

**“Wisdom is justified by her children”**

**Matthew 11:1-18**

**Scripture Ref: Rom 8:16-17; Eph 2:4-10; 1 Pet 1:10-12; Matt 10:25; Matt 10:38-39; Mal 4:5; Dan 12:3; Gal 1:10**

**1.**

11:1 Now it came to pass, when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to teach and to preach in their cities.

2 And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples 3 and said to Him, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"

- 2. Matt 14 fills in the blanks a little here, Herod, the King of Judah at the time, had become smitten with his brothers wife Herodias , and had taken her as his wife.**
  - a. John the Baptist, not one to hold back on speaking the truth, had publicly rebuked the king for this, and so Herod had him arrested and put in prison.**
  - b. Now John, sitting in a dark, cold, prison cell, was probably getting a little depressed.**
  - c. At first he might have been thinking “no problem, Messiah is here, He’ll bust me out! Prophecy tells me that He’ll open prison doors and set the captives free!”**
- 3. John might have been waiting for Jesus to overthrow the Roman empire, establish His kingdom here on earth, and of course bust John out of prison!**
  - a. And... that could have happened – but more on that later.**
- 4. So after a few months, John may have started to wonder, and doubt, and so he sent messengers to Jesus asking...**
  - a. "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"**
- 5. Jesus answer to the messengers was “Look around guys, the blind see, the lame walk (Is 35:5-6),**

4 Jesus answered and said to them, *"Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: 5 The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. 6 And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."*

- 6. “Check out what is going on all around you... prophecy is being fulfilled, the kingdom is being seen – but perhaps not in the way that you expected.”**
  - a. You see, the material, political, literal kingdom that John was hoping for *will come eventually*, (it could have come at that time,**

had Israel accepted Jesus as Messiah, but that is a whole other sermon!)

- b. ...but at that moment Jesus was establishing His kingdom *spiritually*.
  - c. Instead of working globally, He was touching people *individually*.
7. And I think John was in a place that many of us find ourselves:
- a. Perhaps we have followed the Lord in obedience, lived for Him, ...but at some point we find ourselves in a deep, dark, place, and we wonder “Why?”
  - b. “What’s up Lord? Why am I here, why haven’t you delivered me?”

**Rom 8:16-17**

*16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs -- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.*

8. What does that tell me? It tells me that sometimes God will allow us to stay in a place of difficulty, for a time, that we might grow stronger and closer to Him
- a. We sometimes think that the main point of life is to be happy and pain-free all the time.
  - b. If we were happy and life was perfect all the time, we would totally fall away from God!
  - c. But the fact is – sometimes sadness and pain are good for us – they draw us to God.
9. John is sitting in prison, soon he’ll be beheaded, and at first glance we might think “what is up with that? Wasn’t John the guy that said you would come, he even baptized you!”
- a. But we have to remember what Jesus said: *He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it. (Matt 10:39)*
  - b. If we really believe that God is real, that there is a heaven, then is this life the end game?
  - c. Question: Where is John the Baptist right now? Heaven!
  - d. He would probably say *“that was nothing compared to the glory that I am experiencing right now!”*
10. Now, contrast what Jesus said to John’s messengers, to what Jesus said to the crowd after they left.

7 As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? 8 But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those

*who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. 9 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. 10 For this is he of whom it is written: "Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You."*

- 11. Check it out – John the Baptist wasn't a guy who took demographic sampling, or opinion polls to find out what people wanted to hear in the sermon!**
- a. **Not quite – John was a man that wasn't bent by the winds of social change.**
  - b. **John was a man who wasn't worried about his lifestyle or quality of life, having nice clothes and a big house.**
  - c. **No, John was a man who preached good news of the coming Messiah, a man who spoke the truth no matter what the cost or what people thought**
  - d. **Then listen to this...**

11 "Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist;

**12. In other words, John was greater than Abraham, greater than Moses, greater than David...**

- a. **But Jesus didn't say that to John's messengers -**

**13. Hmm... sounds familiar...**

- a. **Where God will often challenge us by His word, and convict us with His Holy Spirit...**
- b. **Yet at the same time He is up there in heaven, saying to the Angels, "Look at my people there in Calvary Chapel Wilmington, aren't they awesome!**
  - i. **They worship me, they love my people, they love my word**
  - ii. **They are robed in my righteousness, and cleansed by my blood!**
- c. **How do I know this? The bible tells me so...**

