

(37) Though He had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in Him, so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

“Lord, who has believed what he heard from us, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” (Isaiah 53:1)

(39) Therefore, they could not believe. For again Isaiah said,

“He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them.” (Isaiah 6:10)

(41) Isaiah said these things because he saw His glory and spoke of Him. Nevertheless, *many even of the authorities believed in Him*, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.

(44) And Jesus cried out and said, “Whoever believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me. And whoever sees Me sees Him who sent Me. I have come into the world as Light, so that whoever believes in Me may not remain in darkness.

(47) “If anyone hears My words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has a judge; the Word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. For I have not spoken on My own authority, but the Father who sent Me has Himself given me a commandment --- what to say and what to speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told Me.”

Think on these things:

- 1) Sometimes we think that if WE saw the miraculous signs performed by Jesus, we would certainly have believed in Him! Jesus even encouraged unbelievers troubled by His teachings to consider the miracles (John 10:37-38). Had miracles made an impact on this crowd of people (v.37)?

No, they were not swayed to believe in Him because of His miraculous signs and wonders.

- 2) John says in v.39 that “they could not believe,” and cites evidence with two quotes from Isaiah. We’ve likely met people just like this; no matter what we’ve tried to share about God with them, they reject it (us) strongly. Let’s take a moment to examine “hard hearts” (i.e., being belligerent):

Exodus 7:14 – **Pharaoh’s heart was already hardened.**

Exodus 11:10 – **God prevented Pharaoh from changing his mind.**

God’s perspective??? (You don’t want to listen and believe? Fine. Then you WON’T believe!)

Now consider Isaiah 52:13-53:1 and Isaiah 6:1-13. Why do you think God judged His own people by blinding them to His truth? (Hint: the silver lining in this is salvation has come to non-Jews.)

Is. 52 prophesies about the Messiah being unrecognized among His own, while Is. 6 prophesies about an ‘unclean people’ who have frustrated God by not hearing, not seeing, not perceiving, and with dull (not understanding) hearts. God determined to keep them in this stupor.

Can this still happen today (Hebrews 3:13)? **Yes, believers can become hard-hearted.**

How? **This Hebrews text says that we can become hard-hearted by the deceitfulness of sin.**

- 3) Vs. 42-43 point out that among the Pharisees and other authorities, there were those who “believed” in Jesus. Can you name a few from memory? Do you think they were saved? Why or why not? See Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23 and 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 about “compromised” believers.

Can you name some? **Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea come to mind...**

Saved? Why or why not? **Yes, (the author) believes they were saved. They believed in Jesus, and this is the requirement for salvation. The Parable of the Sower speaks to believers whose attention is off of Jesus and on the world, making them unproductive, while Corinthians says that we have Christians who never really mature in Christ, remaining spiritual babies. Still --- they are among the saved.**

- 4) Why were these rulers “silent Christians” (v.42)? Do you blame them? Who is like this today?

They were scared of being kicked out of their Jewish synagogues. It is hard to blame them over this fear, if one’s life is built around faith and worship...! Christian converts who grow up in anti-Christian homes may act similarly (e.g., Muslims who convert to Christianity but want to stay connected to their families and communities).

- 5) Jesus has been very candid with the Pharisees and the crowds that He and His Father need to be seen as “one.” Review John 10:30, 36b-38. How do you and I get to see God the Father today?

When we learn about and understand Jesus, the Father shines out through Him. (As Jesus said to Philip in Jn. 14:9, if we have come to know Jesus, we have come to know the Father.)

- 6) Jesus describes Himself as Light in v.46. How should we NOT live, and what does this mean?

Do not live (remain) in darkness, hiding our lies and wrong-doings. We cannot hide them from God, who sees all! We must break from the lives we lived before Christ and move forward, changed, into a new life lived genuinely by faith.

- 7) Again, why did Jesus come into the world (see v.47 and John 3:16-17)?

The first advent (coming) of Jesus Christ was to bring salvation to the world (i.e., to save it).

- 8) There will be judgment on the Last Day. Rejecting “what” subjects us to judgment (vs.46-48)?

Rejecting Jesus and His teachings (Words) --- which are really the Father’s Words --- will subject non-believers to judgment. What Jesus taught, and they rejected in unbelief, will be used to convict them.

People and situations I want to pray for this week: