

Greetings:

The study that Pastor Pat brings on Sunday mornings is a reflection of the study for that week. It represents a lot of research. Not all of what he has prepared is communicated. In an attempt to continue the learning process, he is making available his study notes to the congregation.

They are edited, but not “book” ready. To the critical eye mistakes can be found. So he asks that you take the material with humility, teach-ability, and charity.

Enjoy and if you should have any questions or corrections, please do not hesitate to email him at [pastorpat@waukeshabile.org](mailto:pastorpat@waukeshabile.org).

**Date:** March 27, 2011

**Title:** “Seeking how to . . . Kill Him - The Rejection”

**Text:** Mark 14:1, 2; 15:1-21

**Theme:** The rejection of the Christ is so thorough as to demand redemption.

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Waukesha Bible Church is a family of families seeking to live in the Storyline of the Bible. She is determined by design to have a God-centered, Christ-exalting worship; a Word-centered teaching focused on personal discipleship through intentional and systematic instruction; a Global-impacting mission that resolves to be a church planting church; and a Grace-based fellowship where disciples are invited to live under a reigning grace characterized by a Gospel-driven sanctification that celebrates a divine monergism to the Christian life.

Becoming the People of the Resurrection  
Lent - 2011

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**Introduction:**

Think of those moments when you feel the deep bite of rejection's sting, whether by a spouse, parent, child, or work. We have all tasted its metallic ting on our palates. The deep and bitter dregs of His utter rejection are fully played out by means of multiple events.

Matthew 21:42, Acts 4:11 and Mark 12:10 talk of Jesus as the stone which the builders (or "husbandmen") rejected. 1 Peter 2:7 discusses this rejection of Jesus. Theologians suggest that rejection does not diminish Jesus but rather diminishes those who reject him. "Rejection of the cornerstone" is also referenced in Psalms 118:22.

The word "rejection" was first used in 1415. The original meaning was "to throw" or "to throw back". (Oxford English Dictionary <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/161727?redirectedFrom=rejection#>)

**Rejection** may mean:

- Social rejection, in psychology, an interpersonal situation that occurs when a person or group of people exclude an individual from a social relationship
- Transplant rejection, in medicine, the immune reaction of a host organism to a foreign biological tissue, such as in a transplantation
- In basketball, rejection is a slang term for a block
- In zoology, the shunning of one or more animals in a litter

In commenting on the "feeling" of rejection Evan Hadkins (21 April 2009) writes,

It seems to me that the sting of rejection is in proportion to how much we care about the person rejecting us. Our feeling of rejection shows how much we care about the other person. Being told we have done a bad job, or even that we have done something bad, is different to being told that we are a bad person. I think too that what is being rejected makes a difference. There is a difference between criticizing our actions and our selves. Being told we have done a bad job, or even that we have done something bad, is different to being told that we are a bad person. The intensity of the feeling of rejection depends not only on how much we care about the other person, but also on how much we care about what is being criticized. <http://counsellingresource.com/features/2009/04/21/rejection/>

How deeply do we think Jesus "felt" the rejection by the world He created? Jesus Christ came unto His own, but His own did not receive Him. They "threw Him back". They openly and fully rejected the *Story* written by God for their redemption from sin and adoption into His family.

The path to the cross is intentionally laid out before us, the only plan conceived in the mind of God whereby the enslaved can become sons is through the cross. The steps are laid in well defined places. It is only for us to follow. There are four corporate expressions in the complete and utter rejection of God's *Story* by the world He created.

### THE BIG PICTURE:

The Story told by the Scripture is a Story of creation, rejection/rebellion, condemnation, redemption, re-creation and culmination. This Story is told and re-told throughout the biblical text. Consider Matthew 22:1-14. In this parable Jesus speaks of a king who gave a wedding feast for his son. He sends his messengers to invite guests and the guests not only reject the offer but mistreat and kill the messengers.

<sup>20</sup> "**Wisdom shouts in the street**, She lifts her voice in the square; <sup>21</sup> At the head of the noisy streets she cries out; At the entrance of the gates in the city she utters her sayings: <sup>22</sup> How long, O naive ones, will you love being simple-minded? And scoffers delight themselves in scoffing And fools hate knowledge? <sup>23</sup> Turn to my reproof, Behold, I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you. <sup>24</sup> Because **I called** and you refused, **I stretched out my hand** and no one paid attention; <sup>25</sup> And you neglected all my counsel And did not want my reproof; <sup>26</sup> I will also laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your dread comes, <sup>27</sup> When your dread comes like a storm And your calamity comes like a whirlwind, When distress and anguish come upon you" (Prov. 1:20-27).

