

**John Series: That You May Believe**  
**#9: Rejected By Christ?**

Text: John 2:12-25

Jesus' private preparation for His ministry has been completed, and now we see His public ministry begin. And what a beginning! Israel's true, long-awaited Messiah comes to Jerusalem (the great capitol city) to the very Temple...and at Passover! Every make Jew 12 years and up were expected to come to the Passover each year at Jerusalem. In fulfillment of the prophecy of **Malachi 3:1-3**, the Messiah comes suddenly into the Temple to purify. Does Christ laugh at the sin going on in a place of worship? Does He receive the professed faith of those who have seen His miracles and believed? **Is it really true that some people are rejected by Christ?!**  
**Christ began His public ministry by rejecting people! Not everyone's gonna make it (Mat 10:34-39).**

**I. Christ Rejects Those Who Have False Repentance** (vs 12-22).

- 1. Can't Mix Worship & Repentance with Sin** (vs 13-16). Worship plus sin equals hypocrisy! Passover was a time of worship, repentance, sacrifice for sin, and reflection on God's past deliverance from bondage. What started as a convenience became hypocrisy and sin! (Worship cannot be a matter of convenience). They were cheating the worshipers for greed! Ministry became business.
- 2. Christ's Wrath Comes Down Upon Hypocrisy & Sin** (vs 14-16). What sort of picture of Jesus do you have? A Jesus that would never upset, reject, disagree with, or punish anyone? See Jesus clearing the Temple! See Him turning over the tables and yelling, with a whip! See His righteous wrath against sin, hypocrisy and false repentance! "In no other more definite or picturesque way could He have asserted His claim to be the Christ, the Son of God" – Erdman. (Ps 7:11, Rom 1:18) Grace doesn't mean sin is ok – it must be punished.
- 3. Christ is Passionate About the Purity of His Church (His House)** (vs 16-17). To the point of death!
  - A. Cleaning the House.** At Passover, the head of each house would clean each house of all leaven in preparation for the Feast of Unleavened Bread following Passover. As they were cleaning their houses as a picture of repenting of sin, God's house was full of sin! Christ came and cleansed His Father's house. (1 Peter 4:17-18)
  - B. Eaten Up With Zeal.** The Disciples saw Christ fulfilling the Messianic Psalm (69:9). They were observing with their eyes the passion Christ has for His house, the church – which was typified by the Temple. Indeed, this zeal for His house (His people, the church) would eat Him up – lead Him all the way to death on the cross! **Are we zealous for the church like our Savior?**  
**Church Discipline – a loving way to save each other from the whip of Jesus!** He WILL have a pure church; this is His zeal. If we neglect cleaning His house – HE WON'T.
  - C. Reaction of Faith & Unbelief.** The disciples believe, the religious leaders are blinded in unbelief.
- 4. His Sign (Proof) is His Death & Resurrection** (vs 18-22).
  - A. Foolishness of Asking for a Sign.** Cleansing the Temple WAS the sign! Instead of asking for a sign, they should have confessed their greed and sin.
  - B. Destroy This Temple...** He gave them the sign of Jonah (Mt 12:39-40). His death & resurrection. He was speaking spiritually, they were thinking physically. In tearing down His body at the cross, they were tearing down the physical Temple as well – for Christ had with His death & resurrection secured the building of the church! The physical Temple was soon destroyed by the Romans, only a few years after it was completed.
  - C. Using His Statement Against Him.** This parable of Christ ("Destroy this temple..") was later used against Him at His trial (Mt26:59-61) and at the cross (Mt27:38-40).
- 5. There IS a False Repentance; a Fake Worship.** False repentance and worship wants to allow sin to remain. True worship and true repentance turns from sin. This alone, in Christ, is acceptable to God. (Mt4:17, Lk 13:3, Acts3:19)

## II. Christ Rejects Those Who Have False Faith (vs 23-25).

**1. Many Believed Because of the Signs.** Signs are for strengthening TRUE, saving faith – not creating faith. All the gospels combined record a total of only 36 miracles (with summary statements), equaling out to less than 1 per month over Christ's 3 ½ year ministry. This would be disappointing to those who needed the miracles to believe. A faith resting on miracles always wants more – Christ and His word are not enough. Must have something new and exciting or they find it difficult to believe.

**2. He Didn't Believe In Them.** The verb "commit" in v.24 is the same verb used in v.23 for "believe," only in a different tense. They accepted Christ, but He did not accept them! He did not accept their profession of faith. It was not real, and He knew it. (The Bible never tells us that God believes in us. It only tells us to believe in Him. God has confidence – NOT IN US – but in what HE will do through His children) (2Thess3:4, Rom7:18a, John 15:5b)

**3. He Knew What Was In a Man.** Christ saw their hearts. No one can hide from Jesus! (Peter 1:42, Nathanael 1:46, Samaritan Woman 4:29, the Jewish leaders 5:42, Judas 6:64; He saw repentance 8:10-11; He saw murder 8:40)

### 4. There IS a False Faith – a Faith That Doesn't Save.

- Trusts in outward experience, not divine revelation
- Doesn't last
- Mental & not spiritual
- Doesn't Result in Works (doesn't impact life) (James 2:18)
- Even the demons believe! (James 2:19)

It is possible to have a false faith without being born again! (setup for chapter 3)

### Matthew 7:21-23

**Application:** Christ always rejects false repentance and false faith! Which do you have? Are you attempting to worship God and remain in sin (even secret, "small" sins)? If so, you too will be rejected. Examine yourself, repent of all sin, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ! Put your TRUST in Him forever! Follow Him, miracles or no miracles, and never look back. Cry out to the Lord for true repentance and faith.

### Scripture References

**1Pt4:17-18**– For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? **18** Now "If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

**Mt12:39-40** – "But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. **40** For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth"

**Mt26:59-61** – "Now the chief priests, the elders, and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, **60** but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none. But at last two false witnesses came forward **61** and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.' "

**Mt27:38-40** – "Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left. **39** And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads **40** and saying, "You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross."

**Mt4:17** – "From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "**Repent**, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

**Lk 13:3** – "but unless you **repent** you will all likewise perish"

**Acts3:19** – “**Repent** therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,”

**2Thess3:4** – “And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, both that you do and will do the things we command you.”

**Rom7:18a** – “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells”

**Jn15:5b** – “without Me you can do nothing”

**James2:19** – “You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe--and tremble!”

**Mt7:21-23** – “**21** "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. **22** Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' **23** And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”