

September 9, 2012

WHO WILL NOT COME TO CHRIST?

John 5:31-44

**Today** we will be considering three things: **WHO** in Christ's generation and **WHO** in every generation will not come to Christ. **Then**, we will look at two reasons **WHY** these sinners will not come.

Look at John 5: 39-40 "**Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.**

**40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."**

**Last** time we considered this context, we looked at **WHO** sinners will not come to. **That** is a **VITAL** point. **Sinners** will not by nature come to the Christ testified of in the scriptures. The scriptures testify of Christ. **But**, sinners will not come to Him. **Explain** (review the **WHO**).

**Today** we are considering those **WHO** will not come to Christ. **To NOT** come to Christ is to be lost. **Am I** among those who **HAVE** come to the Christ testified of in the scriptures? Or, am I among those who will not come? **I need** to know.

**In this** context Christ is addressing the scribes and Pharisees of His day. **These** are those who persecuted Christ and sought to kill Him because He healed a man on the Sabbath and, further, because Christ said that God was His Father, making himself equal with God. **These** are the religious leaders of Christ's day. **They** are those the people looked to for interpretation and guidance in spiritual matters. **But**, Christ said to them, "Ye will not come to me."

**FIRST**, who are **THESE** sinners who will **NOT** come to Christ? **They** are those who are searching the scriptures. **They** are those who think that they have found eternal life **IN THEM** (i.e. in the scriptures they are searching).

**Look** back at John 5: 39a "**Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life:**"

**Israel** was the chosen nation of God. **They** were given many things that the Gentiles (the **OTHER** nations) were **NOT** given. **They** were given deliverance from bondage. **They** were given a land of their own. **They** were given the Law to show them their sinfulness, God's (inflexible) Standard, and salvation by the blood of a Substitute. **But**, Israel made a **GRAVE** (a serious) error. **It is** a deadly error to those who continue in it.

**They** õthoughtö that God gave them the Law of Moses as a means for them to gain and maintain their acceptance before God. **The** law was NEVER intended as a MEANS of acceptance with God. **The** law was a õschoolmaster unto Christö.

**In** Luke 18 Christ spoke a parable to these scribes and Pharisees which illustrates this õperversionö of the Law which they held.

**Look** at Luke 18: 9-12 “**And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:**

**10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.**

**11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.**

**12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.”**

**You** can see what the Pharisee gained his confidence from. **It was** the õthingsö he thanked God for enabling HIM to do. **These** õthingsö made up his righteousness before God. **Just** like Cain before him, this Pharisee saw no need for a blood sacrifice and brought the õworksö of HIS hands. **And**, just like Cain, he expected God to accept him based on the õworksö of his hands. **And**, just like Cain was rejected, this Pharisee went away õunjustifiedö.

**Zealous**, religious men of EVERY generation continue to make the same error with the õscripturesö that Israel made with the Law of Moses. **They** (wrongly) see the scriptures commanding sinners to DO (something) in order to õbe savedö.

**Christ** is speaking to the scribes and Pharisees before Him. **They** did INDEED õsearch the scripturesö. He is speaking to THOSE (particular) men. **But**, He is also speaking to those in EVERY generation like them. **EVERY** generation finds men õsearching the scripturesö. EVERY generation finds men THINKING they have found eternal life IN THE SCRIPTURES.

**Like** the scribes and Pharisees of Christø day, these men are diligent. **These** men are dedicated. **These** men are enthusiastic in studying, and learning, and interpreting the scriptures. **But!** What is their motive? **They** THINK that those scriptures have shown them the õwayö to eternal life.

**They** have found a command. **They** have found something that õsets them apartö. **They** have found something for sinners to do to õget savedö. **They** have found some õpathö for sinners to follow to õget to heavenö. **They** õseeö in the scriptures some õway of lifeö that will enable sinners to avoid hell. **And**, they SEARCH the scriptures looking for ways to support what they THINK they have found.

**These** are those who preach and believe that Christ died for you (whoever you are). **And, IF YOU** will just \_\_\_\_\_, God will save you and give you eternal life. **Those** who believe this way give no SAVING VALUE to Christ's death ITSELF. **His** death is ineffectual unless/until sinners do THEIR part. **Multitudes** that Christ died for will perish who don't do THEIR part.

