

# READ

Matthew 12:38-45

# CONSIDER

The way that Jesus describes “a wicked generation” in this passage stirs up many questions for us to ponder and reflect on. He does not begin with heinous acts of violence or cruelty, but rather from the hardness of hearts and the unwillingness to see what God is revealing in our midst. It is our pride and arrogance that prevents us from searching for Him and the ways of life that He came to give. Left to our own devices, we ultimately trust our own ability and agency to face and manage the challenges that enter into our lives, rather than turn to the One who is Saviour and Lord. Even when we experience liberation from vices and temptations by God’s grace, we can easily be enslaved again, and quite likely even worse than before, when the spiritual vacuum is not occupied by Christ. It is not enough to be free for freedom’s sake, but rather that true freedom comes from following Jesus.

The Pharisees and teachers of the law, who already opposed Jesus and were looking for ways to trap him, ask Him for a sign to verify and authenticate His divine authority. The miracles and witnesses of healings, restoration, and sovereignty over creation were not enough for them. Jesus is quick to point out their irony, but also knows that even the greatest feats would also be doubted and rejected because their own pride is what hinders from receiving Him as God-with-them, as it specifically reckons with their power and traditions. A prophet greater than Jonah and a king wiser than Solomon is among them, revealing and bringing the good news of the Kingdom of God. Would they accept and submit to Him or would they condemn themselves for their repudiation?

Jesus hints at one more sign that will come that will indeed certify that He is indeed who He says He is and is able to accomplish what He came to do. His death and resurrection demonstrates His divinity and victory; He has proved Himself and given the sign that we need. Even in the days after He had risen, many still could not receive Him and respond in repentance and faith. Will we accept and believe in Him? Or will our hearts be closed to what He has done and is continuing to do? These questions are as pertinent in Jesus’ day as they are in our own age.

Pastor Jon Nip

## **P R A Y**

Jesus, would you open up our eyes and hearts to what you have already done and are continuing to accomplish. We praise and give thanks for your great love that was shown through your work on the cross and we are in awe of the victory of your resurrection over the world and death itself. Would our trust and union with you deepen as we build up our faith on your truth and the witness of your church. Would you be our center and occupy our hearts so that we do not take for granted the freedom you came to bring. Holy Spirit, help us to believe and to overcome our unbelief. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## **D I V I N G   D E E P E R**

How do our prayers and petitions reveal our hearts, doubts, and attitudes? How do they show us what we are seeking in our lives?

What causes us to fall into temptation and enslavement to sin again, even after experiencing God's grace and restoration in our lives?

How can the gospel of who Jesus is and what He has done be sufficient for us to trust and follow Him?