

## Jesus Deals with Two Types of Unbelief (John 7:1-24)

### I. The Rejection of Selfish Unbelief (1-10)

#### A. Jesus Remained Secluded in Galilee (1)

1. Jesus walked (i.e. ministered) only in Galilee
2. Jesus stayed clear of Judea
  - i. The Jews (i.e. Religious Leaders) were seeking to kill him
  - ii. Throughout this section, we will see Jesus acting on the Father's timetable alone. He did not kick open doors that were not open to Him yet.

#### B. Jesus' Brothers Sought to Benefit From His Ministry (2-5)

##### 1. The Feast of Tabernacles was Near (2)

- a. This festival fell on the fifteenth of the seventh month, five days after the Day of Atonement, and occupied seven days (Exod. 23:16 – 17; 34:22). The first and eighth days were days of rest. Branches of palm trees, leafy branches, and willows, along with choice fruit (Lev. 23:40), were used to make the booths in which the Israelites dwelt seven days — “so your descendants will know that I had the Israelites live in booths when I brought them out of Egypt” (23:43). There was rejoicing with family, servants, widows, orphans, Levites, and sojourners in the community (Deut. 16:13 – 15).



##### 2. Jesus' Brothers Wanted Glory From Jesus' Fame (3-4)

###### a. Jesus' Brothers want Him to go Public (3)

- i. They desired him to go to the city of Jerusalem
  - The city was where all the people were
  - The city was where the religious leaders were
  - The city is where Jesus would really get a following
- ii. They desired his disciples to see his miracles (4)

- Remember in the last chapter almost all his “disciples” left and walked with him no more
- The brothers may have thought Jesus could replenish the ranks by doing miracles in the city in front of all the important people

b. Jesus’ Brothers Want Him to be Famous (4)

- i. “no one does these works in secret if he wants to be known...”
- ii. you need to show yourself to the world
  - Perhaps they thought they would reap some of the glory from Jesus’ works.
  - They would be known as the miracle worker’s brothers
  - They would be in the spotlight as the family of this new Messiah

c. Jesus’ Brothers’ Advice Came from Unbelief (5)

- i. Notice that the text tells us WHY they told him to show himself to the world in verse 5.
  - “FOR (or because) neither did his brethren believe in him”
  - They did not genuinely want Jesus’ ministry of bringing people into right relationship with God to flourish.
  - They knew he was a miracle worker and had grown up with Him – surely they knew something was different about him
  - They had knowledge of his abilities but did not believe on Him as the Messiah for salvation.
- ii. Once again – people desire what Jesus can do for them but not Jesus himself.
- iii. The Brothers wanted to benefit from what Jesus could do, but they didn’t want Jesus as their Lord and Messiah

C. Jesus Refuses His Brother’s Unbelieving Counsel (6-10)

1. Jesus Cannot Walk in accord with the World (6-7)

a. Jesus is not like those of the world (6)

- i. Jesus tells them his “time has not come”
  - Jesus works on the Father’s schedule
  - We will see this in detail later
- ii. Jesus says, “your time is always here”
- iii. The brothers are part of the unbelieving world, they do not worry about God’s timetable. They will face no persecution, nor do they have any work of God to do. They will go to the feast and present themselves as good Jewish men. They will be accepted by all.

b. Jesus Brings Conviction to the World (7)

- i. The world cannot hate those of its own
  - Worldly people are at home around worldly things. They make each other feel better because they can both see wickedness in each other. This way their lives only point to the fact that being sinful is “normal.”
- ii. The world can only hate Jesus
  - Jesus testifies to the world’s sin
  - His life and ministry shows them they are wretched and without God.
  - This is also why Jesus’ followers are persecuted.
  - Jesus shining in his people brings conviction upon all sin of mankind. Sin cannot hide in the presence of Christ.

## 2. Jesus Will Not Operate on the World’s Schedule (8-10)

- a. Jesus would not go to the feast until his time (8)
  - i. He tells them to go up to the feast
  - ii. He says he is not going to the feast because it is not yet his time
- b. Jesus went to the feast privately later (9-10)
  - i. He stayed home and went to the feast later
  - ii. He did not go publicly as the brothers wanted – he went privately
    - did Jesus not know he would be going later when he told the brothers he would not go?
    - did Jesus mean that he would not go until the Father told him to go?
    - did Jesus mean that he would not go the way the brother wanted him to go?