The scripture says that "Christ put away sin by the sacrifice of himself". It says "by His stripes we are healed" (i.e. by His death). **If you** add ANYTHING to Christ's death in order for sinners to be saved, you've moved from salvation by grace to salvation by WORKS.

**What** is the problem with all this? **Sinners** who think this way are NOT looking to Christ and Him crucified ALONE. **THEIR** searching, THEIR study, THEIR zeal, THEIR obedience are what they are looking to. **Those** are the things they are finding confidence in.

**They** are identified in Matthew 7: 21. "**Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord...**"

**These** are those sinners in EVERY generation, (like the scribes and Pharisees of Christ's generation), "who will NOT come to Christ".

**If you** "search the scriptures" and think you have eternal life IN THEM, you have ignored man's greatest problem and failed to see GOD'S solution (the ONLY solution) to that problem.

**What** is man's greatest problem? **It** is sin! **And**, it is sin NOT just in our OBVIOUS transgressions, but sin in our BEST attempts at obedience. **One** of the FIRST things the Holy Spirit "convinces" a sinner of when He comes to them in regeneration is "sin". "**And, when He is come He will convince the world of sin.**" I.e. He will "convince" those He comes to that outside Christ all that I am is sin and all that I do is sin.

**Man's** problem is sin. But, not just sin (in general), but it is what sin has "earned"? **Rom 6: 23.** "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ" "God MUST and He SHALL punish sin with eternal death.

**EITHER**, I have ALREADY been punished with the eternal death I deserve in the Person of Christ my Substitute. **OR**, I am facing the eternal wrath of God in my own person. **I.e.** Man DOES have a problem. **But**, it is a problem that he CANNOT solve or overcome by anything he does or is enabled to do.

**What** is GOD'S solution to the "sin" problem? **It** is Christ and Him crucified ALONE. **Paul** said, "**I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified**" (1 Cor. 2: 2). **WHY?** Because Christ crucified is God's ONLY solution to sin.

**Eternal** life is not ðin the scripturesö. **The** scriptures are NOT commanding sinners to DO (something) in order to ðget themselves savedö. **Eternal** life is IN the One the scriptures testify of.

**John 14:6 (“I am the way....”). John 1:1 (“In the beginning was the Wordí ; vs 5 “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.”).**

**Look at 1 John 5: 11-12 “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.**

**12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.**

**Eternal** life is not ðin the scripturesö. **It is** in the Christ revealed by the scriptures.

**Just** like the Law of Moses was not a MEANS for Israel to find favor with God, neither are the scriptures. **The** scriptures do NOT command sinners to DO anything (not even believe) in order to gain or maintain any measure of acceptance with God. **Lost**, zealous, religious men in EVERY generation see the scriptures that way. **But** they are not written toward that end. **The** scriptures are written to point sinners to Christ and eternal life in Him ALONE.

**Look at John 20: 30-31 “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:**

**31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”**

**WHO** are those in every generation ðwho will not come to Christö? **They** are those who have ðsearched the scripturesö. **They** are those who THINK they have found eternal life in THEIR doing, (THEIR obedience), and NOT in Christ crucified ALONE. **They** are those who do not NEED the Christ testified of in the scriptures, because they THINK they have found eternal life elsewhere (i.e. without any knowledge of Him). And, just in case you are not covered.

**They** are ALL the (fallen) sons and daughters of Adam. **That’s** right! **NONE** of us will come to Christ by nature. **NONE** will come if left to ourselves. **By** nature we are ALL ðalienated from Godö. **We** are ðenemies of Godö. **We** are ðworkers of evilö.

**Look at Colossians 1: 20-22 “And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.**

**21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled**

**22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight:”**

**ALL** are ignorant of God's Righteousness. **And**, therefore, (according to Romans 10), **ALL** are going about to establish a righteousness of our own. **That** is the alienation, enmity and wicked works this verse is talking about.

**The Only** sinners who will come to Christ are those that are made willing.

**Look** at Psalm 110: 1-3a **"The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.**

**2 The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.**

**3 Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power..."**

**What** do sinners have to be made willing to do? Sinners have to be made willing to come to a Savior who has done EVERYTHING required for a Righteous Judge to pronounce the sinners He died for NOT guilty, NOT chargeable with sin, NOT facing His wrath, but justified (righteous) in His sight. **It is** amazing that **NONE** will come to THAT Savior. **You'd** think we would come running.

