

HOW PEOPLE REACT TO JESUS

John 7:37-51

By Raymond White

The celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles, or harvest, included a last day ritual. A priest brought a pitcher of water from the Pool of Siloam to the temple, and as the people sang the Hallel the priest poured the water at the altar fulfilling

Isaiah 12:3 With joy shall he draw water from the wells of salvation.

Against that backdrop, Jesus taught the people about himself. His message was simple: You thank God for water and you pray for water so you can have a plentiful harvest. Well, here I am, the living water that you need to drink.

John 7:37 If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. :38 He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

Living water means running water, river water that flows, not still water from a stagnant, dead lake like the Dead Sea which has no life to give. Living water is water that gives life because it has life.

How did the people react to that message? With diversity.

[1] SOME WERE CONVINCED

John 7:40 Many of the people therefore when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. :41 Others said, this is the Christ.

There are always people who, when they hear the truth, believe it.

[2] SOME WERE CONTRARY

John 7:41 But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? :42 Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

And there are always people who, when they hear the truth, reject it.

[3] SOME WERE CONFUSED

John 7:45 Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have you not brought him? :46 They answered, Never man spake like this.

But there are also people who, when they hear the truth, are confused, as were these police officers who didn't know what to make of Jesus and didn't even know how to account for

their own inaction. They were asked, then why didn't you bring him here? They answered, you had to have been there, nobody has ever talked like this guy.

[4] SOME WERE CONTEMPLATIVE

John 7:50 Nicodemus saith unto them :51 Doeth our law judge any man before it hear him, and knoweth what he doeth?

There are always people who want to “thing about it.” Well, fair enough, if they really do intend to think about it and not just provide an excuse to leave. Nicodemus wasn't ready to commit either way, but he was willing to commit to fairness. “Let Jesus have his say and I'll think about it” was his attitude, and he did. What conclusion did he finally come to? **John 19:39** shows Nicodemus at the tomb with the disciples, apparently a disciple himself.

What, then, are we to make of this diversity? On opposite ends are the believers and the rejecters. But in between are plenty of confused people and thoughtful people who just want some time to decide. All of these are potentials, late bloomers who can be won for Christ and maybe will be, maybe by you, if you are patient.