

# THE REJECTING CHRIST

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JOHN 2:23-25 • TV-001A

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By

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## The Rejecting Christ

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### John 2:23-25

*“Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.”*

I’m going to read for you a passage of Scripture found in the book of **John 2:23**. If you have your Bible I’d like for you to follow along with me as I read.

Now I’m speaking today on the subject: **“THE REJECTING CHRIST.”**

*“Now, when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, (in the Feast Day), many believed in His name when they saw the miracles which He did.”* But now listen to this verse; *“But Jesus did not commit himself unto them because He knew all men and needed not that any should testify of man.”* The Lord knew what was in man!

Now one phrase that I want you to particularly notice, **verse 24**, *“But Jesus did not commit himself unto them; He knew what was in man.”*

## THE REJECTING CHRIST

JOHN 2:23-25 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

Now we are so accustomed to thinking of the Lord Jesus Christ as the receiver of men that we naturally shutter when we hear someone talk about Christ the rejecter of men. But my friends, in this day our Lord is made to appear as a lovesick suitor who continually presses his case while He is rejected with all manner of hatred. This makes him appear cheap and unattractive.

Preachers have begged the world to do something for Jesus so long that Christ to the average person appears to be a weak and powerless person and the Gospel is the butt of humor and jokes in this generation.

If you listen to the average evangelist's invitation at the end of his sermon and it sounds like an auction sale. Listen to them, they say; "Who will take Jesus on this verse? Now we are going to sing one more verse." They've already sung a dozen verses. "We're going to sing one more verse; won't somebody on this verse accept Jesus as their Saviour? Who will let God save him today?"

And from these invitations we get the idea that God is desperately in need of us and that God almighty is desperately trying to save men even on their terms. But my friend, our Lord is not a beggar; He is a King.

Our theme song on our program tells us that: "How great thou art, my Lord and Saviour, how great thou art."

Christ is not a beggar. Christ is a King. In His offices He's Prophet to reveal God, He's Priest to offer a sacrifice for our sins, and He's King to reign over us. He said Himself to His disciples before He ascended back to heaven: "*All authority is given unto me in heaven and earth. All power, all authority, is given unto me.*"

Our Lord stood before Pilate that day He was on trial before He went to the cross of Calvary. And Pilate had asked him several questions and the Master answered not a word. And finally Pilate in exasperation looked at Him and said, "*Answerest thou not me, knowing that I have the power to crucify you or release you?*"

And our Lord did reply to that; He said, "*Pilate, thou couldst have no power over me at all except it were given thee from above.*"

And then on that Calvary road when He was bearing His cross, going to Golgotha's Mountain where He was crucified, the Scripture says in **Luke chapter 23**; "*That many women followed Him weeping and lamenting.*"

And Christ on the road to Calvary between Pilate's Hall and that awful mountain of suffering; as those women followed and wept and lamented and mourned, our Lord stopped. And he turned to those women; and this is what He said; "*Weep not for me, weep for yourselves and for your children.*"

## THE REJECTING CHRIST

JOHN 2:23-25 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

If you're going to shed any tears, don't shed them over Christ. He is not the weak, frustrated, defeated, disillusioned, disappointed and reformer that He is made out to be; He is the King.

Now He saves men but not on their terms. He saves men on His terms. Our Lord Jesus Christ came into this world in human flesh, that's so. He came here as our representative before the law of God, that's so.

Our Lord came here in the flesh and went to the cross of Calvary and there He satisfied in His death the justice and righteousness of the heavenly Father. He obeyed the law perfectly, imputing unto His people a perfect righteousness, with which the Father is well pleased.

He went to the cross of Calvary and there He died, giving Himself a ransom for many. And there is a free and full and sincere invitation to all who will believe on Him, to all who will receive Him, to all who are in need, to come to Him, to all who are guilty sinners, to receive Him, and thereby receive salvation.

Yes sir! The Scripture says; *"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."* The Word of God plainly declares; *"Come let us reason together. Though your sins be as scarlet I'll make them as white as snow. Though they be red as crimson I'll make them as white as wool."*

The Scripture says, out of the mouth of our Lord; *"Come unto me all ye who labor and are heavy laden and I'll give you rest."*

Christ receiveth sinful men but not on their terms but on His terms. And I see that in the Word of God. There is a matchless dignity in the operation of His grace and it's seen in God's Word. It's seen in these cases of people who did come to Him while He was here on this earth.

Now let me give you a few:

First of all: Our Lord received some people and some He rejected! I read about it right here. *"Many believed on Him but He did not commit himself to them."* He knew what was in them. He knew what was in man. He needed not that anyone should tell Him what their motive was; He knew their motive. He knew it before they ever spoke and therefore He rejected them. He didn't commit Himself to them.

