



The REAL JESUS

WEEK 3 | NICK CARNES

All Scripture is in the Christian Standard Bible (CSB), unless noted differently.

Matthew 23:1-4 Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples,
² “The teachers of religious law and the Pharisees are the official interpreters of the law of Moses. ³ So practice and obey whatever they tell you, but don’t follow their example. For they don’t practice what they teach. ⁴ They crush people with unbearable religious demands and never lift a finger to ease the burden.

Matthew 23:5-7 “Everything they do is for show. On their arms they wear extra wide prayer boxes with Scripture verses inside, and they wear robes with extra-long tassels. ⁶ And they love to sit at the head table at banquets and in the seats of honor in the synagogues. ⁷ They love to receive respectful greetings as they walk in the marketplaces, and to be called ‘Rabbi.’

Luke 7:11-15 Afterward he was on his way to a town called Nain. His disciples and a large crowd were traveling with him. ¹² Just as he neared the gate of the town, a dead man was being carried out. He was his mother’s only son, and she was a widow. A large crowd from the town was also with her. ¹³ When the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said, “Don’t weep.” ¹⁴ Then he came up and touched the open coffin, and the pallbearers stopped. And he said, “Young man, I tell you, get up!”

Jesus places _____ above religious _____.

Luke 7:16-18 The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. ¹⁶ Then fear came over everyone, and they glorified God, saying, “A great prophet has risen among us,” and “God has visited his people.” ¹⁷ This report about him went throughout Judea and all the vicinity.

Matthew 9:9 NLT As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at his tax collector’s booth. “Follow me and be my disciple,” Jesus said to him. So Matthew got up and followed him.

Matthew 9:10-11 NLT Later, Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners.¹¹ But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with such scum?”

Matthew 9:12-13 When Jesus heard this, he said, “Healthy people don’t need a doctor—sick people do.”¹³ Then he added, “Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: ‘I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.’ For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners.”

GO DEEPER

This week, read the Scriptures from Sunday and answer these questions:

1. What did you learn from Sunday’s sermon? Did you gain any new insights?
2. The sermon said some Christians can “give Jesus a bad name” by misrepresenting His nature and character. What are some ways Christians can unintentionally—or intentionally—misrepresent Jesus to people outside the church?
3. Jesus contrasted Himself with the Pharisees, who “crush” people with religious burdens, while Jesus demonstrated compassion toward people in need. What is the difference between helping someone follow Jesus and simply placing religious expectations on them?
4. In Luke 7, Jesus encountered a grieving widow and responded with compassion before asking anything of her. Who are some “least of these” or overlooked people in our community that we might be tempted to overlook? What would it look like to demonstrate Jesus’ compassion toward them?
5. The sermon said, “Jesus places people above religious practices.” What are some situations where Christians can become more concerned with rules, traditions, appearances, or being “right” than with genuinely loving and helping people?
6. Jesus called Matthew while he was still an active tax collector rather than waiting for him to clean up his life first. What does Matthew’s story teach us about the relationship between coming to Jesus and being transformed by Jesus? How can we apply that when interacting with people who are far from God?
7. The sermon concluded with the idea that, “*We represent Jesus best when we live like Jesus lived and treat people the way He treated them.*” If someone who did not know Jesus watched your life for the next week, what would they learn about Jesus from the way you treat people? What is one specific change you could make?