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The Cause of Unbelief

John 12:37-43

I. Unbelief is Not Caused By a Lack of Miracles (v. 37)

- A. _____ the water into wine at Cana (Jn. 2:1-11)
- B. Healing the royal official's son in Capernaum (Jn. 4:46-54)
- C. Healing the paralytic by the pool at Bethesda (Jn. 5:1-15)
- D. _____ the five thousand (Jn. 6:5-14)
- E. _____ on the water (Jn. 6:16-24)
- F. Healing the man born blind (Jn. 9:1-7)
- G. _____ Lazarus out of the tomb (Jn. 11:1-45)

II. Unbelief is a Fulfillment of Scripture (v. 38)

- A. The unbelief and rejection of Jesus was _____ by Isaiah (Isa. 53:1; Matt. 7:13-14; Lk. 13:23-24)
- B. The unbelief and rejection of Jesus was not _____ of God's plan (Acts 2:23; Rom. 11:11, 15, 19-20)

III. Unbelief is an Act of Judicial Blindness (vv. 39-41)

- A. They _____ not believe in Jesus, therefore they _____ not believe (v. 39) [Heb. 12:16-17; Ex. 3:19; 4:21; 8:32; Rom. 1:21]
- B. The judicial blindness is rendered for _____ God's Son (v. 40) [Isa. 6:10; Matt. 13:11-16]
- C. They should have seen Jesus as the _____, the Lord of hosts (v. 41) [Isa. 6:1-5]

IV. Unbelief is the Same Thing as Superficial Religion (vv. 42-43)

- A. Who do you _____? (v. 42) [Jn. 9:22; Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9; Matt. 10:37-38]
- B. What do you _____? (v. 43) [Matt. 6:1; 23:5-7; Jn. 5:44]

TAKE HOME

- How does God ***use*** the unbelief of some to bring others to saving faith?
- How does the fact that because unbelievers do not believe in Christ then eventually they cannot believe in Christ, help you ***appreciate*** judicial blindness?
- How does unbelief ***manifest*** itself in superficial religion in our culture?

STUDY QUESTIONS

James 1:22 says, *“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”* These questions are designed to help you apply today’s message to your life. We encourage you to thoughtfully answer these questions and discuss your answers with others. For more information about joining a Small Group that uses these questions as the basis for discussion, prayer, and accountability, please call the church office at (661) 259-2913.

1. Read John 12:37. Briefly review the miracles done in this Gospel. Which one do you think is the most powerful? If these signs are so powerful, why is there still unbelief?

2. Read John 12:38. Why is it so important to recognize that unbelief is a fulfillment of Scripture? (Isa. 53:1; Matt. 7:13-14; Lk. 12:23-24)

3. How can we say that unbelief and rejection of Jesus was not outside of God’s plan? (Acts 2:23; Rom. 11:11, 15, 19-20)

4. Read John 12:39. How does the fact that these unbelievers do not believe in Jesus lead to the fact that they cannot? What are some other examples of this in Scripture? (Heb. 12:16-17; Ex. 3:19; 4:21; 8:32; Rom. 1:21)

5. Read John 12:40-41. What is judicial blindness? Read Matthew 13:11-16. How do these two passages connect?

6. Read John 12:42-43. How is unbelief the same thing as superficial religion? What did the Jews fear would happen if they confessed Christ? (Jn. 9:22)

7. What did the Pharisees love? (Matt. 6.1; 23:5-7). Do you think these authorities in vv. 42-43 were true believers? Why or why not? (Jn. 5:44)

8. Read the take home questions. Which one encourages you or challenges you the most? Why? How will you live differently this week in light of this passage?

“God’s judicial hardening is not presented as the capricious manipulation of that arbitrary potentate cursing morally neutral or even morally pure beings, but as a holy condemnation of a guilty people who are condemned to do and be what they themselves have chosen.”

- D. A. Carson, The Gospel According to John