

Greater Damnation

The dignity and composure with which the Lord Jesus turns these verbal clashes in the temple to the good of His people is a delight to witness. Every attack on the Lord or His people must bend to the Lord's glory, contribute to the increase of the church's happiness, and end in the shame of Christ's enemies and ours. Mark it down. If you trust in the Lord Jesus Christ you will not be disappointed. That is not to say you will not be tried and tested, you will, but the Lord will always give you more than your enemies can take.

Christ rebuts all attacks

It is still Tuesday of the Passover week. By Friday our Lord will have been arrested, falsely accused, condemned, tortured and crucified. Yet every punch, kick, cut, bruise and piercing inflicted on Him will be but the last gasp rage of a defeated foe. There was yet much to be faced and endured by our Saviour for the redemption of His people, but by Sunday our Lord will have risen from His grave in triumph and power. Let us 'continue in the faith', knowing, like our Master, 'we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God'.

'What think ye of Christ?'

As the Scribe who questioned the Lord about the law backed away, amazed at the Lord's wisdom and knowledge, the Saviour posed a question to his accomplices. Matthew tells us the Lord asked, 'What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?' and they replied, 'The Son of David'. The question again displays the Lord's continuing attention to His disciples' apostolic preparation.

God manifest in flesh

In answering the Scribe, Jesus had taught the unity of God and the glorious mystery of One Eternal and Divine Lord existing in a threefold character of persons. We saw that last week. Now, the Lord Jesus goes on to teach His followers about the second wonderful mystery of the Godhead, that is, God manifest in the flesh. By showing that Christ, the Messiah, was at once David's Lord and David's Son, our Saviour explains the doctrine of the incarnation most beautifully and, again, demonstrates how He causes the anger of men to praise Him.

Hearing Christ gladly

Mark tells us 'the common people heard him gladly'. The common people heard and believed what the Lord Jesus was teaching and drew proper conclusions from His words. The Scribes and Pharisees, on the other hand, hated that the Lord shamed and exposed them. They also understood and despised the implications of His words concerning the divinity and humanity of Christ. They were in no doubt the Lord Jesus was declaring Himself to be God.

A Saviour to trust

That was the crux of the matter on this Tuesday in Jerusalem, and it continues to be the crux of the matter today. There are many who can agree there is One God, and many who will confess One God in three persons. But the real question is this, what do you think of Jesus Christ? Is He God the Son? Do you look at the cross of Jesus Christ and see there God the Son giving His life for sin according to the scriptures? Do you see atonement and redemption by blood? Can you depend on such a Saviour? It is this message that touches the soul and blesses the heart of the common people who in the gospel hear Christ gladly and discover the grace of God.

Beware of false teachers

Turning to His disciples and followers the Saviour warned them to beware of the Scribes. These are Bible teachers who do not teach the Bible, and works-lawyers who do not preach grace. The woes recorded by Matthew are much fuller than what is recorded here by Mark. There the Lord's judgment is fierce and condemning but the conclusion is the same. There is greater damnation for false teachers and blind leaders whose deception and hypocrisy in spiritual matters offends the poor in spirit and disturbs the peace and joy of the Lord's little ones.

Degrees of punishment

There are many kinds of wickedness in this world and God keeps a tally upon it all. 'Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' But above all, the Lord hates religious hypocrisy. There

are greater degrees of punishment in hell for those who lead the Lord's sheep astray and rob them of their peace in believing.

Peace and joy in believing

May the Lord purify our hearts with gospel truth, cleanse our consciences with the blood of Christ, grant us faith to believe to the salvation of our souls, and make us wary of false teachers who steal our peace and joy.

Amen

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