<sup>3</sup> "From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, even to this day, these twenty-three years the word of the LORD has come to me, and **I have spoken to you again and again**, but you have not listened. <sup>4</sup> And **the LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets again and again**, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear, <sup>5</sup> saying, "Turn now everyone from his evil way and from the evil of your deeds, and dwell on the land which the LORD has given to you and your forefathers forever and ever; <sup>6</sup> and do not go after other gods to serve them and to worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands, and I will do you no harm.' <sup>7</sup> Yet you have not listened to Me," declares the LORD, "in order that you might provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands to your own harm" (Jer. 25:3-7).

<sup>13</sup> "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Go and say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, "Will you not receive instruction by listening to My words?" declares the LORD. <sup>14</sup> The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, which he commanded his sons not to drink wine, are observed. So they do not drink wine to this day, for they have obeyed their father's command. **But I have spoken to you again and again**; yet you have not listened to Me. <sup>15</sup> Also **I have sent to you all My servants the prophets, sending them again and again**, saying: 'Turn now every man from his evil way and amend your deeds, and do not go after other gods to worship them. Then you will dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your forefathers; but you have not inclined your ear or listened to Me'" (Jer. 35:13-15).

<sup>15</sup> “The LORD, the God of their fathers, sent word to them again and again by His messengers, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place; <sup>16</sup> but they continually mocked the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, until there was no remedy. <sup>17</sup> Therefore He brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or infirm; He gave them all into his hand” (2 Chron. 36:15-17).

“But as for Israel He says, ‘ALL THE DAY LONG I HAVE STRETCHED OUT MY HANDS TO A DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE PEOPLE’” (Rom. 10:21).

This is God in heaven’s expanse inviting the angelic hosts to come and Satan’s rebellion against Him; this is the garden with Adam and Eve. Here we have the full Story played out for us.

We are the unwilling, the mistreating and the murdering. Our intent is to show how thorough is the rejection of and rebellion against the King of kings and Lord of lords. God’s appeals to us are wrapped in His love. He woos us and speaks tenderly to us; calling and inviting us into the warmth of His embrace. This is what we scorn.

### **The Problem:**

We do not see ourselves as part of the rebellion against the king and His Story.

The Holy Spirit is calling to us from this passage to consider three ideas.

**To Know:** The Holy Spirit desires for us to know our presence in the rebelling mob against the King and His Story.

**To Choose:** The Holy Spirit desires for us to choose repentance and accept His invitation.

**To Feel:** The Holy Spirit desires for us to feel the joy of repenting and accepting the King’s invitation.

### **Outline:**

#### I. Religious Rejection - The Scribes and Pharisees sought His destruction and death (14:1,2)

“The ancient Jewish court system was called the Sanhedrin. The Great Sanhedrin was the supreme religious body in the Land of Israel during the time of the Holy Temple. There were also smaller religious Sanhedrins in every town in the Land of Israel, as well as a civil political-democratic Sanhedrin. These Sanhedrins existed until the abolishment of the rabbinic patriarchate in about 425 C.E.

The earliest record of a Sanhedrin is by Josephus who wrote of a political Sanhedrin convened by the Romans in 57 B.C.E. Hellenistic sources generally depict the Sanhedrin as a political and judicial council headed by the country’s ruler.

Tannaitic sources describe the Great Sanhedrin as a religious assembly of 71 sages who met in the Chamber of Hewn Stones in the Temple in Jerusalem. The Great Sanhedrin met daily during the daytime, and did not meet on the Sabbath, festivals or festival eves. It was the final authority on Jewish law and any scholar who went against its decisions was put to death as a *zaken mamre* (rebellious elder)."

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/Judaism/Sanhedrin.html>

"Within its membership there were Sadducees – the priestly classes were all Sadducees – Pharisees and Scribes, who were experts in the law, and respected men who were elders." (William Barclay, *Mark*, 349).

