



SERIES: September 2022 – February 2023 Believe

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Monday, November 21, 2022

Scripture: John 7:45-52

TITLE: Don't Be Deceived

Years ago I managed a retail store where I was able to build relationships with my employees. Inevitably my faith would become known. One of my employees was an atheist. When he discovered my faith, he said, "Oh no. You're one of those people who has been hoodwinked by religion and myth." In other words, he thought I had been deceived from the truth.

Today, the majority of the world looks at Christians and thinks "you've been deceived." The truth is, we're not deceived. We simply understand what the world does not.

Today's struggle was the same struggle when Jesus walked the earth. Let's keep walking with Jesus to see what the problem was back then. John 7:45-52

The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why did you not bring him?" The officers answered, "No one ever spoke like this man!" The Pharisees answered them, "Have you also been deceived? Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him? But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed." Nicodemus, who had gone to him before, and who was one of them, said to them, "Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?" They replied, "Are you from Galilee too? Search and see that no prophet arises from Galilee."

In case you forgot or are joining us for the first time, in chapter 7 of John, the religious leaders are done with Jesus, and they want him arrested. So they send the temple police to get him. Jesus says some challenging things. The people are divided. Is he a nut? Is he a prophet? Who is this Jesus.

That's where we pick it up here.

The officers come back to the Pharisees empty handed. The Pharisees say, "Where is Jesus? You had one job to do! Where is Jesus?"

The officers give their reason, "You don't get it. We've never heard anyone speak like this man." They could have blamed the crowd that likely would have or was preventing an arrest. They could have lied and said, "He resisted arrest and got away." But they share their dilemma: this Jesus is something else.

The Pharisees rebuke them. "Oh, we get it. You've been hoodwinked. You bought the hype. You've heard His words and the sideshow performer has deceived you too. Has anyone else bought this lie? Is there anyone who knows better than to be deceived?"

They insult the temple police and call them simple minded fools. Then in verse 49 they insult the crowd. They say, “But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed.” They’re saying, we’re not fooled. We understand the truth. We know the law. The crowd. They’re stupid. They’re cursed.

Nicodemus steps up and says, “Look, there is due process. We can’t just go grab Him without going through the proper steps.” And he’s right. There was procedure. But remember from John 3 that Nicodemus knew and listened to Jesus. So this was likely the safest way to prevent something bad happening to Jesus. But there is nothing here that says Nicodemus was a disciple of Jesus.

And then, the Pharisees show how little they know in verse 52. They say, “look, Jesus hangs out in Galilee. No prophet has ever come from Galilee.” But they forgot or don’t know that the Prophet Jonah came from Galilee. Some scholars suggest that Nahum and Hosea came from Galilee. So it’s not the crowd or the officers who are deceived. It was actually the Pharisees.

So here’s my challenge for you today: receive the truth about Christ. The majority of the world rejects Jesus. They’ve been deceived to believe the lies about Jesus. Jesus is God. He is the Messiah. He is the sovereign Lord of all. That is the truth. Do not be deceived.