**The** reason **NONE** will come (on their own); (i.e. **NONE** will come without being MADE willing): **Because** to come to Christ, (to rest your whole salvation in Christ), you must relinquish every contribution you think you have made toward your salvation and acceptance with God. **You** must see the wickedness and evil of such efforts and repent. **You MUST** come by Christ ALONE. **NONE** will come unless God Makes them willing.

**That** is WHO will not come to Christ. **NONE** who continue to search the scriptures and think they have found eternal life IN THEM will come. **And**, **NONE** whom God does not make willing will come. **I know** this is true of **ALL** (without exception) because of the **FIRST** reason given here **WHY** sinners will not come to Christ.

**The FIRST** reason sinners go on searching the scriptures; the **FIRST** reason sinners go on thinking they have found eternal life IN THEM; the **FIRST** reason sinners will not come to Christ is because they do not have His word abiding in them.

**Look** at John 5: 37-38 **"And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.**

**38 And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not."**

**You don't** have God's Word **"abiding in you"**. **How** can you tell? **Because** you are not believing the One God has sent.

**This** does not mean you are not reading the word. **You** might have read the Word from cover to cover. **It does** not mean you are not studying the word. **You** might get up 2 hours early every day to study. **It does** not mean you are not memorizing the Word. **You** might be able to quote many scriptures (even be a walking bible). **It doesn't** even mean you are not preaching the word. **Like** the scribes and Pharisees Christ is addressing here, you might have dedicated your life to ðsearching the scripturesö and preaching the Word.

**But**, the Word is not ðabiding inö you unless you are being GUIDED by the scriptures. **The** Word is not ðabiding inö you unless you are JUDGING by the scriptures you are searching. **The** Word is not ðabiding inö you unless you have ðcome toö the One the Father has sent; **unless** you have ðcome toö the One IDENTIFIED and DISTINGUISHED in the Gospel; **unless** you have ðcome toö the Savior the scriptures testify of.

**NOT** to believe the One (the Son) the Father sent is **NOT** to believe the ONE (just God and Savior) who sent Him. **But**, here is a problem. **NONE** of us by nature know either the Father or the Son He sent.

**Look** at Matthew 11: 27 “**All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.**”

**How** can you know when you have ðcome toö THAT Savior? **How** can you know when you are worshipping the Father who sent Him? **How** can you know when the Word of God is ðabiding in youö?

**You** know when you ðfearö God. **You** know when you are given a ðreverenceö for God's redemptive glory. **You** know when you VALUE ðthe righteousness of Godö (which the Gospel ALWAYS reveals). **What** is ðthe righteousness of Godö?

**The** most URGENT, the most VITAL, the most NECESSARY (single) piece of information a sinner is in need of hearing is God's testimony of Christ. **It is** the Gospel which declares Christ and ðthe righteousness of Godö worked out in Christ's life and death. **It is** under the Gospel that the Spirit imparts life and gives faith and repentance. **It is** under the Gospel that God shines the light on His redemptive glory.

**Look** at II Cor 4:6 “**For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.**”

**THE** authority that reveals the (true) Savior of sinners is the Gospel. **It** does not matter what **MEN** say (even **MEN** we respect and admire in many ways). **What** does the Gospel say? **What** does God's Word say about Him (whom God has sent)?

**The** Gospel knows nothing about a (potential) savior. **It knows** nothing about a (savior) who has ever (or will ever) **TRY** to save someone but fail. **It knows** nothing of a Savior who will not bring to final glory **EVERY** sinner He died for. **The** Gospel knows nothing of a (salvation) which sinners obtain by **THEIR** doing. **We** have God's Word (abiding) **IN US** when we let God's Word settle the matter, (when God's Gospel overrules even what we previously believed).

**Until** a sinner hears the Gospel, whatever (idea) of Christ he has falls short of the (true) Christ. **Until** a sinner hears the Gospel, whatever (notion) of eternal life he **THINKS** he has, it falls short of the eternal life that is in Christ **ALONE**.

**The** Word of God is (abiding) in those whose **FANTASY** of (already) having eternal life has been overcome (driven out) by the **REALITY** of **THAT** salvation found in Christ's finished work **ALONE** based on His imputed righteousness **ALONE**.

