that are sent unto thee*" but we wouldn't do that.

But that's what these people said then. They told Him in **Matthew 23:30**; now listen; "*You say if we had lived in the days of our fathers; (this is what they're saying) if we had lived in the days of our fathers we would not have been partakers with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.*" We would not have done this.

Now the prophets of God who had been sent by God to bring His message to the people were stoned and cast out. And finally, when He sent His Son they attempted on many occasions to murder Him and finally did and nailed Him to a cross.

My friend; don't be deceived; don't be deceived by monuments and recognition given to preachers of the past. Someone said, "This is simply one generation trying to cover up the crimes of another generation." The natural mind is still enmity against God.

In fact, when Moses was here on the earth they hated him and bragged on Abraham. Abraham was dead. And when our Lord Jesus Christ was here they hated Him and bragged on Moses. Moses was dead.

And when the apostles came to preach they hated the apostles and bragged on Jesus. And then when the reformers were here, Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Huss, and all these men; they hated them and bragged on Saint Jude and Saint Matthew and Saint Thomas and Saint John and all the rest of them.

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And today what are we doing? Today we are erecting monuments to Luther and Calvin and Huss and Owens and Bunyan and all these men who were hated in their day. And we despise the men who preached what they preached.

Now I say unto you, would our Lord fare any better today? Well, let's find out why they hated Him. Let's find out what caused this extreme hatred for the Master. Let's find out what caused this division.

Everywhere He preached the Scripture says, *"When they heard these sayings there was a division among them because of Him."* There was a division among the people because of these sayings. He was despised. He was rejected. He was hated to the point of nailing Him to a cruel Roman tree.

Now I want you to take your Bible and follow along with me. This is a Bible study. This is a preaching hour and I want you to follow along with me as I read the Scripture and let's find out why these people despised Christ. Let's find out why they were divided because of Him.

Today we've got the idea that everybody loves Jesus. Well let's see if we do. Let's see if you do. Let's see if you love the Christ of the Bible. Now let's read His own words and find out why, *"He was hated, despised, and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."*

Now turn with me to **John 10:31**; now listen to it; *"Then they took up stones to stone Him."* What had He done? What had He said?

You think about this hatred. These people, they were so filled with hatred that they reached down on the ground and picked up stones, large stones. They were going to dash His brains out. They were going to club Him with these stones till He lay lifeless at their feet. What had He said? What had He done?

Well let's find out. Look back up one verse, **John 10:30**; this is what He said, He said: *"I and my Father are one."*

Now read it right there in your own Bible. He says; *"I and my Father are one."* Then they took up stones again to stone Him and He said; *"Many good works have I showed you from my Father. For which of these works do you stone me?"*

And they began to say with their rocks in their hands and their anger on their faces and the hatred in their hearts they began to say; *"We're not stoning you because you do good works. We're stoning you for blasphemy because you are a man and you make yourself God."*

They understood what He was saying. What was He saying? This is what He's saying, Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus born of Mary, virgin born, Jesus Christ who walked the shores of the Galilee and the streets of Jerusalem was saying this; *"I am God almighty in human flesh. I and the Father are one. He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."* That's exactly what He's saying. Do you

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know why they hated Him? Do you know why there was a division because of Him? It's because He said, "I am God."

Now my friend; I ask you; is Jesus of Nazareth God almighty? I'm not asking you, is He a Son of God or the Son of God or a messenger from God or the elect of God; I'm asking you this; do you believe that He is God almighty in human form, in human flesh, who actually walked on this earth?

This is what He's saying and this is what the Bible teaches. And this is why these people picked up stones to stone Him. He said, "*I and my Father are one.*" And then they took up stones to stone Him.

