

That The World May Know – The Life and Ministry of the Messiah – Session 7: Misguided Faith (When Christians Get It Wrong)

Jesus' Method of Confrontation

1. What did Jesus confront, and what were His attitudes and actions?
Mark 5:1 – 20
Matthew 15:21 – 28
Matthew 16:21 – 25
2. Jesus healed the Canaanite woman's daughter while He was in the region of Tyre and Sidon Matthew 15:21 – 28
 - a. What as the reputation of that area?
1 Kings 16:31
Isaiah 23:17
 - b. Why did Jesus go there?
Matthew 9:10 – 13
3. In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus outlined His battle plan for confronting evil. Which characteristics did Jesus call "blessed?"
Matthew 5:5 – 10

What is the purpose of following Jesus' battle plan?
Matthew 5:13 – 16

How are these characteristics and purposed like and unlike the Crusaders' ways of confronting evil?

And our ways of confronting evil?
4. What did Jesus say His followers could expect to encounter as they shared His message? What encouragement did He offer?
Matthew 10:17 – 28

God's People Are to Be Involved in Culture

The Crusaders abandoned Jesus' self-sacrificing methods and isolated themselves from culture. They dominated the political scene, yet had little influence on people's daily lives. God, however, calls His people to live on the crossroads of life so that the world may know that He is truly God

1. What did God, through the prophet Isaiah, reveal about what His people are to do?
2. Isaiah 43:12
3. Jesus also instructed His disciples to be His witnesses. What did Jesus command all of His disciples (including us) to do?
Matthew 28:19 – 20

In what ways are Jesus' disciples to accomplish this?
Matthew 5:13 – 16
4. How did Jesus demonstrate how to be involved in culture?
Matthew 15:29 – 38
5. What did the apostle Peter urge his readers to do? How did this compare with how the Crusaders lived?
1 Peter 2:11 – 12
6. The apostle Paul took his involvement in culture very seriously. How did Paul describe his lifestyle?
2 Corinthians 1:12

Responsibility for Jesus' Death

As Jesus' trial progressed, some people in Jerusalem directed fierce anger and hatred toward Him. When Pilate believed Jesus to be innocent, the mob accepted the responsibility for Jesus' death and willing exclaimed, "Let his blood be on us and on our children!" (Matthew 27:25) Since then, many Christians, including the Crusaders, have blamed the Jews for killing Jesus. But did God place the blame for Jesus' death on that Jewish mob and their children? Did the mob speak for all Jews?

1. How did many Jewish people respond to Jesus and His teaching?
Mark 11:18
Luke 20:39;
Luke 21:37 – 38
2. What made it difficult for the chief priests and other religious leaders to arrest and kill Jesus?
Matthew 26:3 – 5
Luke 19:47 – 48;
Luke 20:19;
Luke 22:1 – 6
3. Which people plotted against Jesus and had Him arrested?
Luke 19:47
John 11:45 – 53
John 18:12 – 14
4. Who actually was responsible for Jesus' ill treatment and execution?
Matthew 27:11 – 26
Luke 18:31 – 33;
Luke 23:20 – 25
John 19:16
5. What was Jesus' attitude toward those who crucified Him?
Luke 23:34

God's Commands through Jesus

In everything He did, Jesus displayed God's love. He loved us so much that He came to sacrifice Himself for the sins of the world. Instead of destroying all the opposition Jesus encountered, God chose to have His Son change the world with a confrontational love that reached out to meet people's needs.

Look at the instructions Jesus gave His disciples concerning how to live in their culture. As His disciples, we have the opportunity to conduct our lives in a way that will reflect Jesus and His gospel to spiritually blind, hurting people.

1. What command did Jesus give during the Last Supper to all who would be His disciples?
John 13:34 – 35
2. Instead of advocating violent, self-serving means like the Crusaders, what did Jesus advocate as His way of changing the world?
 - Matthew 5:5 -7
 - Matthew 5:8
 - Matthew 5:9
 - Matthew 5:13 – 16
 - Matthew 5:23 – 24
 - Matthew 5:38 – 42
 - Matthew 5:43 – 48
 - Matthew 6:14 – 15

References

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| 1 Kings 16 | Isaiah 23 |
| Isaiah 43 | Ezekiel 18 |
| Matthew 5 | Matthew 6 |
| Matthew 9 | Matthew 10 |
| Matthew 15 | Matthew 16 |
| Matthew 26 | Matthew 27 |
| Matthew 28 | Mark 5 |
| Mark 11 | Luke 18 |
| Luke 19 | Luke 20 |
| Luke 21 | Luke 22 |
| Luke 23 | John 1 |
| John 3 | John 10 |
| John 11 | John 13 |
| John 18 | John 19 |
| Romans 10 | Romans 11 |
| 1 Corinthians 9 | 2 Corinthians 1 |
| 1 Peter 2 | 1 Peter 3 |

Jesus did not come to improve your life, a little tweak here and a little tweak there. Jesus came to transplant a new way of thinking into your mind, a new way of living into your soul. Once we join Jesus and pursue God's vision for this world, everything changes. You will go places you never thought you would go.. You will ask God for what you need and trust God to provide. And you may find there is not as much need to worry.

Ephesians 4:1 – 6: As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Taking Action

When we present Jesus to other people using methods other than those that He used and taught, we send the wrong message and defame Jesus' reputation. The era of the Crusades is a great tragedy of the Christian faith. The Crusaders slaughtered and plundered Jews, Muslims—even other Christians—in the name of Jesus. The damage done to Jesus' reputation and the walls erected between Christians and people of other faiths remain even to this day.

Chances are, you will meet someone whose view of Christianity has been affected negatively by tragedies like the Crusades or who has been treated wrongfully by another Christian. What can you do to help such a person see who Jesus truly is?

If you know such a person, which steps will you take in an effort to undo the damage that has been done to Jesus' reputation?

Jesus wants us to confront the power of evil in our culture, but He wants us to do it as He did—not with the sword, but by offering His life. So it is important for us to do it in a way that models His attitudes and behavior. We must reject attitudes and methods that communicate that Christianity is anything like what the Crusaders demonstrated it to be.

Think about the unique opportunities you have to bring Jesus' message to unbelievers through your actions and attitudes. What will you do to lovingly communicate His message—even if difficulties may follow?

What are you willing to do to help bridge the gap between yourself and non-Christians? In what ways can you be a "community" builder instead of a "fortress" builder in your culture?