***Eph 2:4-10***

***4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are***

***His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.***

**14. And if that weren't enough...**

but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

**15. This kingdom age which we live in, even the least of us is greater than John.**

**a. Peter tells us that in past times, the prophets tried to understand**

**1 Peter 1:10-12**

*10 Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, 11 searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. 12 To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven -- things which angels desire to look into.*

**16. We live in a time when we have a more clear understanding of God's plan, we can see how God has moved through the ages,**

- a. we are even now getting a glimpse into how things will come to an end!**
- b. We live in a new age – the new covenant –**

12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.

**17. This verse can be translated several ways in the Greek:**

- a. It could mean that the kingdom of heaven is being attacked by violent men.**
  - i. Indeed it was – John was in prison about to be beheaded,**
  - ii. Herod had killed thousands of babies trying to exterminate Jesus,**
  - iii. Bloodshed and violence abounded, and things were going to get much worse!**

**18. Or it could be rendered another way with equal accuracy:**

- a. It could mean that the kingdom of heaven is taken by men who are aggressive,**
- b. who enthusiastically and energetically pursue spreading the message of the gospel**

- c. Who are willing to do whatever is necessary, to make any sacrifice for the Kingdom,
  - d. Literally doing what Jesus told us earlier – *“taking up your cross and follow me.”*
19. It's interesting to me that if a person makes huge sacrifices in this world, they are held up in the highest esteem
- a. we call them “great warriors, a valiant men”,
  - b. or “great business leaders who built a company from scratch”
  - c. We write books about them, create movies that tell their story
  - d. But if someone gives all for the kingdom of God, they are called “fanatic”
20. The truth is – just like in the secular world: The kingdom is not for the apathetic; those who sit back and figure that God will work everything out.
- a. The Kingdom will be realized by those who press in, those who move with fervent zeal, those who lay hold of the promises of God and move forward – blowing right through the opposition.
21. So as I read this – to me the simple and straightforward interpretation is BOTH of these statements are true and work together
- a. The kingdom is under attack – the world hated Jesus, and it will hate us

***Matt 10:25** It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household!*

- b. And we as God's servants are called to see our lives through the lens of eternity,
- c. and realize that we are not put here to have a pleasure filled and leisurely life – God has the covered in eternity –
- d. We are here we are to follow Him

***Matt 10:38-39***

*38 And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. 39 He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.*

22. It is a great and worthy calling, and many are called, but few are chosen (Marr 22:14)
- a. And the first to be called into this new covenants ministry of proclaiming the gospel was – John the Baptist.
  - b. John was God's messenger – foretold four hundred years earlier by the Prophet Malachi

13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. 14 And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come. 15 He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

**Mal 4:5** *Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.*

**23. But – the people didn't accept John...**

16 "But to what shall I liken this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their companions, 17 and saying: 'We played the flute for you, And you did not dance; We mourned to you, And you did not lament.'

**24. In other words, Jesus is saying “no matter what we did, we got no respect! Ya'll didn't show us any love!**

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' 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!'

**25. No matter what you do, there is always someone there to point out what you did wrong.**

- a. For example, some people criticized John the Baptist. He dressed funny, he ate bugs, he was always talking about repenting. People said he was crazy!
- b. Jesus, on the other hand, was just the opposite: He ate and drank and celebrated with people, and people said He was a glutton and drunkard.
- c. That tells me something: if we are going to answer the call of God, and live for Him – we have to settle in our heart once and for all that we don't care what people think – only what God thinks!

**26. Jesus made the very profound statement...**

But wisdom is justified by her children."

**27. What does that mean? It means that if you are wise, it will be shown in your life. (*But wisdom is proved right by her actions NIV*)**

- a. Specifically by how you live your life
- b. Remember Dan 12:3

**Dan 12: 3** *Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.*

**Gal 1:10** *For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.*

**28. Those who are wise...**

- a. will acknowledge God**
- b. will accept His gift of salvation**
- c. will seek to please God , and not man**
- d. will live their lives with an eye towards heaven**

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