



OCTOBER 17

SIGNS

THE DECISION

This weekend we continued our series in the Gospel of John and saw that, in spite of all that Jesus did and the signs He performed, He was still rejected by the people. We were also challenged to examine our own lives to see how we are responding to Jesus. This week we will explore several passages of Scripture that encourage us to respond to Jesus with a heart of surrender and obedience.

Before you jump in, take a few moments to prepare your heart by reading the following passage:

*To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." **John 8:31–32***



READ

What does the Word say about this topic?

Take a few moments to **read the following passages**. As you read, write down any words or insights that jump out to you. We will refer back to these passages later.

- Isaiah 52:13-53:12
- Matthew 13:1-23
- Acts 8:26-40
- James 1:22-25



REFLECT

What do these passages reveal about responding to Jesus?

1. After listening to this weekend's message and having read through the passages above, what is one insight that stuck out to you? Why?
2. Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is a famous prophecy about the suffering servant. We know now that this prophecy referred to Jesus, His message, mission, and suffering.
 - a) How does it describe how the people saw Jesus and what their response to Him was like?
 - b) How did the servant (Jesus) respond to how He was treated?
 - c) What emotional response do you have as you read this passage about Jesus?
3. Matthew 13, the Parable of the Sower, is one of Jesus' most famous parables. Jesus explains that the seed being sown is the message Jesus taught about the Kingdom of God.
 - a) What happens to the seed (the message) as it falls on the path?
 - b) What about the seed that falls along the rocky soil?

- c) Compare the thorny soil with the good soil. How are they similar? How are they different?
- d) What hindered the fruitfulness in the thorny soil?

4. In Acts 8, how did Philip respond to the leading of the Holy Spirit?

- a) How did the Ethiopian eunuch respond to the good news of Jesus?
- b) Why do you think the eunuch responded in such a manner?

5. Re-read James 1:22-25. According to this passage. . .

- a) What happens to us when we hear the Word but do not do what it says?
- b) What happens to those who hear the Word and do what it says?



RESPOND

In light of these truths, how does God want me to live?

1. In the message this weekend, Michael asked “*What’s Your Response...to Jesus?*” When you first heard the message of Jesus, what was your response to Him? Did you respond quickly, or did it take some time for you to believe in Jesus?

- a) What was that experience like for you?
- b) How have you been responding to His leading in the last few months?

2. As you think about the Parable of the Sower and how you respond to Jesus, are there any distractions and/or worries of life that are making you less fruitful? If so, what are they?

- a) What is one practical step you can take to move towards overcoming those distractions and/or worries of life?

3. In the Parable of the Sower, we also see how persecution causes some to fall away.

- a) How do you honestly feel you would respond if you were persecuted for your faith as so many Christians are around the world?
- b) Are you currently experiencing any persecution for being a follower of Jesus? If so, explain.
- c) How do you think you might respond if your life was threatened for following Jesus?
- d) How can you prepare your heart to always be ready to persevere through suffering and persecution?

4. Isaiah 53 reminds us that there are always going to be some who react negatively to Jesus and reject Him and His message.

- a) How should we respond to those that reject Him?
- b) Are there any people in your life (friends, family, coworkers) that have totally rejected Jesus? If so, who are they?
- c) Besides very practical ways of showing the love of Jesus to these people, one of the best things we can do is pray for them. Spend a few minutes praying for the people in your life that have currently rejected Jesus and His message.