## II. The Rejection of Religious Unbelief (11-24)

### A. The Religious People Question Jesus’ Teaching (11-13)

- 1. The Religious Leaders Looked for Him (11)
  - a. Undoubtedly they had heard of his miracles
  - b. They probably were anxious to see the “miracle worker”
  - c. There was much talk about him in Jerusalem
- 2. The Religious People Questioned Jesus’ Teaching (12)
  - a. During the festival thousands upon thousands of Jews from all over the world poured into Jerusalem. These people were devout and religious enough to make the trip.
  - b. Some people said he is a good man – this is a good religious answer that many people still believe today.
    - i. Jesus cannot be just a good man – He explicitly taught that he was the Yahweh (Jehovah) of the Old Testament incarnate (this is why the Jews wanted to stone him (John 5:18)

- ii. If Jesus taught this (and he did) He is either a lunatic, a liar, or he truly is God. A simple good man would never say he is God if he is not.
- c. Some people said he is leading people astray –
  - i. Many thought He was leading people away from God. They trusted in the law and thought Jesus' teaching about belief and grace was contrary to that.
- d. The Religious fear being associated with Jesus (13)
  - i. They are interested
  - ii. They have questions about who he is and what he does
  - iii. They sound like genuine seekers until they risk being overheard by those who persecute or ridicule them
  - iv. We still do this today when we fear to speak his name because people will think we are one of those crazy people.
- B. The Religious People Face the Authority of Christ (14-24)
  - 1. Jesus Proves His Authority to the Religious (14-18)
    - a. Jesus' Teaching Comes From the Father (14-16)
      - i. The Jews are impressed by Jesus' learning (14-15)
        - They marvel that he knows the scriptures so thoroughly without having studied in their Rabbinical Schools
        - literally: "How does this man know the writings having never learned?"
        - NOTE: This chapter repeatedly uses "Jews" to denote the religious leaders and "people" to denote the rest of the Jewish worshippers.*
      - ii. Jesus Declares the Authority of the Father (16)
        - Jesus tells them plainly where his teaching comes from and how He knows these things.
    - b. Jesus Explains Why the Religious Cannot Understand (17)
      - i. Man must desire to do God's will before He will know Christ
      - ii. He is saying that simply "learning" is not enough – one must have their heart changed to desire God's will
      - iii. Our hearts are not naturally pointed toward God's will – it is only through faith and seeking to be obedient that truth is known.
    - c. Jesus Teaching Glorifies the Father (18)
      - i. The man who speaks under his own authority only glorifies himself
        - In that day, originality was not prized. Rabbi's derived authority from their statements by quoting other people

- Jesus is here saying he does not speak under his own authority but under the greatest authority of all – God the Father Himself.

- ii. He says the one who seeks the Father's glory is true

- notice he doesn't just say that his sayings are true

- He says that HE is true and there is no falsehood or unrighteousness in him (i.e. he is not lying to you)

NOTE: This is a general principle of proof – teaching or living that glorifies the Father is true. Doctrine that is all about man and his desires is immediately suspect. Christianity is completely God centered – it's not about you.

NOTE: Don't be bothered by the fact that Jesus here points glory to the Father while in other places Jesus points glory to Himself and even accepts worship. – Jesus was the perfect God-Man. As a man he gave us the perfect example of what we are to be. We are to glorify God in everything we do (col. 3:17). Jesus was a perfect example of how men live their lives – glorifying the Father.

## 2. Jesus Chastises the Religious For their Religion (19-24)

- a. Jesus is at odds with self-righteous religion (19-21)

- i. Jesus points out their own law-breaking (19)

- They claim to have the law

- Yet none of them keep the law

- The most religious (the leaders) are seeking to kill Jesus – a clear violation of the law

- likewise, Jesus will demonstrate they overrule the law themselves in certain cases

- We should never think that we are keeping the law in and of ourselves. The one who fails in one point of the law has failed in keeping the whole of the law, therefore no one can be self-righteous

- ii. The Religious will always deny their sin (20)

- The crowd thought Jesus was crazy for saying people were trying to kill him

- perhaps the crowd didn't know the plotting of the religious leaders – but there were some there that did.

- b. Jesus Came to Fulfill the Meaning of the Law (21-23)

- i. The Religious think they keep the letter of the law (21-22)

- The Jews marveled (not in a good way) that Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath (remember chapter 5?)
- Yet the Jews themselves disregarded the Sabbath law when it came to circumcision. (22)
- They circumcised a male child on the eighth day even if that day is a Sabbath.
- They persecuted Jesus for healing on the Sabbath but they disregarded the Sabbath to keep circumcision.

ii. Jesus Fulfills the True Meaning of the Law (23)

- They do good to a part of man's body on the Sabbath (so to speak)
- Yet, they were angry at Jesus because he made an entire man's body whole on the Sabbath
- The intention was to do good on the Sabbath, Jesus came and fulfilled the meaning while the Jews kept the letter of the law but actually broke its intention.

c. Jesus Warns the Religious of How they View Religion (24)

i. They are not to judge just by the surface

- they are not simply to keep the surface level meaning of the law and think they have done what is required
- they must see deeper – that the law is about the human heart. They must make their decisions based on true righteousness of the heart – not just an outer righteousness of works.