

Templates of Truth with Rick Smith
Audio Script – April 1, 2009

Life often presents opportunities that seem not so attractive or popular. Because of that, we have the tendency to reject them and move on. Jesus was not what the Jews were expecting, and there was nothing about his life that seemed particularly attractive to them. In today's Templates of Truth, we find that is still the reaction of many modern people.

In his prophecy about Jesus, the coming Messiah, Isaiah said, *He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. He was despised and forsaken of men...and like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we did not esteem Him* (Isaiah 53:2-3). The Jews rejected Jesus as their promised Messiah because they anticipated a great, charismatic military & political leader. Their eyes were on royalty, and Jesus came from obscurity. The Jews drew their assessment from the window dressing, and did not take the time to see what was really behind the curtains. The Jews weren't the only ones to make this mistake. Multitudes of people in our day still reject Jesus because He isn't what they visualize or want.

Jesus is unattractive to many people today because of the standard of living He raises as a requirement to follow Him. He also said, *if you love Me, you will keep My commandments* (John 14:15). Jesus talked about *abiding in Me and My words abiding in you...if you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love* (John 15:7,10). The Bible teaches us how to live holy lives. It contains the commandments, precepts and rules of conduct & behavior that reflect righteous living. Many people today don't want to live according to those expectations, so Jesus is not very popular and attractive to them. They would rather live by their own rules and values, rather than those the Bible prescribes.

Jesus also declared that, *A slave is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you* (John 15:20). Paul said, *indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted* (II Timothy 3:12). The Christian life is not one that is spared of suffering, trials and hardships. People who perceive God as some "pie in the sky" that takes all of life's problems away become disillusioned when they discover that Christians too, have tragedy, loss and destruction that come into the experiences of their lives. Since suffering is not something anyone would want, they tend to reject Christ because He gives no guarantees to spare them from it.

Following Jesus also requires great personal sacrifice. Jesus said, *If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me* (Matthew 16:24). The cross that Jesus bore represented what He was willing to surrender and sacrifice in order to bridge the gap between us and God. Too many people today do not want to give up their own personal goals, ambitions and desires in life in order to surrender totally and completely to God's will. As a result, they reject Jesus in favor of their own agendas.

People who view Jesus on the mere surface may find Him unattractive. But when they allow God to really open their eyes and see Him for who He really is, they soon discover that He is far

more than the eye can perceive. Although He does not spare us from many hardships in life, He gives us the strength and power we need to survive them. Although following Him requires tremendous sacrifice on our part, He makes it all worth it. And even though He raises a strict standard of holiness by which our lives must measure up, He makes living according to that standard a life of utmost happiness and fulfillment. If, as the old saying goes, “beauty is in the eyes of the beholder,” there is more to Jesus than your eyes may have observed. He is worth looking into.

That’s today’s Templates of Truth. This is your Bible teacher, Rick Smith, reminding you to attend church this Sunday for Bible study and worship, pray for one another, and always strive to abide. Until next time, have a blessed and glorious day in Christ Jesus.

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