

"MISPLACED SYMPATHY"**Introduction**

Here we have a picture of Christ on way to Calvary.

We need to remember

- (i) a sleepless night before arrested
- (ii) trials – all 6 of them (3 + 3)
- (iii) scourged by Pilate
- (iv) Simon of Cyrene – pressed by Roman soldiers to carry the Cross (or bar)
- (v) great crowd (v.27) following – news of his death evidently now all over Jerusalem
- (vi) These women – their sympathy + grief (v.28) – no evidence that they were believers – mere human pity, good as far as it went but no proof of faith or regeneration.

That then is the spectacle – background to these words of Christ (v.28). Not unappreciative of their sympathy but warning them of judgement soon to come

DOCTRINE: Unbelief is blind even when it is kind

1. **WHILST NOT DESPISING THEIR SYMPATHY, CHRIST CORRECTS THEM**

- 1) Unbelief leads men to look at the outward events of life and not to see their significance/meaning:
 - What did they see? A victim of man's cruelty...
- 2) This so different from those with faith:
 - (i) Mary and her alabaster box of ointment
 - (ii) dying thief
OBSERVE: They saw meaning of the death – the identity of the person (= Son of God/Saviour). These women saw only the outward side = pain, another crucifixion.
DOCTRINE: Their sympathy not of faith + worthless because they were blind to God's purpose in all this.
- 3) Tragic because:

- (i) They had the history but did not see the message of the history/ The Bible is sealed book till eyes are opened.
- (ii) They had the treasured privilege of Christ in their land/generation = miracles, Himself the greatest miracle of all.
OBSERVE: Unbelief can be kind, sympathetic, generous – but of no spiritual value – because they do not see the point. These women "miss the wood for the trees"! ("Just another sad crucifixion!")
ILLUSTRATION: LEWIS before gospel – a prayer

2. **UNBELIEF IS BLIND TO THE FUTURE**

- 1) They did not understand re Christ
 - (i) Cross = the salvation of all believers
 - (ii) after 3 days, rise again
 - (iii) enter into his glory
OBSERVE: Tears not a proof of anything spiritual in the heart. We have to guard against thinking that if people are well-disposed to gospel in some way they are Christians
 - (i) Ju.6: make Him King
 - (ii) here.
 So history shows how faith behaves:
 - (i) always recognises Christ = Lord
 - (ii) obeys Christ's word:
EXX: They worship Him (Jn.4 / Jn.9 / Greeks)
APPLICATION: Is it not CHRIST you want?
- 2) And had no fear as to the future: This is what Christ especially corrects: "The days are coming". His reference to God's punishment of Jews for this crime of crucifying Christ – "Blessed...the barren" (**EXPLAIN:** - would not see children slain too). It was just 40 years in the future – some of them would live to see it, no doubt.
DOCTRINE: Unbelief, always blind to future. It is a major lesson of history (Flood / Sodom / End of world / Exile).

- 3) It is a great kindness to be informed about the future:
OBSERVE: Not sensible to dislike history's warnings re future troubles to unbelievers.
- (i) After death – Judgement Day
 - (ii) Eternal punishment for sins
- APPLICATION**: Let us face up to it. Christ was right – the very prophecy came exactly true. Read in Josephus, etc. / So too re. end of world.
Q. Are you listening to Him? (TEXT)

3. **CHRIST USES AN ILLUSTRATION**: "green tree"

- 1) Important to understand his message here. It is an argument of a powerful kind:
 - (i) green tree = Christ – his treatment at the hands of men (items).
 - (ii) dry tree = unbelievers – their treatment at the hands of God
- 2) As I have said, immediately referred to Jews and Jesus in AD 70 (Items). But it has application to every unbeliever in the world. Argument runs like this:
 - (i) Here is God's own Son - sinless / holy / so full of goodness (exx.: healings / teachings...)
 Yet, see how even Christ suffers when the sins of many are laid on Him!
 - (ii) So how will God deal with those who are his enemies / who never come to faith in him / are never brought to trust in a Saviour?
- 3) It is surely a forcible argument: What these women saw was pitiful (Christ = Cross).
 But they had a more pitiable future if they did but know it: eternal death: They live forever that...die forever.
- 4) **APPLICATION**
 Have we all faced up to this fact?
 Perhaps you say, "Just for Jews...ghettos, pogroms, dispersion, holocaust under Nazi's..." All right.

True, but have you thought of YOUR own soul?

- 5) Christ is saying what refers in principle to every one who has not come to faith in him: "Weep not for me...for yourselves".
OBSERVE: Are you like them "these daughters of Jerusalem"?
 Blind to Christ / the message of His sufferings / the plan of God / even to your tragic lost state = future?
ILLUSTRATION: Highland Kitchen Maid.

EXPLANATION

1. I can prove Christ's vows refer to the end of the world & Judgement Day. It is because of v.30 // Revelation 6. This is very clear.
2. People are misled when they think that a little sentimental affection for Christianity is enough to make them accepted with God.
 Then women were weeping, wailing! But Christ said it was all worthless.
3. You must come to the point where you see you are hopelessly lost without Christ + His grace in your life – nothing less will do than a complete change of heart + soul which only the New Birth can give you – see Acts 2 (scoff...pricked).
4. How pathetic + misguided to pity Christ!
 The Lord of life / death / grave!
 The Judge of all the earth: angels / devils / mankind: (Psalm 110:1f – "sit – enemies thy footstool"!

CONCLUSION

See Him here as, not to be pitied, but loved, saved, trusted.
 He was going to the Cross to save a dying world
 + to bring us to glory.
 Trust in Him and you will soon see His blessed head
 now crowned with glory – you will share that glory with Him!!

<p>PSALM</p> <p>47: 1 – 8</p> <p>89: 23 – 29</p> <p>110: 1 – 5</p>
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