

Is Jesus for Real?

Ray Stedman

I. Introduction.

- A. Despite the great feats of Jesus, it is amazing that His own family did not believe in Him.
- B. Text: John 7:25-52.
- C. A turning point occurred in John 6 after many of the great multitudes refused to follow Jesus.
- D. The events of John 7 take place during the Feast of Booths—God’s way of reminding the Israelites of the past.

II. Jesus’ brothers come to Him and give Him some political advice:

- A. Get a larger arena.
- B. Reinforce the Judean disciples.
- C. Get a more realistic game plan by working more in the open.
- D. Show yourself to the world so as not to waste your gifts.

III. Assessing the brother’s reasoning.

- A. You hear these arguments all over today—it is very reasonable.

1. Assess the need.
2. Estimate the cost.
3. Organize an approach.
4. Raise the funds.
5. Launch a publicity stunt.
6. Carry out the plan.
7. Reap the results.

- B. The missing element is belief. (John 7:5)

1. Jesus’ brothers recognized His powers.
2. They did not believe that He was the promised Messiah though.
3. If they had accepted that Jesus was the Messiah, it would have changed everything.

4. If the brothers believed, they never would have asked Jesus to do what they did.

IV. Jesus knew that it was not His time.

A. Jesus understood that His time was Passover and not the Feast of Booths, which was six months earlier.

B. Passover pictures Jesus' redemption.

V. Jesus was a polemical figure.

A. Many loved Him because of His miracles.

B. Many hated Him because of how He dealt with the law.

VI. Jesus decided to go up to teach the people.

A. Jesus spoke so insightfully and powerfully that even His enemies marveled.

B. Jesus' teaching reveals His authority.

1. He taught unlike any other.

2. He taught from the Scriptures in a way that was different from what the rabbis did because He taught on His own accord. Scripture was the only authority.

3. What Jesus said was so true to life that many people connected immediately with it.

VII. The key to doing God's will is believing, obeying and practicing the word of Jesus.

A. You cannot learn until you practice.

B. When you do what Jesus says, you will understand that Jesus knows what life is all about.

VIII. The mark of an authentic learner is not seeking one's own glory.

IX. The Lord shows His skill as a public debater by demonstrating that His accusers break the law worse than they accuse Him of doing the same.

Application questions:

1. What in your opinion is the central problem that arises in John 7? Why is this so central to having a proper relationship with Jesus?

2. What does Jesus teaching reveal about Him? How are we to model Him in what we teach others?

3. With what aspects of Jesus' teaching do you have the most difficulty? What are some ways you can learn to think more like Jesus by practicing some of those difficult teachings?
