

Negative Responses to Jesus, Part 4: Rejection

Matthew 12:1-21

Halifax: 24 July 2005

Today we come to our fourth sermon from Matt 11 & 12 on negative responses to Jesus.

- So far we have seen “**doubt**,” “**frivolous criticism**,” and “**indifference**,”
 - which were presented to us in chapter 11.
- Today as we begin chapter 12, we find the negative response of “**rejection**.”
 - I remind you that we are not just looking at these responses as a historical study!
 - The gospels are not designed as mere history!
 - They are designed to instruct every generation since the time of Christ about how we ought to deal with Christ.
 - And so, as with the responses in chapter 11,
 - I again want to speak to you about **your** relationship with Christ when we explore this passage about the negative responses He received from His people when He was here.
- And so with that in view, I begin by urging you to learn from this passage to:

I. Beware of cultivating a piety that rejects Christ (and His way).

A. This is something that has been done in every age, and ours is no different!

1. Every society in every age has a body of accepted traditions and ideas about good and evil.
 - a. Ever since Adam and Eve ate of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil,
 - there has been no little confusion in the world about what is good and what is evil.
 - By eating the forbidden fruit, mankind severed his connection with God and the wisdom that comes from Him,
 - so ever since we have had tremendous difficulty in the world sorting out right from wrong.
 - The harmony of the whole world is disrupted because of sin.
 - b. Just to give you an example,
 - The prevailing opinion in our society is that spanking a child is evil...
 - We have come to this notion in the aftermath of nasty wars and in some cases, abusive parents.
 - Much more could be said about how this opinion originated, but however it happened, we believe spanking a child is evil.

- But we find a very different notion of good and evil among the Spartans.
 - The Spartans were of the opinion that softness and pettiness in boys is a much greater evil than spanking—
 - so much greater that they would whip their boys (even when they had done no wrong) just to toughen them up...
 - They would whip them until they cried out (which everyone thought was a very shameful thing to do),
 - and so avoid the shame, the boys would bear the affliction sometimes to the point of death.

c. Now in this you can see our confusion...

- We both think we are right...
 - There is no question in any of our minds that what the Spartans did was evil. There is no debate...
 - But if they were to hear about our squeamishness to spank a child, even when he has done evil,
 - they would be just as sure that we were wrong... no debate.
- This is where we need God's judgement...
 - Without it, we go wrong about good and evil...
 - His word clearly teaches that both cultures are wrong.
 - On the one hand, children are not to be abused...
 - Yet at the same time, they are to be chastened with a rod to bring them to repentance...
 - Every age is able to look back on previous ages in judgement...
 - But we are in every age blind to our own faults.

2. And though I might not want to admit it,

- we find this same kind of confusion in the church throughout the ages...
 - a. For example, you have one group that forces people to be baptised under the threat of the sword...
 - another that tries to entice them to turn to Christ by redefining God's truth to suit their tastes...
 - whether by bringing in goddess worship (introducing prayers to the Virgin Mary) because the people are more comfortable with that...

- or by denying the truth about God's wrath and judgement because so many people are turned off by that in our day.
- b. Church history is littered with sad examples of confusion from one generation to another...and from one denomination to another...
- 1) And the great danger in all this is that these traditions and ways of thinking grow up very gradually so that we hardly realise it...
 - They grow up in such a way that we do not even question their validity...
 - They are just assumed to be true...
 - They fall into the "Everybody knows..." category.
 - They become "givens" that we think need no debate...
 - That is the great danger...
 - There is also a great evil...
 - 2) The great evil is that these unbiblical traditions and ways of thinking cause us to reject Christ when He is revealed to us!
 - When we find that He does not fit all our accepted ideas and practices, it causes us to reject Him as evil...
 - "What, Jesus does not accept women in the office of elder?"
 - "What, Jesus does not accept prayers to the saints?"
 - That is what happened to the Pharisees and most of the other Jews when Jesus actually appeared in the world...
 - Christ clashed with their ideas of what was acceptable.
 - That is why they rejected Him and sent Him to the cross.
 - 3) Now of course, the crucifixion only happened once in history because Jesus only came once.
 - a) But I would submit to you that if He had come at any other time,
 - most of the covenant people would reject Him just like they did them...
 - Not all of them would, by the majority would be offended because they would clash with Him.
 - b) Jesus actually explained that His rejection when He was here was nothing new...
 - It was the same rejection that all His prophets had faced when they spoke to the covenant people in the years before He came.

