



HOW DO YOU RESPOND TO RIDICULE?

Introduction:

- A. Text: Ps. 25:19 “Consider my enemies, for they are many; And they hate me with cruel hatred.

- B. Ridicule Is Often SO Unfair, Unjust, And Untrue!

- C. But Those Who Spout It Could Care Less!
 - 1. Some are driven by motives of jealousy, envy, resentment, rage, and revenge.

 - 2. Some are driven by protective zeal. In Ac. 5, the opponents of Peter, John, and the rest of the Apostles are described as “filled with jealousy” NIV and ESV or “filled with indignation.” KJV and NKJV.
 - a. The original word can carry the idea of “jealousy.” In that sense the Jewish leaders would have been jealous that they were losing their grip and influence over the people who were becoming believers in Christ.
 - b. However, the original word can also carry the idea of “zeal” -- they were “zealous for the cause of God!”
 - 1. Thus, they felt that they HAD to defend God against what they perceived as this new, fly-by-night movement that opposed the Law of Moses, the Temple, and the Priesthood.
 - 2. They felt that they MUST oppose Peter and John, all of the Apostles, and Jesus -- and their mindset was “IF NO US, WHO?”
 - 3. Therefore they would do anything to stop this movement!

 - 4. They seek to castigate, malign, defame, and destroy.

 - 4. Their attacks can be SO vicious!

- D. It Happened To Our Perfect Jesus; It Happens To Us As Well!

1. John 15:18-25 “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. ¹⁹If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. ²⁰Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. ²¹But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. ²²If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³He who hates Me hates My Father also. ²⁴If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. ²⁵But *this happened* that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, ‘*They hated Me without a cause.*’”
2. So WHY should we be surprised when we are ridiculed or attacked?
3. This still doesn't make it easy!
4. Hopefully our reliance upon the Lord will grow stronger as we face such ridicule!

I. (Slide #2) What Enemies Called Jesus:

A. (►) Blasphemer!

1. One who speaks irreverently, sarcastically, or disparagingly of God!
2. One who speaks evil or who slanders another.
3. Mt. 9:1-7 “Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, ‘Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.’ ³And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, ‘**This Man blasphemes!**’ ⁴But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, ‘Why do you think evil in your hearts? ⁵For which is easier, to say, ‘*Your sins are forgiven you,*’ or to say, ‘Arise and walk’? ⁶But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins’--then He said to the paralytic, ‘Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.’ ⁷And he arose and departed to his house.”
4. When He was tried by Caiaphas. Mt. 26:63-65 “But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, ‘I put You under oath by the living God: **Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!**’ ⁶⁴Jesus said to him, ‘***It is as you said.*** Nevertheless, I say to you, **hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.**’ ⁶⁵Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, ‘**He has spoken blasphemy!** What further need do we have of witnesses? **Look, now you have heard His blasphemy!**’”

B. (►) Friend Of Publicans And Sinners!

1. Mt. 9:11,12 “Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, *that* behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. ¹¹And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said to His disciples, **‘Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?’**”
 - a. This was after Matthew became His disciple.
 - b. Many tax collectors and sinners were eager to hear His teaching!
2. Lk. 15:1,2 “Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. ²And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, ‘This Man receives sinners and eats with them.’”
 - a. Jesus contrasted the Pharisees’ and scribes’ disdain for sinners with God and His desire to save them!
 - b. He did so by the three amazing parables “The Lost Sheep,” “The Lost Coin,” and “The Lost Son.”
 - c. But in reality those parables are NOT emphasizing what was lost; they are emphasizing the LOVE OF GOD FOR THE LOST!!!!
3. And people complained against Him when He went to the house of Zacchaeus: “He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner!” Lk. 19:7

C. (►) Violator Of The Sabbath Law!

1. Mt. 12:1,2 “At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. ²And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said to Him, **‘Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!’**”
2. Mt. 12:10-14 “And behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, ‘Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?’ -- that they might accuse Him. ¹¹Then He said to them, ‘What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift *it* out? ¹²Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.’ ¹³Then He said to the man, ‘Stretch out your hand.’ And he stretched *it* out, and it was restored as whole as the other. ¹⁴Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him.”
3. The Jews had their own interpretations and rules about the Sabbath; Jesus and His Disciples did not sin by violating the Sabbath; He KNEW what the Sabbath Law was; the members of the Godhead were the very SOURCE of the Law!
4. The Jews saw it as a sin to do good on the Sabbath, especially to heal!

- a. When He healed the infirmed woman who was stooped over for 18 years, the ruler of the synagogue condemned Him! “But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, ‘There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day.’” Lk. 13:14. Jesus responded by calling him a hypocrite!
- b. When Jesus, on the Sabbath, healed the man at the pool of Bethesda who had been lame for 38 years, the Jews charged the man of being a sinner because he carried his bedroll home after being healed! Jn. 5:9,10. By the way, he was merely doing what Jesus told him to do! Jn. 5:11
- c. When that former lame man informed the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him, they sought to kill Him!
 1. Jn. 5:16 “For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath.”
 2. And their charge: “Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.” Jn. 5:18
- d. When Jesus healed the blind man on the Sabbath, the Jews attacked: “Therefore some of the Pharisees said, ‘This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath.’ Others said, ‘How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?’ And there was a division among them.” Jn. 9:16

D. (Slide #3) Beelzebub!

1. Mt. 12:22-24 “Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw. ²³And all the multitudes were amazed and said, ‘Could this be the Son of David?’ ²⁴Now when the Pharisees heard *it* they said, ‘This *fellow* does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.’”
2. They are accusing Jesus of being the Devil.
3. And when He taught that He was the Good Shepherd, many of the Jews accused Him of being demon-possessed. Jn. 10:20. Soon thereafter, they tried to stone Him to death! Jn. 10:31-33
4. Can you imagine accusing the sinless Son of God of being the Devil?????

