

JESUS FACES ONGOING REJECTION AT HOME AND FROM THE CROWDS

John 7:1-13

Why don't people follow Jesus – even in our families? Is it our fault? Is there hope?

1.THE REJECTION OF JESUS BEGAN IN HIS OWN HOME – John 7:1-9

- One of the saddest verses in the Bible is verse 5. Jesus had four half-brothers and at least two sisters – Mark 6:1-3. These are the children born to Mary and Joseph naturally after Jesus' own virgin birth – Matthew 1:24,25; Luke 2:7.
- Jesus' brothers and Mary are concerned about Him. But they think He is out of His mind – Mark 3:20,21. They came to try to help Him – Mark 3:31-36. They fail to understand Jesus or His mission. They are apparently mocking Him, encouraging Him to go show Himself off if He is such a big shot – Matthew 4:5-7. Why would Jesus hang around lowly Galilee when He could go up to Jerusalem and show off His miraculous powers to a bigger crowd at the Feast of Tabernacles? How did this rejection by family happen even to our Lord? One hint is verse 7 where Jesus says the world hates Him because He exposes their sin. He testifies that their works are evil. Jesus also exposed His brothers' sin and they did not like it.
- Unbelievers have no concept of God's timing. Jesus' brothers only look at life from a worldly perspective. Jesus follows the timing and leading of His Father always. Jesus' hour refers to His death and resurrection/exaltation that is still coming – John 12:27, 28; 17:1. The right time for Jesus will be the cross. Everything Jesus is and did focuses on the cross and His resurrection – John 1:29. The world, including Jesus' own brothers, don't get it. Many around us still don't.
- This dialogue between Jesus and His brothers should comfort and instruct Christians in unbelieving families or whose own family members do not believe. Believers often *“blame themselves because their families remain worldly and unbelieving. But let them look at the verse before us. In our Lord Jesus Christ there was no fault either in temper, word, or deed. Yet even Christ's own 'brethren did not believe in Him.' Parents, as well, should not marvel if their children struggle in their walk with God. These strugglers in John 7 were, after all, the sons of Mary and Joseph and the younger brothers of Jesus Christ. Seeing Christ's miracles, hearing Christ's teaching, living in Christ's own company, were not enough to make men believers. The mere possession of spiritual privileges never yet made any one a Christian.”* – J.C. Ryle, 1800's.

2.THE REJECTION OF JESUS IS ONGOING AMONG THE CROWDS – John 7:10-13

- Not surprisingly, Jesus is also a figure of controversy among the crowds. Many do not believe and many are confused about Him. Some think He is a good man. Others totally reject Him and want to kill Him! – verse 1; John 7:19,20. It is an irrational diabolical hatred. The Jewish leaders are still offended Jesus violated their man-made Sabbath rules – John 7:21-24. But Jesus' death will not be at the hands of a mob, but at the hands of Pilate and the Romans – THE CROSS!
- Many around us are still confused about Jesus and His hour – the CROSS. Yes, Jesus exposed sin, then He died for it. We not only must bring up sin, but we must offer the cure for sin in the cross of Jesus Christ – 1 John 4:10. Let us seek to make the message clear. Let us seek to live out the gospel and “adorn it” with good works – Matthew 5:16; 1 Peter 2:12.

3. BUT THERE IS HOPE FOR REJECTORS OF JESUS

- But lest we despair, let us remind ourselves there is still hope! – John 1:11,12. Some who once rejected Jesus do come unto Him for salvation. Consider Jesus own brothers! Jesus makes a special resurrection appearance to His brother James – 1 Corinthians 15:5-7. James goes on to become the leader of the Church in Jerusalem – Galatians 1:18,19; 2:9. James becomes a human author of Holy Scripture! – James 1:1. Jude also! – Jude 1.
- Consider Nicodemus – John 7:48-52; 19:39. Consider the Apostle Paul himself - Galatians 1:13-16; 1 Timothy 1:12-17. Don't give up on people. Don't give up on your family. *“Do not cease to pray until they cease to breathe.” – Charles Spurgeon,*

Concluding Applications:

- Are you a former rejector of Jesus? How has Jesus changed you?
- Do you pray for unbelievers around you – even in your family?
- Is your life a good witness to the glory and grace of Jesus?