

From Synagogue to Sanctuary



Week 1: The Days of Jesus
Week 2: The Days of the Apostles

Week 3: The Days of the Rabbis

INTRODUCTION – Snapshot of Christianity:

Peace Through War

A WORKING THEORY FOR THIS SERIES:

Judaism had lost its way (this is a given in the Old Testament material). Jesus came to fulfill Israel's calling. Christianity has, in many of the same ways as Judaism, lost its way. We, Jews and Christians alike, need to hear the message of Jesus afresh. Both religions have strayed at various times and in various ways, including the following categories:

- TORAH (addiction to the printed Word as a source of salvation)
- TRADITION (making human teaching equal with God's Word)
- TEMPLE (a special holy place to connect with God)
- TERRITORY (a special holy land as the place for God's "kingdom" on earth)
- TRIBE (a special holy people, set apart from other races)

Romans 12:4; John 19:10-11

Snapshot of First Century Judaism

- **ZEALOTS** – Freedom fighters against the Romans
- **SADDUCEES** – Being loyal to the Temple
- **ESSENES** – Retreating to the dessert, staying celibate, and waiting for the Messiah
- **HERODIANS** – Supporters of Herod the Great and his son Herod Antipas
- **PHARISEES** – Teaching Torah in Synagogues (precursors to the Rabbis)
- **CHRISTIANS** – New Covenant Jews following the Way of Jesus

After loosing the war against Rome and the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE, only the Pharisees and the Christians survived into the second century.

The Roles of the Church and the Government

Romans 12:17-13:7; 1 Peter 2:13-17

ROLE OF THE CHURCH

Love enemies to death
Never participate in vengeance
Never participate in God's wrath
Fight evil with practical care

ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT

Punish evil to death
Avenger on behalf of God
God's instrument of wrath
Fight evil with the sword

In light of **Romans 12**, Christ-followers must absorb evil, not reflect it.
In light of **Romans 13**, Christ-followers must always submit to and honour the government, although we may not always obey it.

Exodus 1:17; Daniel 3; 6; Acts 4:18-20; 5:29; 23:1-5

70 CE – The End of the World (As They Knew It)

The Great War began in 66 CE (Common Era). The Zealots called upon all true Jews to fight against pagan Rome in the name of the God of Israel. Christians refused to fight. Instead Christians taught that submission to whatever authority was in place was the will of God. Refusal to fight against pagan invaders felt like treason to nationalistic Jews. Christians reminded their kinsmen that Jesus had predicted a terrible loss if they went to war against Rome – a prophecy that came true with alarming accuracy. Rome won and the Temple was destroyed. It was the end of the world as they knew it.

Matthew 10:23; 16:28; 24 / Mark 13 / Luke 19:41-44; 21:5-36; 23:27-31

ENEMY ATTACK AS GOD'S JUDGEMENT!... **Deuteronomy 28:15-57; 2 Chronicles 36:15-19; Isaiah 10:5-11; 19:1-4; Jeremiah 4:11-18; Habakkuk 1:5-12**

CONCLUSION – Faith Working Through Love

John 19:10-11; Galatians 5:6

HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS...

WARMING UP & REVIEW...

1. Discuss the implications of this quote by Richard B. Hays: *Harming or killing enemies is no longer a justifiable option in the light of Jesus' kingdom demand. Believers must renounce violence in their personal relationships and avoid governmental positions that might force them to use violence.*
2. Use your notes to review this week's message, including our key text (**Matthew 24**). As you go, talk about what challenged, perplexed, or encouraged you.

LOOK TO THE BOOK...

3. Review the role of the Church as contrasted with the role of Government. Read over **Romans 12:14-13:7** in different translations. a) Does anything new stand out to you while hearing the same message presented in different translations? b) What verse or thought stands out to you the most? Why? c) What would a nation look like if it tried to live out **Romans 12** instead of **Romans 13**? d) What would the Church look like if they tried to live out **Romans 13** instead of **Romans 12**? (Hint: History gives us plenty of examples.) e) Think about it. What are the revolutionary ramifications of **Romans 13:1** for our lives as Christ-followers? (Also remember Christ's example in **John 19:10-11**.) f) What is the link between **12:19** and **13:4**? Discuss. g) Should German Christians have paid their taxes during WWII? Should American Christians pay their taxes now? Is there ever a time to boycott paying taxes? h) If violence is not a Christian option, and taxes must always be paid, what are some other ways that Christians can actively advocate for good?

SO WHAT?...

4. Take a few minutes to meditate on **12:20-21** with a focus on what it would look like fully lived out in your life. When done meditating, talk about new insights as they apply to your life. What are some situations where you need God's help to live this vision out in your own life? Pray for each other regarding this.

Bruxy Cavey @ THE MEETING HOUSE – Sunday, April 1 / 8, 2007