The religious establishment sought His destruction through stealth and dishonesty (Mark 3:6; **8:31, 32; 10:32-34**; 11:18; 12:13; 14:1, 2; 55-65; 15:1, 31). The words employed to show the depth of their disdain are significant. The word "stealth" speaks of "baiting the trap" (v. 1). It is used in Mark 7:22 as "deceit" to speak of mankind's inherent evil. A similar word is used in Mark 12:13 to describe their activity with the purpose of "trapping Him" as one would catch vermin. Verse 55 confirms their open animosity and bitter venom. Their intent was to seize Him with force in order that they might "kill Him". This was not the first time they sought His complete destruction. The pungent paradox of this is how the religious establishment was guardians of truth and guides of the people and here they rejected the truth and lead the people astray. Jesus was under constant surveillance with the intent of finding fault with Him (Mark 2:6, 7, 16, 18, 24; 3:22; 7:5; 8:11; 10:2). Yet His adversaries were incapable of finding blame (vv. 55-59). Even those who would lie to His damage could not agree among themselves. Those who sought His destruction feared the face of man (v. 2). The sharpness of their bane becomes apparent by the verdict and their response to it, "And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death. Some began to spit at Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him with their fists, and to say to Him, 'Prophecy!' And the officers received Him with slaps in the face" (vv. 64, 65).

It was the religious establishment that engaged in His physical abuse. Their hatred of Him was possessing and vented itself in outright rage and uncontrolled acts (Mark 15:3, 31).

15:3 - Imperfect tense, repeated accusations besides those already made. They let loose their venom against Jesus. One of the common verbs for speaking against in court (kata and agoreuô). (A.T. Robertson's Word Pictures on Mark 15:3)

The text tells us "they were seeking Him". It is the word used in Mark 1:37 of how all the people were "seeking" Him. It is used of the persistent pestering of the Pharisees as they sought from Him a sign in order to trap Him (Mark 8:11). This same "seeking" is used of the hunter seeking to capture and destroy its prey (Mark 11:18; 12:12; 14:1). It is also used of the ardent pursuit of His people of Him (Mark 16:6).

A. Jesus threatened their place/popularity.

They saw themselves as the final court of appeal. They spoke for God.

- B. Jesus threatened their power

If they are right, Jesus is wrong. If Jesus is right, they are wrong.

## II. Political Rejection - The political system rejected Him (Mark 15:1-5)

- A. Ultimate authority resides only in God (Psalm 135:5, 6).
- B. Governments are established by God (Dan. 2:21; 4:34-37; John 19:11; Rom. 13:1ff).

Second, the political system equally rejected Him (Mark 15:1-5). Pontius Pilate found himself locked between the proverbial "rock and hard place". There was no easy out, but Pilate lacked the fortitude to make the hard call and stand for right. The pulse of his popularity robbed him of historical glory. Where fame lurked, there would be only infamy. Pilate sought an easy solution to the complex problem. Although God gives the government authority to rule (Rom. 13:1ff), it ruled contrary to Him and fed Him to the wolves of destruction.

"In about 30 C.E., the Great Sanhedrin lost its authority to inflict capital punishment. After the Temple was destroyed, so was the Great Sanhedrin."

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/Sanhedrin.html>

"The cross was a political symbol long before it became a religious symbol. It was the ultimate symbol of Roman power. It said, 'We are in charge here, and this is what happens to people who get in our way.' "

The political powers allowed His end to happen. They did what was necessary to stop mob rule.

## III. National Rejection - The nation rejected Him (15:6-14)

- A. The nation chose lawlessness instead of law.

"They chose the law-breaker instead of Jesus." (William Barclay, *Mark*, 357)

- B. The nation chose war instead of peace.

"They chose the man of blood instead of the Prince of Peace." (William Barclay, *Mark*, 357)

- C. The nation chose hatred and violence instead of love.

"Barabbas and Jesus stood for two different ways. Barabbas stood for the heart of hate, the stab of the dagger, the violence of bitterness. Jesus stood for the way of love." (William Barclay, *Mark*, 358)

He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. (John 1:10, 11)

His own people, the Jewish nation, rejected Him for a seditious murderer (Mark 15:6-14). The choice was between choosing Barabbas, the murdering rebel, and simple Jesus. The religious leaders empowered the people to reject Jesus and to choose Barabbas. In a senseless act the Creator was rejected by His creation. Darkness rejects light and cannot receive the light for their deeds are evil (John 3:19).

