Christ Rejected by His Own People

John 12:37-50
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Text:

John 12:37-50,

37. But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:
38. That the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, Lord, who hath believed our report and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?
39. Therefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again,
40. He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.
41. These things said Isaiah, when he saw his glory, and spoke of him.
42. Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:
43. For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.
44. Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.
45. And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.
46. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.
47. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.
48. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.
49. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.
50. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak. (KJV)

Commentary:

John 12:37, But though he had done so many miracles before them, ye they believed not on him: (KJV)

I. Even though Jesus had performed innumerable signs, wonders and miracles, the Jewish leaders, enemies of Christ, still did not believe on him.

   A. The leaders and many ordinary Jews, were adamant in denying Jesus Christ! Facts had no effect.

      1. Their necks were stiff, stubborn.

      2. Their eyes were shut, ears closed, mind shut tightly.

      3. Their minds were made up already.

   B. Scriptures:

      1. John 20:30, And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: (KJV)

      2. John 21:25, And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen. (KJV)
John 12:38, That the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, "Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?" (KJV)

I. The failure to believe on Jesus was in fulfillment of prophecy.

   A. The same unbelief that Isaiah faced was also faced by Jesus.

      1. Prophecies often have a dual application, as in this case.

      2. Isaiah was put to death for his preaching. Jesus was crucified.

      3. Isaiah 53:1-3, Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. (KJV)

John 12:39, 40, Therefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. (KJV)

I. For this reason (It had been prophesied.) the enemies of Jesus did not, could not (did not have it in themselves to) believe on Jesus.

   A. This does not mean the people literally could not have believed on Jesus.
1. It does mean they could not believe and have their action be consistent with Isaiah’s prophecy.
   a. They were blinded to what God was doing because they had already decided what the coming of the Messiah would look like

2. Without taking away their free will, God’s foreknowledge of what they would choose to do was made clear in Isaiah’s prophecy.
   a. Doom and destruction would come upon the Jews because they would reject God's chosen one.

3. Isaiah 6:10, Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. (KJV)

4. Matthew 13:14, 15, And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. (KJV)

B. The sun melts butter and hardens concrete.

   1. God never hardens hearts against people’s wills.
John 12:41, These things said Isaiah, when he saw his glory, and spoke of him. (KJV)

I. Isaiah prophesied these things because he saw, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the glory of Christ.

   A. Isaiah spoke of Jesus’ divine and human natures.

      1. Isaiah 9:6, For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (KJV)

      2. Isaiah 53:1-3, Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. (KJV)

John 12:42, 43, Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. (KJV)

I. Nevertheless, in spite of wide spread disbelief, many even of the rulers believed on him.

II. However, they did not confess their faith in Christ because:
A. they were afraid they would be put out of the synagogue.
   1. Intimidation and ostracism were powerful devices which promoted conformity.
   2. Those put out of the synagogue could not find work and were totally isolated from society.
   3. Being put out of the synagogue was a severe punishment.
B. they loved the glory and honor that came from men more than the glory that came from God.
   1. This is quite a commentary on character and motivation.
   2. What do our own actions say about our character and motivation?
C. The kind of faith evidenced by these rulers certainly did not save them.
   1. Remember! The devils believe and tremble, but they are still devils.
   2. There are those who profess faith but show no evidence of it, and there is saving faith (trust) which is obedient faith.
   3. John 14:15, If ye love me, keep my commandments. (KJV)

John 12:44, Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. (KJV)

I. Jesus cried aloud and said,
A. “He that believeth on me, believeth not on me (alone) but on him that sent me.”

B. To believe in Jesus is to believe in the father!

John 12:45, And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. (KJV)

I. God the Father is seen only in Jesus Christ his Son.

A. God the Father sent Jesus into the world.

B. John 5:23, That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him. (KJV)

John 12:46, I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. (KJV)

I. Jesus is the light of the world.

II. Whosoever believes on Jesus need not abide in spiritual darkness.

A. Jesus is the way out of spiritual darkness.

B. John 9:5, As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. (KJV)

John 12:47, And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. (KJV)

I. Jesus did not come the first time to judge those who heard his words but did not keep them.
II. Jesus came to earth to save the world.

A. John 3:16, 17, For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten (literally, "unique", "one-of-a-kind") Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. (KJV)

III. When Jesus returns he will then judge the world.

John 12:48, He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. (KJV)

I. Those who reject Christ and his sayings will be judged by the words Jesus spoke while he was in the world.

A. John 3:17, 18, For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the unique (one-of-a-kind) Son of God. (KJV)

B. John 5:24-29, Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the
hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (KJV)

C. John 12:25, He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. (KJV)

II. The standard of eternal judgment is the gospel of Christ.

A. John 7:24-27, Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is. (KJV)

B. Matthew 28:18-20, And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (KJV)

C. Romans 1:16, For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. (KJV)

John 12:49-50, For I have not spoken on my own; but the Father himself who sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is
life everlasting: what I say, therefore, is just as the Father has told me. (KJV)

I. Jesus did not speak during his earthly ministry from himself as a man.

II. God the Father had given Jesus commandment what he should say, speak.

III. Jesus taught exactly what God had ordered as the true messenger of God. He spoke the true word of Almighty God!

IV. God’s commandment leads to eternal life.

V. How do present day religious leaders arrive at what they teach?
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Questions

1. Even though __________________ had performed ______________ ____________, __________ and ______________, the ____________ ____________, ____________ of Christ still did not ____________ on him.”

2. Facts had no effect on Jesus’ ________________ because their ____________ were ____________, their ____________ were ____________. Their minds were ________________!"'

3. Isaiah had said they could not believe because God had blinded their eyes. Reconcile this with the Biblical teaching of the free will of man.

4. “Nevertheless among the ______________ also __________ believed on him; but because of the ____________ they did not ____________ him, lest they should be put out of the ____________: For they loved the ____________ of men more than the ____________ of ____________."
5. What happened to people who were “put out of the synagogue?” __________

6. Discuss the motivations that caused these people to act as they did. __________

7. Did these people have “saving faith”? Why or why not? __________

8. These people were conflicted in that faith pulled them in one direction while earthly concerns pulled them in another direction. In what ways are you conflicted? __________
9. “He that __________ me, and ___________ not my ___________, hath one that ___________ him: the ___________ that I have ___________, the same shall ___________ him in the ___________ ___________.”

10. Jesus said, “I have not ___________ of ___________; but the ___________ which sent me, he gave me a ___________, what I should say, and what I should ___________. And I know that her ___________ is ___________ ___________; whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the ___________said unto, so I speak.”