

Is Jesus welcome at your church?¹

In a purely non-Scriptural, hypothetical way, we are asking this question.

Of course, if anyone is seriously levelling this accusation at you or your church, they do not know the Scriptures nor the power therein. He will not be stopping by anywhere in the same way He was in 1st century Jerusalem, again. For Christ has come ONCE in humility and He will come again ONCE in judgment. (Heb.9:26-28)

So, really, if Jesus shows up at your church, it means the end of all things.

But let's just say that Jesus did pick this time and place, in which we live, to make an appearance. Let's say that, by some cosmic twist of space, time, and the whole history of salvation, that Jesus enters your church building one Sunday morn.

What will He run into? Ushers? Bulletins? Big-Screens? Blaring music?

More important is: what will He do about whatever He finds? Regardless of "worship practice" or ornamentation or "warm welcoming," Jesus will immediately go to the front of the church where He can speak. Yes, this is His practice in the New Testament, but it is also what He was prophesied to do. As the Servant Songs in Isaiah speak of, Jesus is sent to preach and His mouth is a sharp sword (Isa. 49:2). It will also be no small thing when Jesus opens His mouth to speak. He will stir up anger and judgment with words such as are found in Isa. 50, "*Behold all you who kindle a fire, who encircle yourselves with firebrands; walk in the light of your fire and among the brands you have set ablaze. This you will have from my hand: You will lie down in torment.*" (v.11)

So Jesus speaks His Law that He has given and all in attendance hear it, but who believes it? He has no stately form or majesty that we should pay attention. He has not the appearance that we should be attracted to Him. Yes, we would hear His Word, but His word is like a fire; like a hammer that breaks the rock and that kind of speaking does not sit well.

We would hear Him and we would judge Him. He is not speaking kindly or lovingly and He is scaring the children. He is not allowing questions or debate, simply preaching. His mouth cuts through our façade of holiness and we are cut to the quick. He is not saying things the right way and He is not speaking to people at their level. In talking about sin, He is embarrassing and turning people away.

This is not very Christ-like. Jesus would never do such a thing. So we judge Him and do you know what the next words are that come out of your mouth? "Crucify Him."

Many people love to think to themselves how, when Jesus comes that we just have to be a good person towards Him and we will get "in". Or how, if we were alive at the same time He was, then we would have bashed some Pharisees and rescued Him, but that just proves your own guilt. (Matt. 23:31)

However, since it pleases God Himself to crush Jesus (Isa. 53:10), we should not be so quick to despair. He is the Son of God sent to be crucified. He was supposed to be stricken, smitten, and afflicted. It was divinely necessary, in fact, that the Christ be handed over, suffer, and die and on the third day rise again. (Mt. 16:21)

Should it be any wonder then, that crucifying Jesus is the will of God? No. It shouldn't be any surprise, either, that you would find yourself also shouting with the crowd to have Jesus crucified.

In fact, that is the true Church's cry each and every day. Yes, we lament our sins and are repentant, because God had to go to such great lengths to redeem us. But, come Good Friday, we are cheering Jesus on!

Go, Jesus, go! Take on our guilt. Take on our sin. Endure those false accusations. Survive those beatings long enough to get to the cross. You can do it! Just a bit further. You got to work harder. Get up on that cross. Go, go, go!

¹ www.alienrighteousness.org

Do not let those “holiness groups” or pietists get you to doubt your faith by bringing up Jesus returning, attending your Church, and not being welcome. He is not going to show up in that way anymore. For He died once for all, never to die again. Also, if your church is preaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments, Jesus is already there, not judging, but forgiving.

For, if He showed up today, Jesus would be crucified. If He showed up in the future, He would be crucified. Truly, if Jesus were not crucified, He would not have died. If He would not have died, He would not have been resurrected. If He were not raised from the dead, then your faith is in vain. (1 Cor. 15:17)