Jesus was and continues to be rejected by many Jewish people as a failed Jewish Messiah claimant, converts to Christianity being the exceptions.

Belief in the divinity of any human being, messiah or otherwise, is incompatible with Judaism: "The point is this: that the whole Christology of the Church - the whole complex of doctrines about the Son of God who died on the Cross to save humanity from sin and death - is incompatible with Judaism, and indeed in discontinuity with the Hebraism that preceded it." Rayner, John D. *A Jewish Understanding of the World*, Berghahn Books, 1998, p. 187.

"Aside from its belief in Jesus as the Messiah, Christianity has altered many of the most fundamental concepts of Judaism." (Kaplan, Aryeh) *The Aryeh Kaplan Anthology: Volume 1, Illuminating Expositions on Jewish Thought and Practice*, Mesorah Publication, 1991, p. 264..

"...the doctrine of Christ was and will remain alien to Jewish religious thought." Wylene, Stephen M. *Settings of Silver: An Introduction to Judaism*, Paulist Press, 2000, p. 75.

"For two thousand years, Jews rejected the claim that Jesus fulfilled the messianic prophecies of the Hebrew Bible, as well as the dogmatic claims about him made by the church fathers - that he was born of a virgin, the son of God, part of a divine Trinity, and was resurrected after his death. ... For two thousand years, a central wish of Christianity was to be the object of desire by Jews, whose conversion would demonstrate their acceptance that Jesus has fulfilled their own biblical prophecies." (*Jewish Views of Jesus* by Susannah Heschel, in *Jesus In The World's Faiths: Leading Thinkers From Five Faiths Reflect On His Meaning* by Gregory A. Barker, editor. Orbis Books, 2005 ISBN 1-57075-573-6. p.149.

"No Jew accepts Jesus as the Messiah. When someone makes that faith commitment, they become Christian. It is not possible for someone to be both Christian and Jewish." *Why don't Jews accept Jesus as the Messiah?* by Rabbi Barry Dov Lerner.

The accounts of Jewish rejection of Jesus are prominently featured in the New Testament, especially John's gospel. For example, in 7:1-9 Jesus moves around in Galilee but avoids Judea, because "the Jews/Judeans" were looking for a chance to kill him. In 7:12-13 some said "he is a good man" whereas others said he deceives the people, but these were all "whispers", no one would speak publicly for "fear of the Jews/Judeans". Jewish rejection is also recorded in 7:45-52, 8:39-59, 10:22-42 and 12:36-43. 12:42 says many did believe, but they kept it private, for fear the Pharisees would exclude them from the Synagogue, see also Council of Jamnia.

According to Jeremy Cohen,

"[e]ven before the Gospels appeared, the apostle Paul (or, more probably, one of his disciples) portrayed the Jews as Christ's killers ("... the Jews, who killed both the Lord and the prophets." (I Thessalonians 2:14-15) ... But though the New Testament clearly looks to the Jews as responsible for the death of Jesus, Paul and the evangelists did not yet condemn all Jews, by the very fact of their Jewishness, as murderers of God and his messiah. That condemnation, however, was soon to come." Jeremy Cohen (2007): *Christ Killers: The Jews and the Passion from the Bible to the Big Screen*. Oxford University Press. p.55

Emil Fackenheim wrote in 1987:

"... Except in relations with Christians, the Christ of Christianity is not a Jewish issue. There simply can be no dialogue worthy of the name unless Christians accept—nay, treasure—the fact that Jews through the two millennia of Christianity have had an agenda of their own. There can be no Jewish-Christian dialogue worthy of the name unless one Christian activity is abandoned, missions to the Jews. It must be abandoned, moreover, not as a temporary strategy but in principle, as a bimillennial theological mistake. The cost of that mistake in Christian love and Jewish blood one hesitates to contemplate." Fackenheim, Emil (1987). *What is Judaism? An Interpretation for the Present Age*. Summit Books. p. 249.

Jews have traditionally seen Jesus as one of a number of false messiahs who have appeared throughout history. Jesus is viewed as having been the most influential, and consequently the most damaging, of all false messiahs. (Maimonides. *Mishneh Torah*, Sefer Shofetim, Melachim uMilchamot, Chapter 11, Halacha 4. Chabad translation by Eliyahu Touge.)