- Now of course,
 - after the prophet of one generation was dead and gone,
 - everybody in the next generation claimed to follow that old prophet even while they were rejecting whatever prophet among them, confronting them with their own sins.
 - That is the way it has always was...
- c) And that is the way it continues to this day among those who claim to follow Jesus.
- The great majority reject those who teach His truth and live in His way in their own day,
 - all the while vehemently claiming that they are following Him!
 - Whether they see Him as Jesus the freedom fighter with an AK-47 in His hand...
 - or as Jesus the new age guru who knows nothing of judgement.
 - They reject the real Jesus.

TRANS> And so you see what I am warning you about!

- You must be careful about cultivating a piety that, if Jesus should appear, would reject Him as an ungodly and unspiritual man!
- B. You see that this is exactly what we find in the Pharisees as they encountered Jesus according to Matthew 12 about Sabbath observance!
1. Up until the time of the captivity, the Jews people had been very lax about Sabbath keeping...
 - a. And so the prophets raged against them for this...
 - God even sent them into captivity for 70 years to correspond to the number of Sabbath years they had failed to observe (seventy sevens).
 - And while in Babylon, they found that the Babylonians were very zealous about keeping the Sabbath,
 - even to the point of superstition!
 - b. The Jews were greatly affected by all this—both the judgement of God and the example of the Babylonians...
 - And they came forth from the captivity as zealous Sabbath keepers themselves!

- Yet with a rising tendency,
 - as you find confronted by the prophet Malachi,
 - to keep the ceremonies without godly sincerity...
 - An outward service without an inward piety.
- c. This ungodly attitude and practice came to maturity over the years until it became a part of the nation's very conscience...
- For example, during the Maccabean period,
 - the Jews allowed themselves to be slaughtered by their enemies because they refused to defend themselves on the Sabbath Day.
 - This became an admired example—part of the nation's conscience.
 - Extreme Sabbath keeping became the order of the day,
 - and it is this proud piety that confronts Jesus and His disciples in Matthew 12.
2. You see what a clash takes place here!
- a. Jesus' disciples were walking along with Him on the Sabbath Day,
- probably going to worship at the Synagogue,
 - and as the path led them through a field of ripened grain, they reached out to take some to satisfy their hunger.
 - Apparently they were hungry enough to eat raw grain!
- b. But the Pharisees, who were already having problems with Jesus, "happened" to see this...
- Of course the truth is that they were carefully watching Jesus to see if He would violate the Sabbath—
 - that was the way they were keeping God's Day!
 - And so they confront Him with these words (v. 2)
 - "Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful do on the Sabbath."
- 1) It was not that they accused them of stealing their neighbour's grain...
- God's law expressly allowed a hungry pedestrian to take whatever he could eat from a field of ripened grain as he passed through...
 - You will find that permission in Deut 23...
 - but the Pharisees were disturbed because the disciples had violated the traditions that had grown up around keeping the Sabbath.