Now our Lord rejected those who approached Him on the wrong grounds. Now you stay with me now and listen carefully. Our Lord rejected and refused to receive those who came to Him on the wrong grounds.

Now let me give you some examples of those:

## THE REJECTING CHRIST

JOHN 2:23-25 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

First of all in **John chapter 3 verses 1-6**; there was a man named Nicodemus who came to Christ on the grounds of his religion. Nicodemus was a ruler of the Jews. Nicodemus was a Pharisee. Nicodemus was a student of the Scriptures.

Nicodemus was an Orthodox theologian. And Nicodemus thought that he would be accepted by God on the grounds of his religion, on the grounds of his orthodoxy. But our Lord plainly declares unto him; “Nicodemus; a man is not saved because he’s a preacher.

A man’s not redeemed because he’s religious. A man’s not saved because he’s a student of the Scriptures. A man’s not accepted by God because he’s orthodox.” *“He must be born again. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, (whether it’s religious flesh, or otherwise; it’s still flesh) marvel not that I say unto thee you must be born again.”*

Here was a deeply religious orthodox, fundamental, Pharisee, who came to our Lord and expected to be accepted and received on the grounds of his religion and his orthodoxy. And Christ our Lord shut him up to this, the new birth, regeneration, the work of the Holy Spirit, in bringing a sinner to the real life of God.

And then over in **Mark chapter 10 verses 17-22**; there was a young man who came to Christ. This young man approached our Lord on the grounds of his morality. He came to the Master and he said, “*Good Master*” and our Lord just stopped him right there.

He said, “*Why are you calling me good? If I’m not God I’m not good. There’s none good but God.*” That’s the first thing the Lord was saying to him. He came there believing he was a good man. He came there believing he was a moral man. He came there believing that he could be accepted by God on the basis of his morality.

He said, “*What good thing can I do to inherit eternal life?*” And Christ, first of all, shuts him up to the fact “*There’s none good, no not one. There’s none that seeketh after God. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. All we like sheep have gone astray. We’ve turned everyone to his own way.*” Now that’s the condition of sinners.

But He went on; he said, “*Good Master; what must I do to inherit eternal life?*” And our Lord was going to further show him his guilt, his sin. He said, “*Keep the Commandments, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not bear false witnesses.*”

“Oh he said I’ve kept all these from the time I was a boy. From my youth up; I’ve obeyed all these laws, all these Commandments.” And our Master shuts his mouth; He said, “*Alright; go sell what you have and give it to the poor and take up your cross and follow me.*”

And the young man was sad because he had great possessions. But the Lord wasn’t condemning his possessions; he was condemning his self-righteousness and his greed. He was showing the young man that he didn’t love his neighbor as himself.

## THE REJECTING CHRIST

JOHN 2:23-25 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

And the whole law is based on these two; *“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself.”* And this young man, when the Lord showed him his sin and showed him his guilt; he was not willing to come on those terms; he wanted to come on the grounds of his morality and Christ rejected him.

That’s the rejecting Christ. He rejects those who come to Him on the basis of religion or on the grounds of morality.

Now here’s another group of people: In **John 8:39**, these people came to Him and they said, “Now we have Abraham as our father. We have Moses and the prophets. You see, we are Jews and we have this religious heritage.”

These people approached Him on the grounds of their denominational heritage. Why they said, “We are Jews. We are Abraham’s seed. Why we have Moses and the prophets.” And they were the descendants of Abraham. They were telling the truth.

These people had a rich, religious, background. These people had in their background the prophets; they had Moses, Abraham, David, Jacob, Isaac, and all these great men. But our denominational heritage will never give us an entrance into the presence of almighty God.

We’re not accepted because of what we are or what we do or who we sprang from; it’s on the basis of what Christ has done for us. Paul said, “They’re not of the circumcision who have the flesh cutting; they’re of the circumcision who have the heart cutting.” That is an operation of grace on the heart.

And then in **Luke chapter 9**; here was another young man that came to the Lord. And this young man was willing to follow Christ someday. He said, “Good master; I’ll follow you. I intend to follow you but not now. You see, my father lives at home and he’s an old man. And it’s my responsibility to take care of my father. Now I’m going to follow you someday Lord but not now. Suffer me first to go home and wait till my father dies and after my father dies I’ll follow you.”

The Lord Jesus Christ looked at him and said, *“Let the dead bury their dead. You come right now and take up your cross and follow me.”* This young man had other things that were more important to him and so he would not come to Christ right then.

There are people today who are willing someday to be saved. But like this young man they are rejected because they come to the Lord on the wrong grounds, with the ground of promise, promise; “I promise someday I’m going to do this. I promise someday I’m going to do that.”

## THE REJECTING CHRIST

JOHN 2:23-25 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

Let me tell you something; the church today does what their Master would never do, they make an effort to make room in the church for anybody on any terms. You know that's so and I know that's so.

