

"Why Do People Reject Jesus Christ?" Series

March 08, 2023

Scripture: Matthew 23:1-39

Summary: This lesson on Passion Week answers the question-

"Why Do People Reject Jesus Christ?"

This is Day 3 of Passion Week- A Day of Controversy.

Jesus is attacked and challenged.

He answers His enemies with stunning rebuke.

Passion Week

Day 3(Tuesday)before the crucifixion, A Day of Controversy and Personal Attacks.

"Why Do People Reject Jesus Christ?"

Introduction-

This evening, we will be considering Day 3 of Passion Week, which was a day of controversy, and personal attacks.

Jesus is under fire, and He lashes out in rebuke of the unbelief of the religious leaders of Israel for rejecting Him as Messiah.

Jesus pronounces eight woes against the religious leaders, calling them hypocrites, and publicly humiliating them.

He is not a coward running from trouble.

He set His face to come to Jerusalem, knowing He would face rejection, and die for the sins of the world.

Now, remember, that on Day 2(Monday), of Passion Week, Jesus had cursed the barren fig tree, which represented the fruitlessness of the nation of Israel, and He had also entered the temple for the purpose of driving out the moneychangers, who had corrupted God's House, and made it a den of thieves.

Now, it is Tues- day, and He returns from Bethany and is on the way back to Jerusalem, with His disciples.

It will be a day filled with turmoil.

The first event of importance that we need to look at is that the fig tree that He had cursed the day before was now dry and withered from the roots.

He used this as an object lesson to teach His disciples about the power of prayer, and about Divine judgment on unbelievers.

Several groups attack Jesus, and try to trick Him into saying something that will condemn Him.

I. First, He faces the Sanhedrin-

His authority as a teacher is questioned by this body of religious leaders. The chief priests, the scribes, and the elders were all there. They had a prearranged agenda, to condemn Jesus some- how.

Jesus turned the tables on them, and put them on the spot.

When they gave no answer, neither did He.

He told 3 parables of rebuke to them:

1. The parable of the wicked husbandmen-

This condemned the religious leaders for their rejection of God's only Son.

The punch line was-"The kingdom of God will be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."(Mt. 21:43)

2. The parable of the marriage feast-

This parable shows the unworthiness of the nation of Israel of God's mercy for rejecting His Son.

3. The parable of the wedding garment-

This also shows Israel's unpreparedness to receive God's Messiah, and hence, their lack of righteousness by faith.

*** Reason #1 People Reject Jesus Christ-Because they refuse to believe God. (Unbelief)**

They should have been first to accept Him, and welcome Him, but "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.

"2nd Corinthians 4:4-"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not; lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

II. Secondly, The Pharisees and the Herodians attack Jesus about giving tribute to Caesar.

He turned the spotlight on their hypocrisy again, and rebuked them saying, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God, the things that are God's".

Reason #2-People Reject Jesus Christ, because He reveals their sin, and they don't want to face it, or admit it.

John 3:20-"For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

Better to face them now, than at the judgment."

III. The Sadducees attack Him next over a dispute about the resurrection from the dead, which they denied.

Jesus made them look like fools, also, and revealed that God is the God of the living, not of the dead.

Reason #3-People Reject Jesus Christ, because His

life and teachings contradict theirs.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free."

IV. Next, a Pharisee attacks Jesus with a question from the law of Moses about the greatest commandment.

Jesus revealed that man is to put God first, and his fellowman second.

Reason #4-People Reject Jesus Christ because He demands total commitment, and they want to rule their own lives, not yield to God's control.

Psalms. 2:3"Let us break their bands asunder, and remove their cords from us..."

Such is the thinking of every rebellious sinner.

We must love God supremely, and always put Him first.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness..."

V. Jesus, Himself, then raises an attack on the religious leaders, by proving who the Messiah really would be-son of David, and David's Lord.

Then, Jesus pronounced the woes against the Scribes and Pharisees.

He showed that inwardly they were corrupt, while appearing to be devout believers on the outside.

Reason #5-People Reject Jesus Christ, Because He reveals that only God is good.

We tend to promote our own self-righteousness.

We don't want to admit that we need God. But, in reality, we are all beggars at God's doorstep, unworthy of even the morsels that fall from His table.

Eph. 2:8-10 "For by grace are ye saved, through faith..."

Next in order, on this day, Jesus observed a poor widow giving her all to God and commended her for her great generosity.

Finally, Jesus delivered his Olivet discourse, and told His disciples of the end of the age, and the soon coming destruction of Jerusalem.

His warning is to watch, pray, and be ready.