- In particular, that no more than a lamb's mouthful could be "harvested" on the Sabbath...
 - For them, picking grain was considered reaping...
 - and rubbing it to separate the grain from the chaff was considered threshing.
- 2) There was no prohibition against this in God's word,
- but this was the understood tradition of the day!
 - God's word certainly does prohibit reaping and threshing on the Sabbath Day,
 - But it nowhere forbids a man to satisfy his hunger by picking some grain and separating it for immediate consumption!
- 3) We will look at Jesus' response in a moment,
- but for now I simply want you to see how the Pharisees had allowed a false piety to be cultivated in their mind that caused them to reject Jesus Himself!
- c. A similar confrontation occurs in verse 9-14 when Jesus heals a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath Day...
- 1) The Jew's tradition forbade healing except in the case where the person's life was in danger...
- But in their defence, I should say that they were very generous in this:
 - Treatment was allowed even if just one of two doctors believed the patient's life was in danger!
 - You can see how big-hearted they were!
- 2) But what is so bizarre about their objection is the fact that they were not talking about a physician's treatment...
- this was about divine healing that only God can accomplish!
 - It is not the physician plying his arts and administering his medicines...
 - It is God's power being brought forth to work wonders among His people!
 - These men were so blind that they were declaring an act of God to be a violation of the Sabbath!
 - They might as well have shaken their fist at heaven in a thunder storm on the Sabbath day and accused of God breaking the Sabbath by sending it!

- This shows how blind and foolish a party's accepted traditions of piety can make them!
- They had a piety that caused them to reject the Lord Jesus!

C. Oh how careful you need to be a cultivating such a piety!

1. Even in this very matter of Sabbath observance!

a. The prevailing piety in the churches of Canada today is just the opposite of the Pharisees...

- The prevailing attitude today is that the spiritual person is the one who realises that he is free to do whatever he pleases on the Lord's Day!
- If Jesus were to come to **us** today,
 - He would say nothing different than what those prophets who spoke for Him said to the people in the days before the captivity...
 - when they chided them for breaking the Sabbath!
 - And Jesus would be rejected on that account...
 - just as those who bring that message today are generally rejected.

TRANS> But how can you know what is right?

b. You must test yourself by allowing God's word to speak into your life.

- If you want to know what Jesus thinks, go to the scriptures!
 - It is here that you have His mind sufficiently and infallible revealed!
 - If something you read makes you uneasy about what you think or practice, then you need to look into it further!
- You may well find it to be the case that your ways are not God's ways, nor are your thoughts His thoughts.
 - If that is so, then you need to seek the Lord and repent,
 - You need to renew your mind and reform your life...
 - so that you will think His thoughts and live in His ways!...
 - and the good news is that He will abundantly pardon!

2. But as we are in a reformed church where the Sabbath is observed,

- I would be remiss if I did not warn you about falling into the **same** error as the Pharisees!

a. Sabbath keeping is not difficult until we come to the finer details!

- It is clearly wrong, for example, to paint your house on the Sabbath...
 - or skip church because you wanted to go water skiing and it was raining on Saturday...
 - or to go to the movies because it is the last day the feature will be playing...
 - It is clearly wrong to run down to the office to catch up on some work...
 - or to go out on your farm and harvest the apples before the rain comes.

- b. But it is not so easy to say when it comes to other matters...
 - For example, is it wrong to go out to eat on the Lord's Day?
 - And if so, under what circumstances?
 - What if you are travelling or what if the power goes out at home?
 - What rules should there be regarding children's play on Sunday?
 - What about taking a walk that is not a walk of necessity?
 - These questions become more difficult!
 - And I would submit to you that for the good government of your home it is wise to establish certain boundaries...
 - But be sure that you understand that these boundaries are not God's law,
 - They are personal applications of His law...house rules...
 - Both you and your children need to understand that your house rules are not binding on everyone else...
 - they are for the government of your home, but others will not have exactly the same application.
 - If you do not keep this straight,
 - you stand in danger of establishing rules that would reject the Lord Jesus Himself if He should come into the world and be subjected to them!
 - That is what the Pharisees did!
 - And any piety that would reject the Lord—
 - either by what it allows or by what it forbids—
 - is an unacceptable piety!

