

### How Do People React to Jesus?

<sup>20</sup> *Jesus entered a house, and the crowd gathered again so that they were not even able to eat.* <sup>21</sup> *When his family heard this, they set out to restrain him, because they said, "He's out of his mind."*

<sup>22</sup> *The scribes who had come down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and, "He drives out demons by the ruler of the demons."*

<sup>23</sup> *So he summoned them and spoke to them in parables: "How can Satan drive out Satan?<sup>24</sup> If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. <sup>25</sup> If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. <sup>26</sup> And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand but is finished. <sup>27</sup> But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can plunder his house.*

<sup>28</sup> *"Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for all sins and whatever blasphemies they utter.<sup>29</sup> But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"— <sup>30</sup> because they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."*

<sup>31</sup> *His mother and his brothers came, and standing outside, they sent word to him and called him. <sup>32</sup> A crowd was sitting around him and told him, "Look, your mother, your brothers, and your sisters are outside asking for you."*

<sup>33</sup> *He replied to them, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" <sup>34</sup> Looking at those sitting in a circle around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! <sup>35</sup> Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother." The Christian Standard Bible. Copyright © 2017 by Homan Bible Publishers.*

There is a painting at an art show. Some love it and say it is best painting they ever saw. Others hate it and criticize everything about. Still others walk by indifferently and pay no attention. It is amazing how one painting can cause so many different reactions.

Today we are going to spend just one day with Jesus. On this day Jesus will experience an entire range of feelings toward himself, from those who love him to those who hate him with a group of those who don't understand in the middle. Jesus is still encountering these same reactions today and always will. If it is true, and it is, that there is no other name by which we are saved than the name of Jesus, it is important how we react to Jesus. The first reaction we see is one of complete hatred.

#### *I. Some hate Jesus.*

<sup>22</sup> *The scribes who had come down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and, "He drives out demons by the ruler of the demons.""* In Matthew's account of this story, we are told that Jesus just healed a demon possessed man. How did the crowd react? Was there cheering? We are told how the Pharisees felt. They called Jesus the worse name in the book, Beelzebul, a servant of Satan. But that was a stupid thing to say. Why would someone who serves Satan hurt Satan by driving out demons?" <sup>23</sup> *So he summoned them and spoke to them in parables: "How can Satan drive out Satan?<sup>24</sup> If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. <sup>25</sup> If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. <sup>26</sup> And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand but is finished.* Jesus can't be serving Satan.

So why did they say it? The miracles Jesus was performing were having their desired effect. People were figuring out that there is something special about Jesus. Maybe he is the promised Messiah after all. If he was, then the Pharisees should become loving and obedient followers of him. But they didn't want to. Jesus was a threat and in desperation they resorted to name calling.

How did Jesus react to the Pharisees? Did he strike them dead or turn them into frogs? Always reaching out to people, Jesus used this opportunity to show them why he came. <sup>27</sup> *But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can plunder his house.* Instead of serving Satan, Jesus was serving God. He was fulfilling what God promised in our Old Testament, the crushing of Satan's head. As it says in 1 John 3, *"The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work."* The ultimate showdown came at Calvary where Jesus once and for all destroyed the devil's power over us. The devil's power is sin and death. Jesus paid for our sin so the devil can't accuse of the sins we committed. Then Jesus' resurrection destroyed death. Jesus has come to tie up the strong man in the house so he could walk away with his possessions. That's us.

Jesus then responded to their hatred with love as he warned them they were on the verge of total and eternal destruction.

<sup>28</sup> *"Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for all sins and whatever blasphemies they utter.<sup>29</sup> But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"— <sup>30</sup> because they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."*

Just what is the sin against the Holy Spirit and why is it unforgivable? It is the Holy Spirit who works saving faith in our hearts. He is that voice, that conviction in our hearts that says this is true. But if someone persistently says "No" to the Holy Spirit, he will one day stop calling him to faith, leaving that person in unbelief forever. The Pharisees were sinning against the Holy Spirit. If they continually refused to believe, a time will come when God will say, "Fine, have it your way."

The seriousness of this sin may lead some Christians to wonder if they are committing the sin against the Holy Spirit. I mean, we have our doubts. Don't worry. The fact that you are bothered by doubt tells me that have not sinned against the

Holy Spirit. If you were, you wouldn't care, would you? Besides, look at what Jesus said before. God forgives all sins including the sin of doubt.

