

Was Jesus Narrow-Minded?

Introduction. Our society has a great tendency to label anyone who believes in a conservative viewpoint "narrow-minded." This is especially true in matters of religion. Although Jesus is often pictured by some people as being so "broad-minded" that He will accept any and every sort of response which a human being may make to His instructions, the Bible does not so describe Him. Many believe that God's love is so large that He will accept anything from a heart that is sincere. That basic premise strikes at the very heart of the Lord's teaching (Matthew 7:21-22). Jesus demands that men reverence and obey His word as is plainly seen from statements in the sermon on the mount (Matthew 7:13-27).

The definition of being "narrow-minded" is "lacking tolerance or breadth of view." In order for men to see the importance of having and of living in harmony with the truth, it is necessary for them to see that Jesus was "narrow-minded" in the sense that demanded obedience.

We are going to see that Jesus made it very clear that He was "narrow-minded" concerning many subjects. He even sent His apostles into the world to make that very clear. These brethren -- apostles of our Lord -- were so narrow-minded (Acts 4:12; Ephesians 4:4-6).

I. ***Jesus Was "Narrow-Minded" In His View Of His Authority***

- A. The Lord taught in Matthew 5:21, 22, 27, 28, 31, 32, 33, 34, 43, 44 that He had the authority to announce that a new order was at hand. He repeated the phrase, "But I say unto you" to show the strength of that authority.
- B. When the Lord was finished preaching His sermon on the mount, the multitudes were amazed because He taught them as one who had authority (Matthew 7:28-29). The Lord claimed that authority belonged to Him and to none other (Matthew 9:6; 28:18).
- C. In Matthew 16:19, Jesus gave this authority to Peter and in Matthew 18:18, He gave it to the rest of the apostles. Jesus taught us by command in Matthew 6:33, example in John 13:14-15 and necessary inference in Matthew 22:29-32.
- D. However, we are told by the "broad-minded" world to accept the authority of the Pope, Buddha, Mohammed and even the denominational creeds which are only the authority of men.

II. ***Jesus Was "Narrow-Minded" In His View Of Worship***

- A. When the devil tempted the Lord to worship him, the Lord said we worship God only (Matthew 4:10). However, it is not uncommon to

see men worshiping virtually everything from Satan to angels to Buddha.

- B. At Jacob's well the Lord talked with the woman of Samaria about worship (John 4:21-24). He stressed that worship, to be acceptable to God, had to be directed to God, had to be in spirit or from the heart, and had to be according to truth.
- C. It is not uncommon today to see churches altering their patterns of worship according to the wants and wishes of man, not God. If Saturday is more convenient than Sunday, so be it. If contemporary instrumental music is what is desired, so be it. Instead of worshiping in "spirit and truth," man gets to set the agenda, not God.

III. ***Jesus Was "Narrow-Minded" In His View Of Discipleship***

- A. Notice the commitment demanded by the Lord (Matthew 10:37-39; 16:24; Luke 9:57-62; 14:25-27). We all know very well the type of life Jesus asks of His followers. It is a life full of love, dedication, and sacrifice.
- B. In a society where everything is easy and simple, we want religion to follow the same mold. In order to attract people, society wants to present the gospel as something which will not require a major change of life.

IV. ***Jesus Was "Narrow-Minded" In His View Of False Teachers***

- A. In Matthew 7:15-20, He issued a warning about false teachers. In Matthew 23 the Lord scathingly rebuked the scribes and the Pharisees:
 - 1. They said things but did not do them (Matthew 23:3).
 - 2. They did their works to be seen of men (Matthew 23:5).
 - 3. They loved preeminence (Matthew 23:6-7).
 - 4. They locked people into a teaching devoid of Christ (Matthew 23:15).
 - 5. They cared for small matters and ignored more central matters (Matthew 23:23-24).
 - 6. They were hypocritical (Matthew 23:25-26).
 - 7. They appeared scrupulous but really contaminated the people (Matthew 23:27-28).
- B. The Lord is very stern concerning false teachers, but we continue to hear the pleas to provide a warm welcome for those looking for a congregation to attend while "turning the other cheek" toward false doctrine and practices (2 Peter 2:1-2; Titus 3:10-11).

V. ***Jesus Was "Narrow-Minded" In His View Of Salvation***

- A. The Lord plainly said there would not be many people who would be saved (Matthew 7:13-14). He said to obey His commandments (Matthew 19:17, 21).
- B. The Lord told Nicodemus that there was one way to enter the kingdom (John 3:3-5). Jesus also said the world could be saved if they were obedient (John 3:14-18; 15:6).
- C. The Lord outlined the steps to salvation as:
 - 1. Faith (John 8:24).
 - 2. Repentance (Luke 13:5).
 - 3. Confession (Matthew 10:32-33).
 - 4. Baptism (John 3:3-5).
- D. Around 80-90% percent of people believe they are going to heaven, but only a fraction of them do what is required to become a Christian. We are also sold on false methods of salvation such as salvation by faith only, infant baptism, and once saved, always saved.

Conclusion. As we contemplate the fact of the evidences of our Lord's "narrow-mindedness," may we be impressed with the obligation and the privilege we have of being like Him. He lived to show us how to live. We are to follow in His steps (Philippians 2:5; 1 Peter 2:21). May God help us always to have the faith, the knowledge, the courage, and the conviction to imitate our "narrow-minded" Lord.