

WHO IS JESUS?

John 7:14-52

Jesus was controversial in His ministry on earth and divided people into two groups. He still does.

1. JESUS IS THE ULTIMATE TEACHER FOR GOD THE FATHER: HIS AUTHORITY - John 7:14-36

- Jesus may not meet our human expectations or opinions. Many people still misjudge Him (ex. Bertrand Russell). The Jewish leaders were shocked by Jesus' teaching because He was not the product of their official "school" systems. He had no formal earthly credentials or pedigree – verse 15. But Jesus says His message comes directly from God, the One who sent Him. Jesus always spoke for His Father –verse 16. Jesus spoke with authority, not like the scribes and rabbis – Matthew 7:28,29.
- Jesus' own followers would also shock the leaders and be called "unschooled" – Acts 4:13. But all the difference is in spending time with Jesus!
- The crowds are confused and wonder if Jesus really is the Messiah – verses 25, 26. Jesus responds that He is here because the Father sent Him – verse 28,29. Jesus is teaching what the Father wants Him to teach. But the people do not really know God and some want to arrest Jesus.
- The time to decide about Jesus is now. Jesus tells the leaders and crowds that He is only going to be with them a little longer. Then He is going back to God the Father. They will not be able to go with Him – verses 33, 34. The Jews are confused and wonder if Jesus intends to go to the Gentiles outside of Israel – verses 35, 36. Ironically, Jesus will go to the Greeks, but not in the way they are thinking. The message of Jesus and the cross is soon going to be proclaimed by Jesus' followers among the Jewish Dispersion and to the Greeks – John 12:20-23; Romans 1:16. But for us it is still time to decide about Jesus now – 2 Corinthians 6:2.

2. JESUS IS THE GIVER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO ALL WHO TRUST HIM: HIS PROMISE – John 7:37-39

- We see here the beauty of the offer of Jesus to bless all who come to Him. It is timely and wonderful. The Feast of Tabernacles ended on the 7th day with the High Priest carrying the water in a golden pitcher from the Pool of Siloam through the streets of Jerusalem followed by the other priests and crowds. It was a joyous beautiful moment in Israel. As they approached the Temple, another priest would bring a jug of wine to pour out. They would circle the altar seven times like the people did the city of Jericho. The Temple choir was singing the Hallel – Psalm 113-118. Then each man took a sheaf in his right hand and a piece of fruit in his left, signifying the harvest. They cried out three times "Give Thanks to the LORD!" Then the Priests would pour the water and wine on the alter. Probably right at that joyous beautiful moment or shortly afterwards, Jesus cries out with a loud voice and offers an overflowing flood of living water for our souls. No mere jug or pitcher can contain the rivers Jesus promises. Jesus' promise of the Spirit and quenching thirst is fulfilling the words of Isaiah –verse 38; Isaiah 12:3; 44:3,4; 55:1-3; see also Nehemiah 9:20. He is the Only One who truly quenches our thirst – John 4:13,14; 6:35. *Jesus is the "True Fountain of Life, the supplier of all spiritual necessities, the reliever of all spiritual (needs)"...* – J.C. Ryle, John. The invitation still stands open today to quench our thirst in Jesus – Revelation 22:17.

- During Jesus' ministry the Holy Spirit had not yet been given in the New Covenant way – verse 39. After Jesus' death and resurrection will come Pentecost. This is the fulfillment of the Age of the Spirit promised in the Old Testament – Deuteronomy 30:6; Numbers 11:26-29; Jeremiah 31:33,34; Ezekiel 36:26,27; Joel 2:28,29.
- Jesus will baptize all His followers in the Spirit - 1 Corinthians 12:13. The Holy Spirit is the key to living a Christ-honoring life. Jesus will explain the new work of the Spirit to His disciples the night before the cross in John 14-16. Key verses include: John 14:15-17,26; 16:7,13,14.

3. JESUS IS GOD THE FATHER'S ULTIMATE SPOKESMAN: THE POWER OF HIS PRESENCE– John 7:40-52

- The people continue to divide over Jesus – verses 40,41. Some question that Jesus is from Galilee, not knowing Jesus was actually born in Bethlehem, the City of David – Luke 2:4-6.
- The Jewish authorities sent officers to arrest Jesus – verse 32. Notice the response of the officers in verse 46 - “No one ever spoke like this man.” These officers were impressed with the power of the Presence of Jesus! But the Jewish leaders accuse them of being deceived because none of the authorities and Pharisees have believed in Jesus! They dismiss the crowd as rabble who do not know the Law anyway. In other words, the really spiritual intelligent people have all rejected Jesus so they should also. This same arrogance is still seen today especially among those who think they are very intelligent and “refined” – 1 Corinthians 1:18-24. But only Jesus and the message of His cross saves!
- If you are against Jesus you oppose His followers. This happens today and it happened to Nicodemus. Nicodemus speaks up and asks if the Law condemns someone without hearing and listening to Him – verses 50, 51. The Jewish leaders (Sanhedrin) condemn Nicodemus and insult him by accusing him of being a Galilean too. They reject Jesus outright because He is associated with Galilee. But they deliberately forget Jonah was from the Galilee area – 2 Kings 14:25. Nahum also. Jesus will give them all the sign of the prophet Jonah – His own resurrection!

Concluding Applications:

- Have you listened to and believed in Jesus?
- As a Christ-follower do you realize the Holy Spirit is in you to enable you to live for Jesus?
- Will you stand up for Jesus in a confused, dark world?