

# WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BELIEVE?

John 7:10-17

Introduction and Context:

## 1. The Variety of beliefs about Jesus in Jerusalem

### A) The Beliefs

- > Some believed that Jesus was a good man (John 7:12b)

Jesus was a good man ..... but He was much more.

He claimed that He was God and if this claim is not true, then He wasn't really good (Matt 9:1-7; John 11:25-26)

- > Some believed that Jesus was a deceiver (John 7:12c)

He may be able to do miracles, but Jesus isn't speaking for God

This is what the antichrist will do (Matthew 24:23-24)

- > Some believe that Jesus is danger that needs to be eliminated (John 7:1, 13, 19b)

The Jews have wanted to kill Jesus for months (John 5:16)

John later records an insight into their motives (John 11:45-48)

### B) The Question – how could there be so much confusion?

- > Was there some deficiency in the nature or amount of Jesus' miracles that led to confusion? (Acts 1:22; John 3:2)

- > Was there some deficiency in what Jesus taught or His teaching style that led to confusion?

No, what Jesus said was clear ..... they just didn't want to believe it (John 6:60)

Even the 12 illustrate this mistake (Matthew 20:18-19; Luke 24:25-27)

## 2. Jesus went up to the temple into the temple to teach

“Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught.” (John 7:14)

### A) The response of the Jews (John 7:15)

> Jesus taught with an authority that was obvious yet abnormal

Recognized authority was to quote tradition and various rabbis

Jesus did neither

Matthew 5:21a, 22a – the pattern that follows

Matthew 7:28-29 – the response to Jesus' teaching

The Jewish leaders questioned, resisted and resented His authority (Matthew 21:23)

B) The source of Jesus' authority

> His doctrine / teaching is not His but His Father's (John 7:16)

> What has been a pattern of Israel's response to God's prophets? (Matt 5:11-12)

C) The impact of the heart upon the ability to understand what Jesus taught

> The premise – "If anyone wills to do His will" **OR** "If anyone chooses to do God's will" (John 7:17a)

There is a moral dimension that is involved in understanding and believing Jesus

D) Why such a broad range of responses to Jesus and His teaching?

The various groups were revealing their heart attitude toward God (John 7:17b)

**ILLUSTRATE:** This principle can be seen throughout the Scriptures

The parable of the rich man in hell (Luke 16:19-31)

The Jewish leaders response to Lazarus being raised from the dead (John 11:45-48)

The Jewish leaders' response to the paralytic's healing (Acts 4:13-17)

The rebellious world to the judgment of God (Revelation 6:16-17)

Now, let's look at the other side of this coin – those who want a prophet who will say what they want to hear (Isaiah 30:9-11; Jeremiah 5:30-31; Micah 2:11; 2 Timothy 4:3-4)

**APPLICATION:** The heart, not just the head, determines our ability to understand God's Word

This doesn't preclude the work of the Spirit in this process, but allows this text to speak for itself

May the attitude of Samuel to the voice of God be yours / my commitment today, every day

"Speak Lord, for your servant is listening."