- Beware about the kind of piety you cultivate!
 - See that it is a piety that is conformed to God's word and not just to Christian culture or congregational culture or Canadian culture!
 - You must remember that Jesus is the Lord...
 - There are things about which you will be wrong as you go along in your faith and that is okay so long as you are sincere...
 - that is, so long as you are willing to continually submit your thoughts and your ways the scrutiny of the Lord Jesus and learn from Him.
 - He does not require perfection, but teachability!
 - Of course, the principle pertains to a lot more than Sabbath keeping!
 - Everything from wine drinking to how you discipline your children is included!

TRANS> So learn from this passage to beware lest you cultivate a piety that rejects the Lord Jesus.

- That is the first thing to learn.
- Secondly, I would urge you to

II. Learn from this passage how to deal with those who reject our Lord Jesus and His ways by their traditions.

- It is inevitable that if you are following Jesus, you are going to clash with many Christians.
 - You need to learn how respond...

A. I want you see first of all that Jesus does not act as if it doesn't matter!

1. He takes time to answer his accusers carefully—
 - not only for their sake, but also for the sake of His disciples and others who are looking on...
- a. He wants to set the record straight about what is or is not acceptable to God.
 - But sadly, for us, setting the record straight is not the fashionable thing to do!
 - We live in a society that has been disillusioned
 - and so the popular way is to just not care and to be very casual about everything.
 - We are like the people were in the time of the Judges when everyone did what was right in his own eyes!

- In our society, the person who is considered to be the most together is the person who doesn't care.
 - Of course that makes it easy for us to fall into the "I don't care" attitude as well...
- b. But you must do all you can to set forth and uphold the truth of God!
- 1) If you are accused of doing something or not doing something when you are following the Lord,
 - You should defend the truth as you are able...
 - Of course, if you examine what you are doing and find that it is not true to God's word, you must repent.
 - 2) But you need to be careful as to how you go about defending the truth.
 - It is something that requires wisdom according to the circumstances...
 - There are times when it is best to not even answer—as Jesus did not answer at His trial when foolish accusations were thrown at Him.
 - But you should never be indifferent and you must always stand for what is true.
2. Well let us now look at the specific answers that Jesus gives.
- a. Regarding their first challenge about eating grain on the Sabbath...
 - 1) Jesus begins with the example of David.
 - He tells about when David and his men ate the showbread that nobody was supposed to eat except the priests.
 - David did not do this because of high pretensions about himself as the one who was anointed to be the next king...
 - nor did he do it because he didn't care that the bread had been set apart for special use...
 - He did it because there was no other food available and he and his men needed to eat before they went on...
 - It was not that they were about to die of starvation—
 - It was just that they needed something to eat to strengthen them for the journey.
 - 2) To this, Jesus adds a second example—how the priests regularly profane the Sabbath by doing the work of the temple—
 - The Pharisees knew well that on the Sabbath, double sacrifices were offered to the Lord both morning and evening!

- And they knew that offering sacrifices was a labour intensive business!
 - But neither the Pharisees or any of the other Jews believed that the priests were doing wrong because God had ordered it to be done.
 - It was considered a necessary work that negated the ordinary Sabbath rules.
- 3) Jesus then shows that if the Sabbath could be violated with reference to the temple,
- how much more could it be violated in His own service!
 - He is greater than the temple,
 - and if He had allowed His disciples to eat on the Sabbath,
 - it is because it was appropriately necessary.
 - Not a life and death necessity, but necessary enough to warrant it!
 - After all, He is the Lord of the Sabbath—the one who instituted it to start with and who regulates it...
 - And if He has allowed His disciples to pick the grain and rub it out, there is no transgression in it!
 - His judgement is right!
- 4) To this Jesus adds the principle that they had missed with their tight regulations...
- namely, that God desires mercy rather than sacrifice.
 - God is not interested in people starving in order to keep ceremonies!
 - The Sabbath is intended to be a blessing as day set apart for men to worship God...
 - Picking a little grain to strengthen them for the duties of the day is no violation, but rather a help for the observance of the day.
 - These legalists had all their rules,
 - but showed by their opposition that they completely missed the real purpose of the day.

