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THE REJECTED CHRIST

Seven centuries before Jesus was born, Isaiah prophesied that He would be “despised and rejected of men” (Isa. 53: 3). The Gospel accounts undeniably record the fulfillment of this prophecy. One of Jesus’ parables describes a landlord who sent a series of servants for an accounting of his property, but the stewards mistreated each one. Finally, he sent his son, reasoning that they would surely receive him, but “they took him, and... killed him” (Mat. 21:33–39). This parable summarizes the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy.

The Jews of Jesus’ generation were not the only ones who have rejected Him, however. Through the centuries, others continue figuratively to “crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh” (Heb. 6:6) in the following ways:

- **Men despise and reject His authority.** God decreed, “This is my beloved

Son;...hear ye him”(Mat. 17:5). Jesus declared that His Father gave Him “all authority...in heaven and on earth” (28:18; cf. Heb. 1:1–2). In spite of the His authority, men still exalt mere men (popes, councils, creed books, preachers, et al.) above Him. All that we do and say must be done by **Jesus’** authority (Col. 3:17).

- **Men despise and reject His name:** Salvation is in Jesus’ name alone (Acts. 4:12). We dare not follow men and use their names in religion (1 Cor. 1:12–13). Names of mere men, of certain practices, of an organizational structure, or of a geographical area are far more prominent on church signs than Jesus’ name. The name of Jesus is not all that is important, but true religion can’t exist apart from it.
- **Men despise and reject His church:** Jesus built His church just as he wanted it (Mat. 16:18). It is composed of those who have been saved by His blood (Acts 2:38–47). The thousands of denominational bodies claiming to be part of His church bear no resemblance to it as it is depicted in the New Testament.
- **Men despise and reject the worship He authorized:** Men **must** worship God “in spirit and truth” (i.e., sincerely and in accordance with His Word) (John 4:24). God has never allowed men to choose the ways they would worship. Our worship is vain when we do what pleases us instead of Him.
- **Men despise and reject His Gospel:** There is only one Gospel, and men invite the Lord’s anathema when they pervert it (Gal. 1:6–9). Men reject His Gospel by refusing to obey it (2 The. 1:7–9), but it alone is “the power of God unto salvation” (Rom. 1:16). To reject His Gospel is to reject that which will judge us in the Last Day (John 12:48).

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