However, since the general Jewish belief is that the Messiah has not yet come and that the Messianic Age is not yet present, the total rejection of Jesus as either messiah or deity in Judaism has never been a central issue for Judaism. At the heart of Judaism are the Torah, its commandments, the Tanakh, and ethical monotheism such as in the Shema — all of which predated Jesus.

Judaism has never accepted any of the claimed fulfillments of prophecy that Christianity attributes to Jesus. Judaism also forbids the worship of a person as a form of idolatry, since the central belief of Judaism is the absolute unity and singularity of God. A belief in the divinity of Jesus is incompatible with Judaism:

- "The point is this: that the whole Christology of the Church - the whole complex of doctrines about the Son of God who died on the Cross to save humanity from sin and death - is incompatible with Judaism, and indeed in discontinuity with the Hebraism that preceded it." Rayner, John D. *A Jewish Understanding of the World*, Berghahn Books, 1998, p. 187.
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- "...the doctrine of Christ was and will remain alien to Jewish religious thought." Wylene, Stephen M. *Settings of Silver: An Introduction to Judaism*, Paulist Press, 2000, p. 75.
- "For a Jew, however, any form of shituf is tantamount to idolatry in the fullest sense of the word. There is then no way that a Jew can ever accept Jesus as a deity, mediator or savior (messiah), or even as a prophet, without betraying Judaism." Schochet, Rabbi J. Immanuel. "Judaism has no place for those who betray their roots", *Canadian Jewish News*, July 29, 1999.

#### Judaism and Jesus Don't Mix (foundationstone.com)

- "If you believe Jesus is the messiah, died for anyone else's sins, is God's chosen son, or any other dogma of Christian belief, you are not Jewish. You are Christian. Period." (*Jews for Jesus: Who's Who & What's What* by Rabbi Susan Grossman (beliefnet - virtualtalmud) August 28, 2006)
- "For two thousand years, Jews rejected the claim that Jesus fulfilled the messianic prophecies of the Hebrew Bible, as well as the dogmatic claims about him made by the church fathers - that he was born of a virgin, the son of God, part of a divine Trinity, and was resurrected after his death. ... For two thousand years, a central wish of Christianity was to be the object of desire by Jews, whose conversion would demonstrate their acceptance that Jesus has fulfilled their own biblical prophecies." (*Jewish Views of Jesus* by Susannah Heschel, in *Jesus In The World's Faiths: Leading Thinkers From Five Faiths Reflect On His Meaning* by Gregory A. Barker, editor. (Orbis Books, 2005) p.149)
- "No Jew accepts Jesus as the Messiah. When someone makes that faith commitment, they become Christian. It is not possible for someone to be both Christian and Jewish." (Why don't Jews accept Jesus as the Messiah? by Rabbi Barry Dov Lerner)

<sup>21</sup> "But the governor said to them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release for you?' And they said, 'Barabbas.' <sup>22</sup> Pilate said to them, 'Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?' They all said, 'Crucify Him!' <sup>23</sup> And he said, 'Why, what evil has He done?' But they kept shouting all the more, saying, 'Crucify Him!' <sup>24</sup> When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this Man's blood; see to that yourselves.' <sup>25</sup> And all the people said, '**His blood shall be on us and on our children!**'" (Matt. 27:21-25).

#### IV. Military Rejection - The military abused Him (15:15-21)

The soldiers abused and mocked Him (Mark 15:15-21). The cruelty heaped upon Him by His tormentors is considerable. Pilate has Him scourged (v. 15). He is ruthlessly mocked by rough cut Roman soldiers (vv. 16-20). The language is compounded and continual. Their acts were relentless and without pity. They beat Him, spit on Him, and shamelessly mocked Him (v. 19). The tense accents the repetitive nature of their indignities.

Where does this leave us? His rejection was written into the Story and foretold by God's messengers. As tragic and toxic as this is, His complete and utter rejection is indispensable if His people are to be redeemed from their sin and adopted into His family.

Romans 5:8-10 asks us a penetrating question, "For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

**Shepherding the Sheep:** (What's the NEXT STEP?)

1. It is impossible for us to comprehend how God would write into His Story His own rejection, yet this is the Story.
2. Do you see yourself as part of this rebellion?
3. Have you repented of your rebellion and accepted the king's invitation?