E. (►) Liar!

1. Mt. 26:60,61 “Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none. But at last two false witnesses came forward ⁶¹and said, ‘This *fellow* said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.’”

2. Mt. 26:63-65 “But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, ‘I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!’ ⁶⁴Jesus said to him, ‘*It is as you said.* Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.’ ⁶⁵Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, ‘He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy!’”

F. (▶) **False Prophet!**

1. Jesus was invited to the house of a Pharisee to eat; while there, a sinful woman came into the house, washed His feet with her tears, wiped His feet with her hair, and took an alabaster box of ointment, poured it on his feet, and anointed His feet.
2. The Pharisee immediately thought within himself, “This man, **if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman *this is*** who is touching Him, for she is a **sinner.**” Lk. 7:39

G. (▶) Then They Just Piled On Him -- **Glutton, Winebibber, Friend Of Tax Collectors And Sinners!**

1. Mt. 11:19 “The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ But wisdom is justified by her children.”
2. They had previously accused John who “came neither eating nor drinking,” of having a demon.! Mt. 11:18
3. The point: no matter what a prophet or the Messiah did, the unbelieving people of that generation rejected them!

II. (Slide #4) **What Enemies Called Christians:**

A. (▶) **Cult!**

1. Ac. 24:5 Tertullus’ accusation against Paul before the Governor Felix “For we have found this man **a plague, a creator of dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.**”
2. This was an oft thrown attack at the Christians.

B. (▶) Trouble-Makers And Lawbreakers!

1. Paul and Silas cast the demon out of the girl being used by covetous men!
2. Ac. 16:19-21 “But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged *them* into the marketplace to the authorities. ²⁰And they brought them to the magistrates, and said, "These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city; ²¹and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe.”
3. The result of these vile attacks -- Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown in jail!

C. (▶) Blasphemers!

1. Dishonest men were induced to make these charges against Stephen, “We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God.’ ¹²And they stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes; and they came upon *him*, seized him, and brought *him* to the council. ¹³They also set up false witnesses who said, ‘This man does not cease to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law; ¹⁴for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs which Moses delivered to us.” Ac. 6:11-14
2. In their rage, the Jews whom Stephen condemned, stoned him to death!
 - a. Ac. 7:54 “When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with *their* teeth.”
 - b. When Stephen declared that He saw the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God, “Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; ⁵⁸and they cast *him* out of the city and stoned *him*. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on *God* and saying, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’” Ac. 7:57-59

D. (▶) Liars And Opponents Of The Law!

1. As Paul was before Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia, the Jews charged him “This *fellow* persuades men to worship God contrary to the law.”
2. Paul was NOT an opponent of the Law; he merely knew that the Law had ended at the Cross; now Christ and His Law were in effect!

III. (Slide #5) How Do We Respond To Ridicule?

A. (▶) Well, It's Easy To Say The Time-Worn Mantra **“Sticks And Stone May Break My Bones, But Words Can Never Hurt Me!”**

1. The point of that mantra is to encourage people to refuse to give power to those who ridicule you.
2. However, people are often deeply hurt by vicious words! And today, it may be said to your face, written, e-mailed, texted, or Tweeted.
3. Solomon was SO right, “Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.” Pr. 18:21
4. Words can build up; words can crush the spirit!
5. Words can bless; words can destroy!

B. (▶) **Don't Get Bent Out Of Shape About It; If You Are Ridiculed For Serving The Lord, Just Accept It And Move Along!**

1. Think what He, the sinless Son of God endured for you!
2. Be grateful that you can face ridicule for Him!

C. (Slide #6) **Compare Being Ridiculed With The Horrible Persecution Some Have Endured For The Lord And His Cause!**

1. What is suffering ridicule compared to scourging or cruel death?
2. Think about the unnamed people in the Hall of Faith in Heb. 11! Heb. 11:35-38

D. (▶) **Pray About Your Own Heart!**

1. Mt. 5:39 “But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.”
2. Mt. 5:44 “But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,”

E. (▶) **If You Are Falsely Accused, Show Where The Ridicule Is Wrong And Move On!**

1. Ac. 24:14 “But this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets.”

2. Ac. 28:22 “But we desire to hear from you what you think; for concerning this sect, we know that it is spoken against everywhere.”
3. Paul knew the accusations people made against Christianity and him -- “CULT!”
4. It did not deter him; he said, “Well, that’s what they call us.” At the same time he knew the accusations were absurd and concocted lies!

F. (Slide #6) Rejoice That You Can Suffer Like Christ And For Christ!

1. Mt. 5:11,12 “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. ¹²Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”
2. Imitate Him as you face ridicule! I Pet. 3:9 “not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.”

G. (►) Let Your Life Outlive The Ridicule -- People May Not See Through The Ridicule At The Time; However, The Passing Of Time Reveals The Heart Of The Ridiculer And The Heart Of The Ridiculee!

H. (►) Never Forget His Promise To Bless You For Facing Ridicule!

1. Mt. 5:11,12 “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. ¹²Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”
2. He will bless any who are persecuted for His name’s sake!

I. (►) NEVER Seek To Retaliate!

1. Mt. 5:38,39 “You have heard that it was said, ‘*An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.*’ ³⁹But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.”
2. I Pet. 2:21-23 “For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: ²²*‘Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth’*; ²³who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed *Himself* to Him who judges righteously;”
3. Go and live FOR Christ; Go and live LIKE Christ!