TRANS> That is how Jesus answers their first challenge

b. Now regarding the second challenge about healing on the Sabbath...

- 1) We are told that when the Pharisees asked Jesus if this was lawful, they were looking for a way to accuse Him.

- If He said yes, they would have accused Him of breaking the Sabbath...
 - If He said no, they would have accused Him of refusing to help a man in need.
- 2) But Jesus knows that this particular party that is questioning Him has no problem about rescuing their animals when they fall into a pit on the Sabbath Day.
- Some of the Jews would not allow this,
 - but the men who were accusing Him apparently felt that this was quite a legitimate thing to do on the Sabbath—and indeed it was!
 - I would conjecture that Jesus had even seen one of his accusers doing this!
 - So Jesus points to their practice and then reasons that if it is right to rescue an animal,
 - Is there any question as to whether a man ought to be rescued?
- 3) He concludes with the very obvious point that it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.
- In saying this, He suggests that it would be evil to see a man in need, to have the power to help him, and refuse!
 - Therefore, it was not just allowed, but required to do good when we are able.
 - Caring for people is more important than keeping ceremonies!
 - That is what Jesus is teaching these hard-hearted legalists!

TRANS> So you see how Jesus is very careful to answer them.

- He is not indifferent about the error they were holding and teaching.
- And you should not be indifferent either...
 - You are to do whatever you can according to your place, your opportunity, and your ability, to correct error both in yourself and others.
 - But that is not all we are taught in this passage about dealing with those who have a distorted piety that causes them to reject Jesus.

B. We are also taught by Jesus' example to respond with gentleness.

1. Verse 14 shows how the Pharisees responded to Jesus' answer!
 - a. Did they listen to his scriptural arguments and begin to consider how their traditions had gotten out of line?

- Did they look upon the wonderful work that Jesus performed and realise that this was something that only God could do?
 - And that if God had done it, it must not be wrong?
 - Did they conclude that
 - “Our thoughts are not God’s thoughts, neither are our ways His ways,”
 - and repent?
 - No, not at all!
- b. Instead they became all the more opposed to Jesus!
- 1) Verse 14 says “Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him.”
 - You see how deep their pride was in their own traditions!
 - The question was not if He should be destroyed...
 - it was how they were go about carrying it out!
 - Jesus had done nothing but good,
 - yet they are committed to His destruction...
 - The only “wrong” He had done was to clearly show them that they were wrong!
 - 2) Here you see the mind of a legalist!
 - a) A legalist is trying to justify himself by his own deeds...
 - And so he cannot bear to be wrong about what he believes and does!
 - He does not understand that God is merciful to those who repent.
 - He wants to be accepted on his own terms, on the basis of his own piety and goodness!
 - b) Of course, we have a twist on this today that is a little different but still amounts to the same thing...
 - We are ready to admit that we make lots of mistakes and that nobody is right about everything...
 - But don’t let someone tell us that we need to repent and trust on Jesus to be accepted of God!
 - “God knows our hearts, and surely He will accept us when we are trying to do the best we can!”

- Well, the answer is, no He won't!
 - God is holy and the only way you can be blessed is by trusting in His Son who died for you sins.
- c) The point is, nobody is good enough for God!
- That is what infuriates sinful human beings!
 - That is what makes them want to drive Jesus away—
 - not the Jesus of their own imagination,
 - but the Jesus of the Bible...
 - the Jesus that confronts us with our sin and that died on the cross to take away the sins of all His elect.

TRANS> But look now at how Jesus responds to these murderous rejecters!

2. Verse 15 informs us that He simply withdraws from this place!
- a. He withdraws, but continues His ministry to the multitudes who follow Him.
- Learn from Him that you are not to let detractors—even if they have murderous intent...
 - put you to silence!
 - Jesus will go on teaching and healing just the same as ever...
 - And He will go on healing on the Sabbath!