Now listen to the Scripture in **2 Corinthians 5:19**; "*God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.*" It just doesn't say that God sent Christ or blessed Christ; He says "*God was in Christ.*"

Now listen to these Scriptures, **John 1:1 and John 1:14**; "*In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory.*"

Look if you will at **Acts 20:28**. Paul is about to leave these elders of Ephesus and he said to them; "*To you feed the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*" Who purchased the church? God did. How did He do it, "*With His own blood?*"

It's the blood of God that was shed for sinners. That's right! In **1 Timothy 3:16**; now listen to this; "*Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh.*"

Jesus Christ is God almighty. That's who He is. And that's the reason they were divided. Now if He's not God; (now listen to me) if He's not God He's a liar because He said, "*I and the Father are one.*"

The Lord told Phillip; He said, "*If you've seen me you've seen God.*" And He let Thomas fall down at His feet and worship Him and call Him Lord and God. And if He's not God, Jesus Christ is an imposter and He's a liar. If He's not God He can't save anyone, not even His own self.

And if He's not God you are an idolater and so is everybody else who worships Him because only God is to be worshipped.

But we find in the Scriptures that every attribute of God was revealed in Christ, every attribute. Take the attribute of eternal existence; only God is eternal, before the world, before the stars, before the moon, before the sun, before the universe, before the clouds, only God.

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And the Scripture says; *“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God.”* And Christ Himself said; *“Father; glorify me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was,”* that is eternal existence.

Here’s another attribute of God and that’s creative power. *“All things were made by Him.”* Only God can create. You and I can discover. We can put things together but only God can create. He created all things out of nothing and Christ claimed that power. He created; He said, *“All things were created by Him and for Him.”*

And then watch this; He has power to give life. Only God can give life. And Christ Himself said; *“The Son quickeneth and maketh alive whom He will.”*

And then there’s the attribute of holiness. He said Himself; *“Only God is good.”* Somebody came to Him one day and said to Him; *“Good Master, He said, (now wait a minute) why do you call me good? Only God is good.”* And if I’m not God I’m not good. But He was God. He is God. He is good. He is holy. *“Which of you convinceth me of sin?”*

The heavenly Father said: *“This is my Son in whom I’m well pleased,”* the only flesh with which God the Father was ever pleased was that worn by His Son.

Omnipotence; He said, *“All authority is given unto me in heaven and earth, all power over all flesh.”*

And then omniscience: Jesus knew their thoughts. That’s right; He knew men’s thoughts. Only God knows men’s thoughts. *“Men look on the outward countenance; God looks on the heart.”* And Christ knew their hearts; He’s God.

And then omnipresence; only God is everywhere. And Christ said to His disciples: *“I’m with you always.”*

So, this is the first reason there was a division. I’m telling you this; that right now as I’m preaching this message Jesus Christ is God. There’s a division being set up right now. Some of you believe that and some of you don’t believe it, so there’s a division.

And there was a division then because of it. They said; *“Why He’s crazy. He has a devil. He’s blasphemed. He’s a man. Why we know His mother and father. We know His brothers and sisters. His name’s Jesus. He came from Nazareth. He worked in the carpenter’s shop. We know this fellow. How can He be God?”* He is God!

Secondly: Now turn to **Luke 4**. Now this may shake you a little bit. You just sit there and listen and follow in the Bible, **Luke 4:28**; listen to it, *“And all that were in the synagogue;”* now this is a church meeting. These folks are religious folks. They were all in the synagogue when they heard these things.

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This division was always because of what He said, not because of what He did. *“When they heard these things they were filled with wrath (angry) and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built that they might cast Him down headlong,”* that they might murder Him.

Now I want to know what He said that turned this Sabbath morning congregation into a bunch of murderers. I want to know what Christ said that caused these people who had come to the house of God on the Sabbath Day to worship their God to turn into a raging, angry and murderous mob.

Now what do you suppose He said? Well, let’s find out. Now, these people were an organized religion. They were there that morning to worship God and Christ stood up to speak. He read the Scripture.

And then He said in **Luke 4:25-26**; (look at it) then He said: *“There were many widows in the land of Israel, in the days of Elijah but none of them, unto none of them was Elijah sent except to a widow, a woman of Sidon who was a widow,”* a Gentile.