## *II. Some don't understand Jesus.*

That's how his enemies reacted to Jesus. What's even more amazing is the response he got from his own family. <sup>20</sup>**Jesus entered a house, and the crowd gathered again so that they were not even able to eat.** <sup>21</sup>**When his family heard this, they set out to restrain him, because they said, "He's out of his mind."**

Jesus and his disciples just returned from a long journey. They needed rest and food. But when word got around that Jesus was back, crowds gathered at his house. Jesus and his disciples couldn't even get something to eat.

Jesus' family were concerned about him. They knew how the crowds hounded him continuously to the point he didn't take a break to eat. They knew that powerful and influential people like the Pharisees began to dislike him. If they don't intervene, they thought, then Jesus will collapse with exhaustion or suffer a nervous breakdown or get arrested. **"He's out of his mind,"** was their conclusion.

Mary and his brothers meant well, but they were wrong. They saw a busy Jesus but never noticed the souls who needed to hear they have a Savior. Another big part of the problem was they didn't believe in him. Mary, no doubt believed, but we are told in the gospel of John that **"even his own brothers did not believe in him."** Jesus claimed to be the Messiah. God testified to it at his Baptism. His miracles proved it. Even demons acknowledged it. But his own family were skeptics. Rather than confessing, "Jesus is Lord," they said, "Jesus is crazy."

You know, we must be nuts to be Christians, at least in the eyes of the world. That was the diagnosis the Roman Governor Festus made after he heard the Apostle Paul speak the gospel. **"Your great learning is driving you insane,"** he concluded. You are nuts to spend so much time and energy in church. Just think of what you could be doing right now? Imagine if you took your offerings and invested them every year. How much would you have for retirement or you could leave behind for your kids? And why restrain yourself. If your enemy hits you, why turn the other cheek? Only weaklings or crazy people do that.

But you are not nuts, nor was Paul, nor was Jesus. Paul seemed crazy when he was willing to let people whip him and beat him with their fists and throw him in jail, but he wasn't crazy, only showing his passion. It was worth his life if one more soul would believe and be saved. If someone calls you nuts for being a Christian, I hope you respond the same way Paul did. **"If we are out of our mind, it is for the sake of God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again."**

I don't think anyone here will call Jesus, "Satan." But we do often behave like Mary and Jesus' brothers. Sometimes we regard the Kingdom work secondary or unimportant. We accept a certain level of spiritual immaturity and ignorance and don't desire to grow in our faith. We often put physical needs above our spiritual needs. But Jesus shows us that his Words are important, more important than anything else as we see in our third and final reaction.

## *III. Some believed.*

<sup>31</sup>**His mother and his brothers came, and standing outside, they sent word to him and called him.** <sup>32</sup>**A crowd was sitting around him and told him, "Look, your mother, your brothers, and your sisters are outside asking for you."**

<sup>33</sup>**He replied to them, "Who are my mother and my brothers?"** <sup>34</sup>**Looking at those sitting in a circle around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers!"** <sup>35</sup>**Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."**

At first Jesus sounds rude. But he is not rude. No one loved his mother more than Jesus. He willingly submitted to his parents authority and provided for Mary's needs from the cross. But remember why Jesus' mother and brothers and sisters intervened. They were trying to stop Jesus from doing his work by force if necessary, and no one, not Peter, not the Pharisees, not the devil, not even his own mother was going to stop him because there was a whole house full of people who desperately needed him. Those people sat there and listened to his words. Because they did there was a stronger bond than between a mother and a son. The closest bond is between God and anyone who does God's will by believing in Jesus.

The Pharisees saw Jesus as a nuisance and hated him as much as anyone would hate Satan. Mary saw her son worn out and tired. His brothers saw Jesus as a religious nut who needed to be restrained for his own good. But the hundreds of people in that house saw in Jesus their Savior.

Jesus was called many things in one day: Satan, nuts, unimportant. The sad thing is he is still being called that today! Thank God you know the truth. If people call Jesus evil or Satan, all we have to do is see Satan bound as Jesus carries one soul after another out of his house. And Jesus isn't crazy; he just loves us that much. You have to be nuts not to believe. Most don't believe. Love them with the same love Jesus has for you. Pray for them. Ask God to change their hearts. Let's bring them into the circle around Jesus as his true brothers and sisters. INJ Amen.