TRANS> But at the same time, He withdraws to avoid unnecessary conflict with these men.

- b. This is amazing because of what He might have done to them!
- 1) He might easily have done as Elijah did when he called fire down from heaven to consume the captain of fifty that came to take him!
- Jesus had ten thousand legions of angels at His command, and you can be sure that the entire Roman army would have been no match for them!
 - How much less the Pharisees!
- 2) But instead of using all this power, Jesus simply withdraws and leaves them alone!
3. Why does Jesus do this? Why doesn't He crush them and let everyone know He is king?
- a. He doesn't do that because that is not God's plan for Him.

- God's plan for Him at this time is revealed in Isaiah's prophecy in the 42nd chapter!
 - Matthew paraphrases it for us in vs 18-21!

- b. Verse 19 and 20 explain what His agenda is during the days of His humiliation:
 - 1) It begins:
 - "He will not quarrel nor cry out, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets"
 - a) This does not mean that Jesus spoke softly when He addressed the multitudes—
 - We are told in several places that He cried out with a loud voice.
 - We know that he spoke to thousands of people in the open air...
 - b) It means rather that He will not raise His voice to stir up a violent mob or to begin a military campaign against those that oppose Him.
 - He will not take up arms against his enemies.
 - 2) One of the reasons He will not do this is given in verse 20
 - a) It says:
 - v. 20: "A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench until He sends forth justice to victory."
 - Jesus knew that in Israel—even among the Pharisees—there were many who would believe...
 - There were those bruised reeds who had been stung by what He said and were on the verge of repentance...
 - And there were those smoking flaxes—a wick that was hardly burning but had a small spark—
 - and He would not snuff them out!
 - b) As He says in another place, He did not come to bring judgement, but salvation!
 - And it was His purpose now to give His life a ransom for sinners...
 - To willingly, humbly go to the cross and bear all the scoffing of men that He might offer Himself as a sacrifice.
 - And so He refuses to use His power to crush His enemies now!
 - He will not do it before the time lest He crush one of those who were yet to believe in Him!

- This is the same thing that we find in 2 Peter 3 where it says He does not send His judgement now because He is not willing that any of His elect should perish!
 - He is waiting until the last one repents and comes to Him!
 - As He waited in the days of Noah until all were safely aboard the ark,
 - so He waits to bring His judgement upon the world until the last one is brought in...
 - He will not close the door until then.
 - And you see, this was also true of Israel to whom He was ministering in Matthew 12.
 - He did not send judgement upon Jerusalem for rejecting Him until 70 AD.
 - He waited until all had been gathered into the fold.
 - If you look at Isaiah 42, you will see that there seems to be a contradiction...
 - In 42:2, it says that He will not cry out or raise His voice...
 - But then in 42:13, it says, and I quote:
 - “The LORD shall go forth like a might may; He shall stir up His zeal like a man of war, He shall cry out, yes, shout aloud; He shall prevail against His enemies...
 - He goes on to explain:
 - Isa 42:14: “I have held my peace a long time, I been still and restrained myself, now I will cry like a woman in labour.”
- c) Do you see what this is saying?
- The Lord Jesus restrained His wrath against His adversaries because the day of judgement had not yet come!
 - It would come, but it had not come!
 - It was not His desire to judge at this time.
 - He would do that soon enough—
 - He will bring justice (actually the word is judgement) to the Gentiles...

- He will not allow the Jew's rejection of Him to stand but will destroy their city and their temple in order that He might bring His rule to bear upon the Gentiles.
- And when He does, verse 21 tells us that:
 - "In His name the Gentiles will trust."

