

## Why Should Anyone Believe in Jesus?

John 7:1-18

Disagreements about Jesus in the book of John sound familiar to us today:

- "He is a prophet." (9:17). Today Muslims agree with this.
- "He is insane" (10:20), or "He is a deceiver." (7:12) Today this is the viewpoint of some atheists, agnostics, Jewish people, etc.
- "He is dangerous." (11:48-50) Over one third of the world lives under regimes who believe this.
- "He is a Rabbi, a good teacher." (6:25) Many non-religious Americans believe this is all Jesus is.

How did Jesus respond to these doubters, skeptics, and critics? *He gave them reasons to believe.*

Our passage today is John 7:1-18:

- [7:7] Jesus explains why not all believe—and it's not pretty.
- [7:17] If you want to know who Jesus is, you'll know. Jesus promises this!
- [7:18] Jesus gives a reason to believe: He doesn't seek his own glory but God the Father's glory.
  - In other words, "Watch what I do. Look at my character."
  - For instance: power, money, and women. No hint of Jesus being corrupted by any of these! This isn't the case for all religious founders...
  - The ultimate proof: Jesus' willingness to die horribly because it was the Father's plan to love us sacrificially. (John 8:28, 12:27-28)

Jesus gives at least four big reasons to believe:

1. *His character.* As discussed already from John 7:18 and 7:7.
2. *John the Baptist's testimony.* "[John the Baptist] has borne witness to the truth...I say these things so that you may be saved." (John 5:33-34; see also John 1:26, 32; 10:41)
3. *Miraculous signs.* "...or at least believe on account of the works themselves." (John 14:11; see also 10:38, 3:2)
4. *Fulfillment of the Scriptures.* "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me..." (John 5:39; see also Matt 5:17, Luke 24:26-27, 45-47)

Responding to Jesus' reasons for faith:

- A leap?
- An alternative?

### Questions for Reflection and Application:

1. Read John 7 & 8. Note all the different opinions about Jesus. How did Jesus explain his identity and correct people?
2. Read John 7:7. Is Jesus loved or hated today? Or both? Explain.
3. Jesus says he seeks the Father's glory in John 7:18. Name some ways in which this was/is true. How would you be different, if you sought God's glory all the time?