

Collect / Prayer (pg. 25)

Benediction

Hymn **C.W. 51** / TLH 99

SERMON TEXT: John 7:40-43

Vs. 40 – On hearing His words, some of the people said, Surely this man is the Prophet.

Vs. 41 – Others said, ‘He is the Christ.’ Still others asked, How can the Christ come from Galilee?

Vs. 42 – Does not the Scripture say that the Christ will come from David’s family and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?

Vs. 43 – Thus the people were divided - σχισμα - because of Jesus.

GREETING: Jesus says: heaven & Earth will pass away, but My Words will never pass away. . (Matt. 24:35)

January 6th is Epiphany. Epiphany means revealing / manifestation. Something hidden becomes known.

Epiphany is also sometimes called the Gentile Christmas.

Jesus is revealed as the Savior not only for the Jews, but also for the Gentiles. (Gal. 3:28) (Gentiles are all the non-Jews.)

The Biblical account of the Wise men from the East is the Gospel reading for Epiphany.

These Wise men / Magi are Gentile believers who go searching for the Baby Jesus, led by the Star. (Ps. 72:10, Num. 24:17)

When the Wise men from the East arrive in **Bethlehem**, we find that they worship Jesus at the house (Matthew 2:1-12) where Mary and Joseph and the Baby Jesus were. The Baby Jesus is no longer out in the stable.

Instead of going back to King Herod, to inform Herod where the Baby Jesus was, the Wise men then return to their home as warned in a dream because King Herod actually wanted to kill the Baby Jesus because Herod felt threatened that Jesus, “The King of the Jews” was born. (Matthew 2:2)

We know that Herod wanted to kill the Baby Jesus because he ordered the killing / murder of all the baby boys in Bethlehem that were under the age of two in an attempt to kill Jesus. *Murder of the Innocents*. (Matthew 2:16)

But King Herod failed because an Angel of the Lord warned Joseph in a dream to go to Egypt.

And so the Baby Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in complete fulfillment of Micah 5:2-5a, but did not grow up there. After Joseph, Mary and the Baby were in Egypt for a time, they then went back to Nazareth (Matthew 2:23).

Since Jesus did not grow up in Bethlehem, we see in our text for today that many people did not know that Jesus WAS born in Bethlehem. This led to doubts and confusion as we see in:

Vs. 43 – **Thus the people were divided-** σχισμα - **because of Jesus.**

The English Word in this verse for *divided*, comes from the Greek word - σχισμα - Which also in English can read – Schism. This Greek term has various possible translations such as: Rent – Split – A Gap.

The people are divided, - there is a gap, - there is a schism.
Other English equivalents are – A rift – break – gulf – discord – estrangement.

In our Text for this morning there is a Schism / Division.

The people are debating over: “Who Is Jesus?!!!”

Vs. 40 – On hearing His words, some of the people said, Surely this man is the Prophet.

Vs. 41 – Others said, ‘He is the Christ.’ Still others asked, How can the Christ come from Galilee?

Vs. 42 – Does not the Scripture say that the Christ will come from David’s family and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?

Vs. 43 – Thus the people were divided - σχισμα - because of Jesus.

It is interesting to note that in the midst of this argument which is occurring among this crowd of people, they speak all types of facts, but not the total truth, they are confused.

This text tells us that some of them say Jesus is The Prophet – We know that Jesus is our Prophet – Priest and King. (Dt. 18:15; II Sam. 7:12; Mk. 15:2; Heb. 6:20; Matt. 11:5)

Some say that Jesus is - The Christ – We know that Jesus is the Messiah, the Anointed One, The Christ. Who was prophesied from O.T. times. (Gen. 3:15; Ps. 2:2; Matt. 16:16)

We know that some time after two years of living in Bethlehem, that Joseph and Mary and Jesus lived for a time in Egypt, and then moved back to Nazareth in Galilee.

All these facts, yet so much confusion and a schism occurs.

Are there Schism in our present day, over Jesus and His Word?

YES of course there is, hence all the various denominations.

There are those who reject:

- Baptism - Rejection of Infant and that baptism is FOR the forgiveness of sins. (Acts 2:38-39)
- Lord’s Supper - Rejection of *Real Presence* and for the forgiveness of sins. (Matt. 26:26-28)
- Trinity - a denial of equality of all three persons as GOD, yet One God. (Matthew 28:29; Gen. 1:26; Deut. 6:4)
- Dual nature of Christ -Denial of either the Divinity of Jesus or the Humanity of Christ. (Lk. 2:6-7; Jn. 10:30)
- Sin – Total depravity of Mankind – (This doctrine of Scripture really makes our Sinful nature and pride angry!) (Gen. 6:5; Isa. 64:6-7; Eph. 2:1-10; Rom. 8:6-8)
- Salvation – All God’s Work for us – not by works but by God alone. (Jn. 6:65; II Tim. 1:9; Eph. 2:8-9)
- Creation – 6 x 24 hour days and the 7th day God rested. (Gen. 1:1; Gen. 1:5, Gen. 1:8, Gen. 1:13, Gen. 1:19; Gen. 1:23; Gen. 1:31; Gen. 2:3)

There are those who make Faith into our work or our assistance of. Faith is all God's Work in us through the Gospel in Word & Sacrament. (Romans 10:17)

There were divisions at the time of Jesus concerning Who Jesus was and what He came to do.

There are divisions now in our day and age.

How do we deal with / combat these misunderstandings?

Search The Scriptures. Let Scripture Interpret Scripture.

Beware of Wolves in Sheep's clothing. (Matt. 7:15; Lk. 10:3)

Do not be led astray by deceiving talk. (Romans 16:17-18)

Gently guide others in the Word of God as written in the Holy Bible. (1 Peter 3:15-16)

Stay in the Word of God – The Holy Bible.

Be as the Bereans. – Search the Scriptures every day for in the Holy Scriptures the Holy Spirit will strengthen your faith in Christ Jesus your Risen and Ascended Savior. (Acts 17:10-12) AMEN

THEME: A Schism over Jesus.