

“The Misunderstood Christ”

Life is not fair. That’s not pessimism, it’s a fact. It’s not a com-plaint, it’s just the way things are. – Max Lucado

We’ve read great healing stories from Matthew, miracles that brought a dead girl back to life, and we’ve heard powerful lessons that beg to transform your hearts and minds!

“Does the law permit a person to work by healing on the Sabbath?” They were hoping He would say yes, so they could bring charges against Him. (vs. 10)

According to Sabbath law a person could not travel, fast, cook, buy, sell, draw water, walk beyond a certain distance, lift anything, fight in a war or heal on the Sabbath. Their religion, the distinct beliefs about God’s call to their nation, the Temple, and the Sabbath, became the binding force that kept Jews together and maintained their unity as a people for more than 2000 years!

Their Law was the absolute truth from God, and the Law was to be followed to the *letter!*

So it’s from out of their laws that we hear the religionists declare about Jesus, “No, no, no! This isn’t what we want! This man is breaking up our religion...!”

The Way of the Atheist

An atheist is a person who disbelieves or denies the existence of God.

The strategy of these religionists was to discredit Jesus so the people would stop following Him!

The religionists rebelled against Jesus because they didn’t want Jesus to control their religion or their lives! They didn’t want to follow the way or the message of Jesus Christ! It didn’t fit!

What happens that we mirror the actions of the religionists?

1. Personal Tragedy. “Why didn’t God take care of me?”
2. Religious Rules.
3. Modern Mind.
4. Absence of Compassion. “God is supposed to keep us safe!”

Evidence to Condemn Christianity:

1. Prayer Does Not Work.
2. This contradicts the Christian notion that God is omni-benevolent.
3. Christian theology is incoherent to the point of absurdity.

Rescued from Rejection

C.S. Lewis returned to a robust Christianity from out of years of a) intellectual struggle and this came only after b) being convinced that faith was reasonable.

“My argument *against God* was that the universe seemed so cruel and unjust. Just how had I got this idea of just and unjust? A man does not call a line crooked unless he has some idea of a straight line. What was I comparing this universe with when I called it unjust...“Mere Christianity”

Lewis recognized that God seeks us personally and makes demands upon us. We have a personal God who calls us individually to make a personal response to the Gospel invitation.

Overcoming Critical Ideas

1. The atheist believes that the Christian God is a God who always does good, and
2. Christian theology is incoherent to the point of absurdity.

When the unbelieving philosopher approaches Christianity, one of their first premises is that the Christian God is a God who does good. This depends on how we define “good.” Good is always defined according to your personal point of view ...But God has a much more full and complete and perfect point of view. God said in the Bible:

“My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts, and My ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so My ways are higher than your ways and My thoughts higher than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:8-9)

[SEE also Proverbs 3:5-6 and Romans 11:33-34]

God does not promise to bring what you believe to be good to everyone. From God’s position, there is a purpose to be found in the trials of life. And part of that purpose is discovering that the Father is with you at the worst crossroads of life.

By the same impulse, similar circumstances that may have broken your faith – can be the same impulse to restore you to faith!

God uses special events or crises to capture our attention in order to give us a chance to abandon ourselves so that we embrace our need for Him!