And then He went on; He said; *“And there were many lepers in the land of Israel in the days of Elisha but not a one of them was healed, not a one of them except Naamam the Syrian,”* a Gentile.

In other words, He’s saying this to these religious worshippers, these religious Israelites who thought they had a corner on God, who thought God almighty was obligated to them, who thought they deserved His grace.

He was saying to them that salvation, mercy, and the grace of God is not in your tradition, ceremonies, ritualism, customs, and traditions, handed down through generations, but salvation is in the hands of God who giveth it to whom He will.

That’s what Paul taught in **Romans chapter 9**. God said to Moses; *“I will be merciful but I will be merciful to whom I will.”* God doesn’t owe you grace. He doesn’t owe you mercy. He doesn’t owe you life. He doesn’t owe you heaven.

He just owes you the wages of sin. God almighty must be just. He may be merciful. God almighty must punish sin. He may show mercy. But if He shows mercy *“He’ll show mercy to whom He will.”* That’s what the Scripture teaches.

And that’s what Christ was saying to these people. Nobody deserves the mercy of God whether he’s Jew or Gentile, whether he’s educated or uneducated, no matter whom he is. He doesn’t deserve the grace of God.

You don’t and I don’t and no one else does. We’re sinners, sons of Adam, rebels against God. *“Salvation is the gift of God.”* And He will show mercy on whom He will and when He will. That’s what the Scripture teaches. *“Salvation is of the Lord.”*

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Read **Romans 8:28-32**: *“And we know that all things work together for good to them who love God, who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son. And whom He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son He called. And whom He called He justified. And whom He justified He glorified. Now what shall we say to these things?”*

I’ll tell you what we say, Paul said; *“If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all; how shall He not freely with Him give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect; it’s God that justifieth?”*

That’s what our Lord was saying to these people; God doesn’t owe you salvation. God doesn’t owe you mercy. God doesn’t owe you grace. And boy that made them angry.

Why their fathers were brought up in that land and they were special people and they had a corner on God. And they were religious, and they were going about the ceremonies and they were playing church every Sabbath Day.

And He came and told them that in the days of Elijah there were many widows, but only a Gentile was fed. And He told them that in the days of Elisha there were many lepers, many lepers, but only a Gentile was healed. And it made them mad.

And I’m telling you this, that same Christ, that same message, will divide men today. It’ll divide them in the camps of those who believe that salvation is all of grace and those who believe it’s all of works.

And I’ll tell you this; a man can get his dander (anger) up even in religion to the point of murder. You know that most all the blood of martyrs that were shed through the years was not shed by government leaders and military; it was shed by the church, hating men who disagreed with them, hating men who gave God the glory.

That’s right! They hated Christ. He said; *“I’m a sovereign Christ. I’ll be merciful to whom I will.”* And they hated Him and despised Him.

All right now; grab a hold of your chair there, we’re going to read another Scripture now, **John 8:59**; listen to it; *“Then, they took up stones to cast at Him.”* This is Jesus Christ I’m talking about. This is the Son of God. This is God in human flesh.

These people hated Him and despised Him so much that they tried again to stone Him. Here are religious people and you know where this took place; this took place right in the midst of their so-called temple, their place of worship.

And here they are picking up stones again to stone Him. Why? What had He said? Well, I’ll tell you what He said and I’ll let you read it, **John 8:41**; *“Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, we be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.”*

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But here's what He's saying; He rejected their doctrine of the universal Fatherhood of God.

That's exactly what He rejected. He rejected their doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and He called them, "*Children of wrath.*" Now you listen to it. I'm going to read God's Word. You say that you believe the Bible, that you believe the Bible is God's Word.

These people they were angry with Him and they said; "We be not born of fornication. We have one Father. All of us have one Father, even God." Jesus Christ; (are you listening) said unto them; "*If God were your Father, you would love me. You are of your father the devil.*"

This is Christ speaking. This is not a fanatical, radical, preacher; this is Christ speaking. "*You're of your father the devil and the lust of your father you will do. He that heareth God's Word is a child of God. You hear them not because you're not of God.*"

Now you talk about making them angry. That's when they picked up stones again and they were going to stone Him.

