**‘This Generation’**

Matthew 12:38-45

October 5, 2025

**Introduction**

About 2 months ago we looked at what I called The Unsatisfied Generation in Mt11:1-19

The unsatisfied generation had the greatest prophet John, and Jesus the Son of Man

JS said in v16-17: But to what shall I liken this generation? It is like children

sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their companions and saying:

We played the flute for you and you did not dance, we mourned for you

and you did not lament. For John came… and you say … and the Son of

Man came… and you say …

In Mt 12:38-45, the word ‘generation’ is used 4X’s, 3 of the 4 it is called ‘this generation’

Today in Mt 12:38-45 Jesus cites two charges against ‘this generation’ as evil

what JS says to His ‘this generation’ is very pertinent to our ‘this generation’

**1st Charge: ‘This Generation’ Asks For A Sign 38-42**

A. This generation asks for ‘a sign’ 38

The Scribes and Pharisees – scholars and religious leaders, JS opponents 93 1224

these were the ones who attributed JS casting out demons to Beelzebub

They ask Jesus: Teacher, we want to see a sign from You. 1Co1:22

Use of teacher here after 12:25-37 is hypocritical and disingenuous

JS has already done many miraculous signs, they want to see ‘a sign’ now

How many signs does it take for ppl 2blv?

Israel? Nb14:21-23 Dt29:3-4 Pharoah? Ex 4:8 10:1

Excursus on signs – things God does to show Himself to people

Gn9:12 – the rainbow is a sign God not destroy world again by flood

Jos4:8 pile of stones a sign of where promised into land of Israel

Judges 6:17 Gideon asked for a sign – ground and fleece, this is unique, like S&P

Is7:11 God lets King Ahaz ask any sign for himself

Ezk12:5 Ezekiel becomes a sign to Israel

Lk2:12 sign to the shepherds of their Savior, find a baby wrapped ..

Seven Signs in gospel of John

2:11 turn water into wine at wedding 4:54 healing a noble man’s son

5:1-18 healing of invalid at pool of Bethesda 6:5-14 feeding of 5K

6:16-21 walking on water 9:1-7 giving sight to the man born blind

11:1-45 raising Lazarus from the dead

In J20:30-31 many others but these written that you might believe

We want to see ‘a sign’ from You – impudent, hypocritical, insulting [AB Bruce]

B. How Jesus feels about being asked for ‘a sign’ 39a

Evil and adulterous generation asks for ‘a sign’ – very strong language used here

Jesus does not commend seeking a sign, see 23:29-36

Jesus Himself offered signs, these signs were to authenticate His creds as Messiah

These people were so far that not any sign would do, no sign would do

C. Jesus says ‘see the sign’ 39b-42

Note Jesus distinguishing between their request for ‘a sign’ and ‘the sign of …’

No sign except ‘the sign’ of Jonah the prophet …

Jonah was 3days and 3nights in the belly of the great fish

1st century idiom for any part of 3 days

Jonah 1:17 Jonah went to wicked Nineveh preached they repented!

So the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth – i.e. His resurrection

16:4,17 Lk11:29-30

Men Nineveh rise up judge this generation, repented at preaching of Jonah

Son of Man is greater than Jonah, yet this generation not hear Him

Queen of South rise up condemn this generation 1 Kings 10:1-13

She came to hear Solomon and a greater than Solomon is here!!!

Lesson - How is ‘our generation’ like ‘this generation’ of Jesus day?

Talking with a man who wanted ‘a sign’ for himself, so he could believe

He didn’t get it so he doesn’t believe. Some still want ‘a sign’ asking4

But for many today, ignore ‘the sign’ Jesus gave in His resurrection from dead

Read Sermon on the Mount and see the wisdom of Jesus, recognize the greater

Believe ‘the sign’ Jesus has given all. He asks for belief from you and response

Jesus calls it an evil and adulterous generation that seeks after a sign. And may I

Add, that ignores the signs that Jesus has already given

The demand 4a sign is th end of faith! God asks 4faith, Mt810,26 1528 Ga220  2Co57

**2nd Charge: ‘This Generation’ Cleans Out But Does Not Fill Up With God 43-45**

A. This generation cleans out 43-44

Jesus tells a sort of parable to make His point

Unclean spirt goes out of man, goes seeking rest finds none

Returns to the man and finds the man

cleaned out - empty, swept, put in order

‘This generation’ had developed superficial changes through legalism

This made them look clean and orderly

They were people who had reformed their lives, made improvement…

But not really done anything with God, with Jesus

Also the connection in 12:22-30 with the charge of JS casting out

Demon by the ruler of the demons

V30 no neutral ground with JS, if U do, you open self up to worse

B. But this generation does not fill up with God 45 a

Jesus finishes the parable

The unclean spirit goes and takes with it, 7 other spirits more wicked

They enter and dwell there

Last state of the man is worse than the first

The sort of reformed life without the Holy Spirit, without relationship w JS

God not ruling in this life, opens itself up to worse than before

2Pt2:20-22

C. Jesus point 45b

This is the way it will be for this wicked generation

Note the term ‘wicked’ with generation, evil

Israel had gone into Babylonian captivity because of idolatry

They gave up idolatry when they came back, reformed much

But when the Messiah came, they did not see Him

Lesson – The hardest people to reach with the gospel are people who think they have

cleaned up, orderly lives with everything put in order who go to church. But in the end they are in a worse state than if they were a knowing down and out sinner because they cannot see their own problem. Outer reformation without inner transformation brings one to be susceptible to worse

Revitalization – Revitalization comes from a vital living relationship with the Lord Jesus

Salvation – is the first step, have you come to know Jesus as your Savior or are you trusting in

outward reforms you make in your life?