

THE TRUE STORY OF JESUS

THE WISDOM OF JESUS

BECOMING A BELIEVER AND NOT A DOUBTER

John 7:1-29

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Q: Who is the most famous person you've met? What surprised you?

The New Testament Book of John is revealing who Jesus really was and is. Following the amazing miracle of the feeding of the 5000, there were some religious leaders of the day who were questioning Jesus' identity. In John 7, we see even more evidence and must decide if we will be a believer or doubter.

John 7:1-5 ¹ After this, Jesus went around in Galilee. He did not want to go about in Judea because the Jewish leaders there were looking for a way to kill him. ² But when the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles was near, ³ **Jesus' brothers said to him, 'Leave Galilee and go to Judea, so that your disciples there may see the works you do.'** ⁴ No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world. ⁵ **For even his own brothers did not believe in him.**

Q: What was the reaction of Jesus' earthly brothers to him at this time?

John Courson writes, "Can you imagine growing up with a brother who never did anything wrong, who never called you a name, never teased you, or never made fun of you? Jesus was the nicest brother who ever lived. Yet His brothers didn't believe in Him." Later, after the crucifixion and the resurrection, his half-brothers Jude and James became believers and not doubters. Just being nice may not be enough. We may need to actually share with those in our lives the saving power of Jesus Christ. We may need to step up our witness to others.

John 7:6-10 ⁶ Therefore Jesus told them, 'My time is not yet here; for you any time will do. ⁷ **The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify that its works are evil.** ⁸ You go to the festival. I am not going up to this festival, because **my time has not yet fully come.** ⁹ After he had said this, he stayed in Galilee. ¹⁰ However, after his brothers had left for the festival, he went also, not publicly, but in secret.

Q: What lessons does Jesus teach us in his discussion with his brothers?

Family dynamics can be complicated at times. Jesus doesn't forsake his divine mission despite the pressures of his brothers. However, Jesus demonstrates great wisdom in his response and his timing. He is not silent but he is also wise.

Q: How can a man deal best with family pressures?

John 7:11-15 ¹¹ Now at the festival the Jewish leaders were watching for Jesus and asking, **'Where is he?'** ¹² Among the crowds there was widespread whispering about him. Some said, **'He is a good man.'** Others replied, **'No, he deceives the people.'** ¹³ But no one would say anything publicly about him for fear of the leaders. ¹⁴ Not until halfway through the festival did Jesus go up to the temple courts and begin to teach. ¹⁵ **The Jews there were amazed and asked, 'How did this man get such**

learning without having been taught?'

Q: How did the people respond to Jesus' teaching?

We are told that there were about 30 seminars in and around Jerusalem at the time Jesus was ministering. Jesus didn't have a degree from any of them, but when he spoke, the Jewish leaders wondered where he received his insights.

John 7:16-19 ¹⁶ Jesus answered, 'My teaching is not my own. It comes from the one who sent me. ¹⁷ **Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.** ¹⁸ Whoever speaks on their own does so to gain personal glory, but he who seeks the glory of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him. ¹⁹ Has not Moses given you the law? Yet not one of you keeps the law. Why are you trying to kill me?'

Q: What happens when a man becomes a believer in Jesus Christ?

It is not enough to read the Bible, it is a matter of applying it to your life. If a man chooses to obey what they know in the Bible, God will reveal even more to them. If we don't, then we will get stuck in our faith and not grow.

John 7:20-24 ²⁰ 'You are demon-possessed,' the crowd answered. 'Who is trying to kill you?' ²¹ Jesus said to them, 'I did one miracle, and you are all amazed. ²² Yet, because Moses gave you circumcision (though actually it did not come from Moses, but from the patriarchs), you circumcise a boy on the Sabbath. ²³ Now if a boy can be circumcised on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing a man's whole body on the Sabbath?' ²⁴ **Stop judging by mere appearances, but instead judge correctly.'**

Q: Based on these lines, what have you discovered about who Jesus is?

John 7:25-29 ²⁵ At that point some of the people of Jerusalem began to ask, 'Isn't this the man they are trying to kill?' ²⁶ Here he is, speaking publicly, and they are not saying a word to him. Have the authorities really concluded that he is the Messiah? ²⁷ But we know where this man is from; when the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from.' ²⁸ Then Jesus, still teaching in the temple courts, cried out, 'Yes, you know me, and you know where I am from. **I am not here on my own authority,** but he who sent me is true. You do not know him, ²⁹ but I know him because I am from him and he sent me.'

Q: What are some qualities of a fully devoted follower of Jesus?

Jesus wants to bring hope, help and healing to a person's life. **In order for that to happen, a person must move from being a doubter to being a believer.**

Q: What practical lessons do you take from this section of John's Gospel?

PRAYER: Father, thank you for helping me understand who Jesus really is. Help me to be a confident believer. Help me to live my life to the full. Amen!