



SERIES: September 2022 – February 2023 Believe

SPEAKER: NATE OPFER

Wednesday, November 16, 2022

Scripture: John 7:25-31

TITLE: Decide for Yourself

Welcome to Win the Day. I'm Nate, your coach, filling in for Pastor Nat and today you need to decide for yourself, is Jesus the Messiah?

We are continuing in the Gospel of John 7:25-31 (NIV), which reads:

At that point some of the people of Jerusalem began to ask, "Isn't this the man they are trying to kill? Here he is, speaking publicly, and they are not saying a word to him. Have the authorities really concluded that he is the Messiah? But we know where this man is from; when the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from."

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, but I know him because I am from him and he sent me."

At this they tried to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come. Still, many in the crowd believed in him. They said, "When the Messiah comes, will he perform more signs than this man?"

It's about midweek of the Feast of Booths and Jesus has been in the temple courtyard in Jerusalem teaching there. He has drawn a crowd of both skeptics and believers who heard Him teach and they start to question Him.

The debate was raging: who is Jesus?

Jesus was not a small, unknown figure. He quickly and widely becoming known in the region due to His miracles and teachings and had even caught the eye of the authorities and the religious rulers, the Pharisees.

This debate spills over into the crowd here. "Isn't this the man they are trying to kill?" The crowd recognized Jesus and they also knew well enough that the authorities wanted to kill Him, because He healed a man on the Sabbath and claimed to be equal to God.

But why are they leaving Him alone? Have they concluded that He is the Messiah?

This is a rhetorical question. They know Jesus is from Nazareth and that the Messiah does not come from there. So they know the authorities don't believe He is the Messiah.

They have come to a place of comfortable rejection. Despite all the miracles and the teachings, despite the fact they could look up His birth records, they aren't buying it. These people have made two fatal flaws. The first is in their assumption of where Jesus is from. The second is in their assumption of the Messiah.

These are flaws because they're wrong about both of these, and at their core these people do not want to believe. They despise Jesus. When you don't want to believe, it's funny how you can make anything a convenience for that unbelief.

I call it a convenience because despite the fact that these are false beliefs, despite the miracles and teachings of Jesus, these two misbeliefs are being used to suit their own comfort, purposes, and needs.

At this, Jesus had enough. He cried out, loud enough for everyone to hear Him, with a sarcastic, ironic line. What He is saying is, "You *should* know me and where I am from but you don't!"

Why do you not believe? You have everything you need to believe but you won't because you are unable to see what I do and unable to hear what I say. You have let your unbelief get in the way! Don't fall into comfortable rejection! I am from God and He sent Me!

When they heard this, the unbelieving people wanted to seize Him. That despicable desire was never gone. When Jesus doubled down on His divine claim being of and from God, they again wanted to rise up against Him.

But it wasn't time yet. In God's sovereign and perfect timing, many in the crowd believed in Jesus. They saw the miracles and heard the teachings and they believed. How could anyone, ever do more than Jesus had done?

God knew what He was doing. Jesus came into the world at a time and place where people had to deal with Him. According to God's plan, Jesus rose from the grave and ascended into heaven and now you have to deal with Him. All these years later the debate still rages on. Either Jesus is the Messiah, or He's not.

It's a decision that needs to be made by all of us. God tells you and shows you that Jesus is the Messiah. How long will you waver between two opinions? Are there any conveniences you hold that keep you from believing? Decide for yourself, if Jesus is God, follow Him!