But the Master of the house, the Master of the church, rejected men on these false terms of religion, of morality, of denominational heritage, and of someday promises. Christ turned them away. That's the rejecting Christ. He refused those who came to Him on the wrong ground.

Secondly: You stay with me and listen carefully; our Lord rejected those who would exploit Him.

Now I'm going to say something here that may hurt your feelings but I want you to listen to me; it's the truth. How many preachers have you heard promise people that God will bless them materially if they tithe?

How many preachers have you heard from the pulpit, the television, the radio and promise people "Now; if you'll send one-tenth of your income, if you'll send an offering, if you'll send a tithe, God will bless you materially and God will bless you physically?"

My dear friends let me tell you something; true believers will give whether they prosper or whether they do not prosper. They're not believing on Christ, they're not receiving Christ, they're not professing Christ, they're not confessing Christ on the basis of what He'll do for them physically or materially; "*They believe on Him though He slay them,*" as Job said.

They believe on Him though they live in poverty. They believe on Him though they have nothing of this world's good. And you're not going to drive a bargain with God almighty. You're not going to say, "Lord now I'll do this if you do this."

Right here I'm going to give you some examples of some people who tried that and Christ rejected them; He rebuked them.

How many preachers have you heard promise people that God will give them good health and healing in return for service, in return for faith? My friends, this is just not so, it's just not so.

Job said as he sat on the ash heap broken out with boils all over, all of his wealth gone, his family dead, everything swept away, his friends turned against him, and he cried out, "*Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.*"

You know our Lord received a message one day. He came from the little town of Bethany. There was a man down there whom He loved named Lazarus whose sisters were Mary and Martha. A messenger came to Him one day and said, "*Him whom thou lovest is sick.*"

## THE REJECTING CHRIST

JOHN 2:23-25 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

That might be said of you too and of me someday. The Lord loves you in Christ. And God loves you like He loved Lazarus but that won't keep you from getting sick.

I'm telling you this; if you'll go back and look over church history; David Brainerd, one of the greatest missionaries this American Continent has ever listened to, died when he was 29 years old of TB. And he had it for years before he ever died.

He used to ride for miles up in Pennsylvania and New York on a horse until he'd nearly pass out and spit up blood preaching to those Indians. He was a sick man but God loved him.

Robert Murray M'Cheyne, one of Scotland's greatest preachers died when he was 30 years old. The man who wrote Rock of Ages, Augustus Toplady, died when he was only 35 years of age. Charles Spurgeon, the greatest preacher London ever produced; he preached to more people than any preacher London ever produced, died when he was 58 years of age and he was sick for 30 years of his life. He spent months out of his pulpit because of illness. And so, for a preacher to stand and tell you, "If you believe on Christ I guarantee you that God will give you good health and healing," he's not telling you the truth.

You're not going to exploit the Lord. He'll reject you coming to Him on those terms. Now Lord if you'll heal me I'll serve you. And Lord if you'll bless me financially I'll tithe. And Lord if you'll save me I'll serve you and so-forth.

In **Luke chapter 10** there was a woman who came to Christ; her name was Martha. Christ loved her. But she came there one day. Her sister Mary was sitting at Christ's feet. And she said, "Lord, I'm here in the kitchen fixing supper, washing dishes, doing all these things, serving you and the disciples and Mary sits there at your feet and does nothing. Make her get up and come help me."

This woman was trying to get Christ to settle her domestic affairs. And do you know what He did? He rebuked her. He said, "*Martha, Martha, you're cumbered about with much care; Mary's chosen the good thing. You're heading in the wrong direction Mary. This is the best thing, to sit at my feet and listen to me. A man's life is more than the meat and drink and bread.*"

And then in **Luke chapter 12** there was a man who came to Christ and said, "Master; my father died and left a lot of money and my brother's got it all, my older brother. I want you to settle these economic problems for me. And I want you to make my brother share the inheritance with me."

And Christ rebuked him. This man was exploiting the Master. He wanted Christ to settle his domestic affairs. And Christ said, "*A man's life consisteth more in the things that he possesses.*"

## THE REJECTING CHRIST

JOHN 2:23-25 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

And then in **John chapter 8** these religious Pharisees; they were exploiting Christ. They wanted Him to settle their moral questions and their moral rules of conduct for other people. And they brought Him a woman found in adultery.

They said, “Lord we found her in the very act of adultery. “ And they cast her at His feet and they said, “Now the Law of Moses says stone her. What do you say? Let’s have a discipline committee meeting here and decide what we’re going to do with this woman.” Do you know who got rebuked? It wasn’t the woman. It was the folks that had brought her to Him. Our Lord will not be exploited.