**These** are those who have been (delivered) to (that doctrine) (that Gospel) which declares Christ and reveals God to be just and the justifier of the ungodly by the finished work of Christ **ALONE**.

**Look** at Romans 6: 17-18 "**But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.**  
**18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."**

**The** words underlined should read (to which you were delivered). **This** verse is talking about something much more dramatic than the Gospel being (delivered) to a sinner. **It is** talking about the miracle of regeneration and one of the main evidences of it.

**It is** talking about a sinner being (delivered) to the Gospel. **THIS** is when the Spirit of God enables a sinner to believe the Gospel. **THIS** is when a sinner **BEGINS** to value the righteousness Christ established as the **ONLY** way God can be doing right (just) in showing mercy to sinners.

**THIS** is when a sinner is **DELIVERED** from (searching the scriptures) and thinking he has found eternal life **IN THEM**. **That** is what **ALL** of us do by nature. **We** serve sin (the sin that deceives us). **Like** the Pharisees, we **ALL** (by nature) think that we have eternal life because of (something) God has enabled **US** to do.

**But**, God ðeliversö His people from such thinking. He ðelivers them to the Gospel. **Regenerate** sinners ðWERE the servants of sinö. **But**, we are ðfreedö (liberated) from that bondage. **We** are made the ðservants of righteousnessö.

**Recognizing** and admitting what we WERE and what we now ARE in Christ is one of the MAIN evidences that we are saved. **It is** one of the MAIN evidences that we are resting our ENTIRE salvation in Christ ALONE. **And**, ðcoming to Himö is THE evidence that the Word of God is ðabiding in usö.

**The FIRST** reason sinners will go on ðsearching the scripturesö and thinking that they have eternal life IN THEM; the FIRST reason sinners ðwill not come to Christö: **The** Word of God is not ðabiding inö them. **The** Word of God is not their GUIDE. **The** Righteousness of God revealed in the Gospel is not their STANDARD. **Christ's** Righteousness imputed in not ALL their salvation.

**The SECOND** reason sinners will not come to Christ is because ðthe love of Godö is not in them.

**Look** at John 5: 41-43 **“I receive not honour from men.**

**42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.**

**43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.**

**44 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?”**

**Christ** came in the ðnameö of a Just God and Savior. **He** came under the requirements of the God who must DO RIGHT when He shows mercy to ungodly sinners. **He** was made ðunder HIS lawö. **He** came under the demands of HIS Justice.

**John** is not speaking here about a sinner's love FOR God. **He is** speaking about God's love FOR sinners. **He is** speaking about God's (eternal, unchangeable) love for EVERY object of that love. **You** will not come to the Christ testified of in the scriptures because THAT love (the love God has for His people) is NOT ðin youö.

**No** sinner will come to Christ who does not see God's love providing what His Law and Justice demand. **No** sinner will come to Christ who has not seen God's love providing a Savior, (a TRUE Savior), One who by His obedience unto death ALONE has met EVERY condition and fulfilled EVERY requirement to bring EVERY object of His love to final glory.



It is THAT love which God made known in the giving of His Son (NOT as a ðpotentialö Savior), but as the Savior who has (already) saved His people from their sins.

Look at 1 John 4: 9-10 “**In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.**

**10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”**

It is THAT love which the Holy Spirit ðsheds abroadö in the heart of every regenerate sinner.

Look at Romans 5: 5 “**And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”**

It is THAT love that motivates the regenerate sinner to love and obedience.

Look at II Cor 5: 14-15 “**For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:**

**15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.”**

And, it is THAT love from which its objects can NEVER be separated.

Look at Romans 8: 35a; 38-39 “**Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?**

**38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,**

**39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

**WHO** will not come to Christ? **NONE** by nature will come: **Because** ALL by nature are (like the Pharisees) ðsearching the scripturesö and thinking we have eternal life IN THEM. **NONE** by nature will come because the Gospel is not our STANDARD of judgment. **NONE** by nature will come because the ðlove of Godö is not ðin usö.

**But** God! **God** makes His people ðwilling in the day of His powerö. **He** makes them ðwillingö to see the ðevilö of ðsearching the scripturesö and thinking they have eternal life IN THEM. **He** makes them ðwillingö to believe the Gospel; **worship** Him as the God who justifies the ungodly; **to submit** to Christ’s Righteousness imputed for ALL of salvation.

By Mark Pannell

