

Isaiah 53:4, **“Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted.”**

This past Sunday was Resurrection Sunday or Easter Sunday. Easter Sunday is one of two or three Sunday's every year when most churches find themselves almost full or completely full. This phenomenon brings to mind the term “CEO Christians.” The CEO stands for “Christmas, Easter, and One other” Sunday when people come to church. While this little saying is somewhat humorous, the reality is no laughing matter because eternity is at stake.

At Sovereign Grace Community Church we have been working our way through Isaiah 53 these past few Sunday's during our time in God's Word. This past Sunday we specifically looked at Isaiah 53:4-6. In verse 4 there is one word that I want us to pay special attention to and that is the word **“esteemed.”**

The word **“esteemed”** is translated from the Hebrew to mean “to consider, to reckon, to account, to think.” In the context of this verse Isaiah is saying that the Jewish people didn't consider or think of Jesus Christ as the Messiah. This is why they screamed for Him to be crucified. They did not hold Christ in high esteem; they **“esteemed Him stricken.”**

If we are really honest with ourselves, if we look in that mirror as Paul calls on us to do in 2 Corinthians 13, we understand that we don't esteem Christ either. For the most part people in today's world disregard Christ. Even though this past Sunday most churches were filled with Easter celebrants and lip service was given to the Lord Jesus Christ; most of that was just going through the motions. You may be one of those who attended church this past Sunday, and it may very well be one of the few times you attend church this year. But what about Monday? What about Tuesday? Will you, as it says in Malachi 3:16, **“fear the LORD and...esteem His name”** today and the day after? Or was Sunday morning all Jesus will get from you for a while?

The problem is we are just like the Jews of Jesus' day because we don't really think Jesus is God. At least we don't *act* like Jesus is God, do we? Instead we believe that we are our own gods. We don't *need* the God, because we have created our own god and he is just like us.

“Yeah, but I belong to such and such church.” You say, or “I listen to K-Love, I go see every Christian movie that comes out, I serve on the board of a Christian ministry.” But look at what Matthew 7:21 says, **“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.”** Verse 22 continues, **“Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’”** Then verse 23 is kind of a holy kick in the teeth: **“And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’”** What Jesus is saying here is that it's not enough to just say you are a believer, it's not enough to do some religious things, to belong to a church, to post Christian meme's on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

What you have to do is look at your life and evaluate whether or not your life is the life of a Christian. Look at Matthew 7:16, **“You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they?”** Verse 17 gets a bit more specific: **“So every good tree bears good fruit.”** If you are saved, if you have genuinely been

saved by God, your life will be marked by **“good fruit.** What is **“good fruit?”** Galatians 5:22 says, **“Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...”** In ever increasing amounts.

Verse 17 continues with, **“but the bad tree bears bad fruit.”** What is **“bad fruit?”** Galatians 5:19 tells us, **“Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing...”**

So the question is: Do you esteem Christ? Do you honor Him as the living God? Or do you just give Him lip service? Do you go to church just occasionally, yet live your life just like everyone else in the world? Will Christ say to you on the Day of Judgment: **“I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS?”**

I implore you to examine your life and ask yourself these questions. If the answers you get lead you to think that you are a Christian in name only, then I call on you to repent of your sins and believe in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. Your church membership, family, and good deeds do not save you, only the shed blood of Jesus Christ does that.

If you have a desire to know what a sinner must do to be made righteous and escape hell and enter heaven, then I want to invite you to come worship with us at Sovereign Grace Community Church on Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m. We are meeting at the Moffat County Public Schools Administration building at 775 Yampa Ave. and we invite you to come and hear what God’s Word has to say about this most important of questions.