

The Danger of Denial

Luke 13: 34-35

The setting of our Scripture today takes place in the last week of Jesus' ministry prior to the crucifixion. On Sunday He made His triumphant entry into Jerusalem and on Monday He cleansed the temple of the money-changers. Following these two dramatic events, Jesus begins to teach the people again with power and authority. As was usually the case, He was met with immediate opposition.

Jesus knows that His hour is quickly approaching and yet He is aware that His own continue to reject Him. He had spent over three years ministering to the Jews and they still refused to accept Him as the Messiah.

It is with great caution and care that I approach this passage. I am aware that Jesus is dealing with the nation of Israel and their rejection of Him. This is a prophetic passage concerning the Jews which is yet to be completely fulfilled. However, I am certain that there is practical application for us as well. The rejection of Jesus and His desire for us is a dangerous thing. For the unsaved, the difference is heaven and hell. For the church, the difference is a life of victory and joy or a life of defeat and despair. I want to look at the great **truths** revealed in this passage as we consider: **The Danger of Denial**. May we search our hearts as we move through these verses?

I. The Consideration of the Savior (34)

A. His Passion – **O Jerusalem, Jerusalem**. Clearly Jesus is concerned for Jerusalem. He is concerned for the spiritual condition of the people. His hour is quickly approaching and He will soon bear their sins upon the cross. He has come to redeem mankind and yet many will not believe. It is with this in mind that He weeps over the rejection of Israel. He desires them to accept Him. He desires them to be forgiven of their sin and restored to God. He is heartbroken at their rebellion and rejection of Him.

- Jesus has the same passion for the world today. He died that all might be forgiven. He died that all might inherit eternal life. He died that all might live more abundantly in Him and yet many will not receive Him.
- As I studied these verses I wondered how many times Jesus has looked on from the portal of glory and wept over the church. I wonder how many times He has wept over my life. I wonder how He views us today!

B. His Patience – **How often would I have gathered thy children together!** How many times He had stood patiently waiting for them to receive Him. How many times He had shown up in their midst and desired to move mightily among them. How many times He had longed for their fellowship and love. Jesus patiently waited upon Israel to open their eyes.

- How many times has Jesus stood in the background of our lives wanting us to see Him? How many times has He longed for our worship and devotion to Him? How many times has He longed to meet our needs and yet we failed to recognize Him? Aren't you glad we serve a patient Lord?

C. His Pursuit – *How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings!* How often have I been rejected and yet I would have called you unto myself that I might provide for you and protect you. Jesus continually pursued those who rejected Him. He loved them even as He hung upon the cross. He came to die that we might live. Even though He was rejected He still sought men to come unto Him.

- How many times has the Lord proven Himself faithful in our lives and we fail to acknowledge His goodness? How many times has He shown up in a service to meet with us and we didn't even recognize it was Him? How many times have we failed and come short in this life? How many times have we brought hurt and shame to our Lord? To all of these we likely couldn't count the times and yet He continues to pursue us. He is still tenderly pleading and calling for us to come unto Him. He is calling the weary to rest, the wayward home, the hurting to comfort, the lost to salvation, even though He has been ignored and rejected time and again!

D. His Pain – *And ye would not!* We can't begin to imagine the pain that this brought to the heart of our Lord. He left the splendor of heaven to take on a robe of flesh. He lived as a servant to all, dwelling in poverty. He worked mighty miracles among them, healing their sick, providing their needs, raising their dead, and yet they would not come unto Him. He was about to die upon the cross and they would reject His sacrifice to die lost and spend an eternity in hell. Surely this broke our Lord's heart.

- We tend to look at this passage with amazement. How could the people of God not see and know that Jesus was the Christ? How could they reject Him and cause Him such pain? I suppose that future generations will ask the same of us? How could we see the miracles He has performed among us and not believe? How could we meet for worship services, experience His power and yet fail to worship? How could we receive such wonderful salvation and yet not live for the Lord? Don't you suppose this too grieves the heart of our precious Lord? Don't you think we bring Him pain as well?

I. The Consideration of the Savior (34)

II. The Rebellion of the Religious (34)

A. Their Actions – *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee.* Jesus reminds them of their rejection of the prophets. He reminds them of how they treated those whom God had sent to help them. They had been given great light and yet they

would not believe. They refused to receive that which God had given them. God had been merciful and they refused His mercy. They were simply rebellious.

- We are not guilty of stoning the preacher, but we too have acted in rebellion toward God. Gossip kills His influence. There is no difference when we hear the Word of God proclaimed and refuse to heed its call. When we allow bitterness and strife to grow in our hearts, we are working against the will of God and His plan for our lives. We have been given great Light and many times we are unaffected by that Light.

B. Their Arrogance – **O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee.** Jesus reminded them that the prophets were sent for them. God had sent His messengers for their good. He had allowed Jesus to come as the ultimate sacrifice for their good. God had their best interest in mind. He only wanted to bless them and redeem them of their sin, but they refused the blessings of God's grace and mercy! They acted as if they needed nothing from the Lord. Their lives were fine as they were. There was no need to make any changes or advance spiritually.

- I sense a lot of spiritual arrogance in our day. Many refuse to admit or acknowledge they need anything spiritually. All is well and yet nothing is right in their lives!
- We are allowed this opportunity to gather in His house for our good. We have been given the Word of God for our good. Jesus died on the cross that we might be forgiven. The Lord sends His blessing and abundance toward us because He loves us and wants to help us, but many times folks will look God in the eye and refuse His blessing. Many feel as if they have arrived. They feel as if they don't need revival or regular attendance. They are doing fine in themselves and refuse the provision of God!

C. Their Apathy – **And ye would not!** Time and again the Word of the Lord had come unto His people. Prophet after prophet had proclaimed a message of repentance and the coming Messiah. God had given them instruction concerning Jesus. He had walked among them and proven Himself to be the Christ and they refused Him. They rejected the Son of God for their religious traditions. They saw no need to abandon their way of doing things in order to serve the Lord.

- Church we are there in our day as well. God has blessed us time and again. He has shown Himself mighty among us. We have heard the Bible preached all of our lives. We know what the Lord desires and expects of us and yet we are unmoved. We seem satisfied with things just as they are. We see no need to make any changes or grow closer to the Lord. We would rather have our traditions and comfort than the presence and power of God! May the Lord help us to get over our complacent, apathetic attitudes and get serious with Him!

I. The Consideration of the Savior (34)

II. The Rebellion of the Religious (34)

III. The Isolation of the Refusal (35) – Here Jesus reveals the consequences of their rejection. It isn't a pretty picture.

A. The Desolation – *Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.* Israel had rejected God before, leading to chastisement and even bondage. Jesus had come unto them and they refused to believe upon Him. God had come in the flesh and dwelt among them and they would not accept Him.

- Because of their rejection the house of Israel would be *desolate*. This has the idea of being “*solitary, lonely, uninhabited; deserted by others; a flock deserted by the shepherd; a woman neglected by her husband.*” There were serious implications because Israel had rejected the Lord.

- The church is the bride of Christ. She has been bought with a price. Jesus loved the church enough to die for it. He will never abandon or forsake the church, but we can grieve Him and find ourselves in a desolate situation. There are individuals and congregations today who have rejected the call for the last time. They no longer enjoy the blessing of God. They made a choice much like Israel and the Lord has left them to their choice.

- These are now a solitary people, a lonely people. They live life being part of the flock, but never sense the presence of the Shepherd. They may be part of the bride, but never have any intimacy with the Bridegroom. It is dangerous when we refuse to heed the call of God.

B. The Desertion – *Ye shall not see me, until the time come.* Jesus declared that Israel had rejected Him for the last time. He would depart from them and they would not have His presence among them until the last day. Israel remains God's chosen people, but He is no longer with them as He was. Jesus is not worshipped as the Messiah. They are still looking for Him. Isn't that a tragedy? A people chosen of God, who now don't have fellowship with Him. The glory has departed and will not come again until the last day.

- Jesus promised to never leave us nor forsake us, and He will not, but I can assure you that He will not abide where He is not welcome. He will not continue to reveal Himself to a people who refuse to embrace Him. There are churches all across our land today who have had the glory depart. The presence and power of the Lord is no longer there and many of them don't even know the difference. Wouldn't it be sad to have the presence of the Lord removed from our lives? Wouldn't it be terrible to attend services on a regular basis and never experience the presence of God? That could very well happen if we refuse the call of God and lack obedience!

C. The Discernment (35) – *Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.* Jesus reveals that Israel will one day recognize Him as the Messiah. When Jesus returns in His glory Israel will embrace the Christ. The nation will look back on its history and realize that they missed it. The tragedy is that this will not be soon enough for countless generations. Many will embrace Him, but for others it will be too late.

- Are you sensing the application? Jesus is real in our midst today. He is pleading with us to recognize Him and submit our lives to Him. I don't want to look back on these days and realize that we missed it. I don't want to stand before the Lord and realize that we were so close to real revival and never followed through. Now is our opportunity. Will we seize it?
- Think about those who have not yet accepted Christ. They too will bow before Him in judgment, recognizing that He is Lord, but then it will be too late. There are those around us right now who need to see Jesus high and lifted up. Will we be responsible for our generation failing to see Him?

What does Jesus see as He looks upon us today? Have we received all that He desires for us? Have we accepted the Lord's will or are we living in rebellion? Denial is a dangerous place. Why not seek Him today?