And then in **Luke chapter 20** another group tried to get Him to settle political issues. They came to Him and they said, “Now; do you think a Christian ought to pay taxes? Do you think it’s lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar?”

And our Lord Jesus Christ refused to be exploited. He said, “*Let me see a penny.*” They showed Him a penny. He said, “*Whose picture’s on there?*” They said, “*Caesar.*” He gave it back to them and said, “*You pay Caesar what he’s due and you pay God what He’s due.*”

People who try to exploit the Lord; I saw many of them in the Navy during the war (WWII), Marines, Army soldiers and Navy men, who tried to drive a bargain with God. “Now God, if you’ll get me out of this foxhole I’ll serve you. If you’ll get me back home safely with my family I’ll serve you. Lord, if you’ll do this, if you’ll do that.” Christ will not be exploited. You come to Him empty handed or you don’t come at all.

And then I’ll tell you something else here in **John chapter 2**. These people followed Him because of outward miracles. Now I’m going to hit where we’re living right now. Ninety percent of the religious hucksters in the nation today are making a tremendous amount of money playing on this thing right here, “The miracle of healing.”

Now these people here in **John chapter 2**; it says, “*They believed on Him because of the miracles which He did.*” They saw the blind see and the lame walk. We are not seeing that. I don’t see any blind men receiving sight.

I don’t see any folks without any arms growing new ones. I don’t see folks who hadn’t walked from their infancy walking. I don’t see the dead raised. What they’re doing is “mind over matter,” healing diseases that can’t be seen or can be verified.

But these people saw some real miracles. Christ healed the sick. Christ made the lame to walk. Christ made the blind to see. Christ raised the dead. And when they saw these miracles they believed on Him.

But listen to the next verse; “*He did not commit himself to them.*” He knew that these people were only following Him because of these miracles. And when the miracles stopped, they had stopped.



## THE REJECTING CHRIST

JOHN 2:23-25 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

And their faith was not heart-faith; it was a false interest created by these so-called signs that they had seen. And you find me a man whose faith in Christ is based on a miracle of healing and I'll find you a man that does not know the Lord.

Our faith is based on His sacrifice and His blood and His Word. And if He never shows a sign and if He never works a miracle; we still believe on Him.

And then I'll tell you something else; there were some folks in **John 6**; and the Lord said, "*You follow me because you ate of the loaves and were filled.*" These people were following Him because they got their stomachs full.

"Why, if we have this man as our King, we won't have any more depressions, we won't have any hospitals, we won't have any cemeteries. Let's make Him king." And Christ refused them. He rebuked them and He rejected them.

Now, in the next two or three minutes I want to show you those whom He received. He rejected those who came to Him on the wrong grounds, the grounds of religion, morality, the grounds of denominational heritage and the ground of promises.

He rejected those who would exploit Him and drive a bargain with Him. He rejected those who followed Him because they wanted to see some healing. They wanted to see some miracles and some signs. And they wanted some food from His hand.

Who did He receive? In **Luke chapter 18** there was a Publican in the temple who would not so much lift his eyes to heaven but he smote on his breast and he said, "*Lord be merciful to me a sinner.*"

All whom He received have two things in common; they recognize their need, their sinner hood, their guilt, and they recognize His Lordship; "*Lord be merciful to me.*" Peter, when he was sinking beneath the waves, cried, "*Lord; save me or I perish.*"

In **Matthew chapter 8** a leper came and fell at His feet and worshipped Him and said; "*Lord if you will, you can make me clean,*" *the Lordship of Christ to a needy sinner.* The Syrophoenician woman came and fell at His feet and cried;, "*Lord have mercy on me, Lord, have mercy on me.*"

The thief on the cross; there were two thieves and both of them cast the same in his teeth. But finally one of them stopped and he said to the other, "Don't you fear God; (he recognized the Lordship of Christ) seeing you are in the same condemnation, and we indeed justly?"

He recognized his condition, his condemnation, and he recognized he deserved it. And he turned to the Master and he said; "*Lord, you're not going to stay dead. You're coming into a kingdom. Lord; remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.*" And the Master said, "*Today, thou shalt be with me in Paradise.*"

## THE REJECTING CHRIST

JOHN 2:23-25 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

The Publican; *“He went home justified.”* The Syrophenician woman went home blessed. The leper went home healed. The thief on the cross went to Paradise with the Lord. But these were empty handed sinners. These were beggars. These were broken sinners. These were guilty sinners. Christ received them. *“Christ receiveth sinful men.”* That’s what the Scripture says.

*“Christ died for the ungodly.”* Paul said, *“This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation; Christ came into the world to save sinners.”* And if you come to Him on the grounds of your religion, your fundamental orthodoxy, your morality, looking for signs and miracles and wonders; you’ll be turned away.

How can you come so as to be received? Come as a needy sinner and recognize His Lordship and believe on Him!