But my friend; this is what God teaches in His Word. Now you look at **John 1:12**; "*As many as received Him (not to all men) but to them who receive Him, (who love Him, and who believe on Him) to them gave He the right, (the privilege, the power) to become Sons of God.*"

Sons of God are those who are born of God. We're born of Adam's race. Those who are born again are born of God. Those who are in unbelief and rebellion hate Christ; this is what divided them and this is what made them pick up stones. I read it to you.

They took up stones to stone Him and they said; "We be not born of fornication. You tell us that God is not our Father. We have one Father and that's God." And He said; "*You are of your Father the devil.*"

And my friend; those in unbelief and rebellion are not children of God; the Bible says, "*They're children of wrath.*" **Ephesians Chapter 2:1-3**, listen to it; "*And you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins: wherein in times past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom we all had our conversation, (our citizenship not in the kingdom of God, not in the family of God), but we were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*"

That's offensive and I know its offensive. But Christ our Lord declared it and they hated Him. And He said; "*My brethren; marvel not if they hate you. They hated me long before they hated you.*" Why'd they hate Him? I've been reading it to you.

Now one other Scripture; turn to **John 6:66**. "*From that time many of His disciples went back and walk no more with Him.*" Now these people were disciples, (not the 12 apostles) but learners, followers, people who had listened to Him, people who had been attracted to Him, and people who were interested in what He had to say.

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“But from that time, they went back and walked no more with Him.” They quit. They took out on Him. They resigned, you know. They left Him. They weren’t going to follow Him anymore, why?

John 6; read the whole chapter. But Christ preached to them the way of life. He preached to them that He was, *“The bread of life.”* He said, *“I am the bread of life.”* He taught them that His body must be broken and His blood must be shed for the remission of sins.

And that in order to be saved, in order to have life eternal, that they must take into themselves, not a doctrine, but a person. That they must take into themselves, not a teaching, but a person and that they must take into themselves by faith and receive Him.

You know the Scripture says; *“As many as received Him,”* received Christ. Now, people read that as if it is to receive a doctrinal system or a denominational program or a catechism or a creed or mental facts about Christ.

It’s to receive a person. Salvation is a person. Jesus Christ came down here to this world, was born of a virgin. Took on Himself human flesh, met the law and obeyed it perfectly for every believer.

Went to the cross and there the judgment of God and the wrath of God was poured upon Him for our sins. He shed His blood for us. He met the justice of God and obeyed it. The wrath of God was satisfied.

He was laid in a tomb and on the third day He rose again and He ascended to the right hand of God where He intercedes for us. And salvation is believing Him and receiving Him. Actually, to receive Him into myself, to be brought by God’s grace and God’s power into a vital and living union with a person.

Salvation is not just to quit a few bad habits and take on a few religious habits; salvation is not to go down to the church on Sunday and play church for an hour or an hour and a half, to join into the social crowd and make out like you know God. Salvation is to know God and to walk with God and to love God in the person of His Son Jesus Christ.

Salvation is not in laws, rules, regulations, and personal righteousness; salvation is in Christ, it is in Christ. Listen to the Word of God in **Colossians chapter 2:9-10**. *“In Him, (in Christ) dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily and you are complete in Him.”*

That’s what He’s saying to them; in **John 6:53**; *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.”* That’s not talking about cannibalism, a physical eating of Christ and drinking of His blood; it’s talking about the soul, spiritually to receive Christ, like I receive my bread tonight.

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It's to receive Christ's teaching, Christ's person, Christ's substitutionary work, Christ's promises, and Christ's blessings; Christ living in us. "*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*"

It's to be vitally united, not with an organization, but with a person, with Jesus Christ the Lord. And that's what made them angry.

But I'm telling you this; if you are to be saved you're going to have to deal with Christ who is God, with Christ who saves whom He will, with Christ as a guilty sinner, and with Christ as the effectual substitute!