C. And so the lesson for us here is that we must not strive against our enemies!

1. God has not called us to quarrel with men or to try to use force to bring them to salvation.
 - a. We are not to be indifferent about their salvation—
 - We are to go on in the ways of God even when those ways offend them...
 - And we are to do what we can to refute their errors...
 - b. But we are not to use the sword or any other carnal means to try to force them to convert.
 - Like Jesus, we are to go about in gentleness doing good and teaching truth.
 - We must not let them dampen our zeal in any way, but neither should we allow them to stir up strife from us...
 - God will judge them soon enough...
 - This is the day of salvation and we are to call them to come to our Saviour and find life in Him.
2. Many of the Jews did not approve of Christ using this method!
 - a. They wanted Him to demonstrate war-like power...
 - Sometimes we do too...
 - We want Him to put a stop to all His adversaries...
 - b. But it was not time for that—
 - He will do that soon enough...
 - His work of humiliation had to come first...
 - The cross and then the crown.

TRANS> And so you see from our text that you are to deal gently with those who have cultivated a piety that rejects Christ.

- You are not to crush them, but to win them.
- And now I want you to see in conclusion that though many reject God's Son...

III. Matthew shows us clearly that God the Father fully approves of Him!

- You know how easy it is when a lot of people reject and brother and speak ill of him to let that start to colour the way you look at Him too!
- But you must never let that happen with Jesus!

A. Look at what the Father says about Him in verse 18!

1. First of all, He calls Him, “My servant whom I have chosen!”
 - Out of all God’s people,
 - Jesus Christ is the only one who was chosen out to redeem us!
 - He is God’s servant in the sense that He was given this task to perform for the sinners that the Father has appointed to salvation!
2. Secondly, not only has God chosen Him to be His servant,
 - a. He has also fully approved of Him...
 - Not only does He say He is pleased,
 - He says **He well** pleased!
 - b. The true God examines all the thoughts and ways of men...
 - and He finds that there is not one who does well!
 - None but this one—
 - God is pleased with Him though men are not pleased with Him!
3. Thirdly, you see that God has fully equipped Him for the work of saving us!
 - He says, “I will put My Spirit upon Him...”
 - The Spirit was the oil with which He was anointed to do His work as our prophet, priest, and King.
 - And now He is able to give His Spirit to all who trust in Him to change their hearts so that they might turn from their own thoughts and their own ways...
 - those thoughts and ways that are not God’s thoughts and ways...
 - And be renewed in their minds and reformed in their lives.
 - Yes, you are weak and you find often that your thoughts are not God’s thoughts and your ways are not God’s ways...
 - But look to Jesus!
 - He will give you the Spirit in conjunction with His word to renew your mind and reform your life!
 - He has been given the Spirit without measure!

4. And because Jesus is God's servant, chosen by Him, pleasing to Him, and endowed with His Spirit...
 - It only follows that He will declare justice to the nations!
 - He will bring God's salvation to His elect all over the world!
 - He will bring us under God's gracious rule—restore us to Him again by His gracious work!

TRANS> Yes indeed!

- God has fully accepted Him and absolutely pleased with Him!

B. That should be enough for you—

- If God approves of Him, so should you!
 - Do not be like one of those small-minded Pharisees who would not yield His own foolish ideas to Christ!
- 1. If God the judge of all has accepted him, who are you to reject Him?
 - Put away all your foolish little notions and ideas about what is right and wrong...
 - Put away all your foolish little cavils against Christ...
- 2. Don't let it discourage you that He has so many enemies!
 - The Father approves of what He is doing!
 - He does not crush them now because now is the day of salvation...
 - He waits to judge in order that He might be gracious!
- 3. When You see that God has accepted Him and fully approves of Him as the only Saviour,
 - It really doesn't make a whit of difference what anybody else thinks of Him—including you...
 - If God has approved of Him as the only Saviour,
 - there is no other place you can find acceptance with God but by trusting in Him...
 - Nobody else's judgement will stand—
 - not the respected religious leaders, not yours...
 - Only God's...