

ChristReformationChurch

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The Gospel According to Matthew

The Son Reveals the Father

November 18, 2018

Sermon Text: Matthew 11:

Scripture Reading: Daniel 4:28-37

We ended last Sunday with this summation of Christ's pronouncement of judgment upon the cities He had revealed Himself to:

...the most severe wrath of God, the most intense and horrible portion of hell is reserved for people who heard and rejected the greatest, clearest offers of God's riches in Christ. How many people in the Day of Judgment, who were "religious" and "moral" will find themselves under greater condemnation than the lowliest drug addict and sinner whom they despised all the years of their lives because they

experienced more of God's blessing, yet still rejected Him.

Christ then turned to those who *do* have ears to hear Him and who love God's Word, and prays for them, then extends a wonderful invitation to them:

Mat 11:25-30 At that time Jesus declared, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; (26) yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. (27) All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

(28) Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (30) For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Let's spend some time this morning considering this very important subject – Christ reveals the Father to those He chooses.

Mat 11:25 At that time Jesus declared, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children;

No human being will ever come to a saving knowledge of God except through the Lord Jesus Christ. God will remain hidden from the wisest, most intelligent, most "understanding" person who ever lived unless the Son reveals the Father to that person. Until a person becomes "a little child," Christ will not give them eyes to see and ears to hear. The Father will remain hidden from them.

Have you ever noticed how often the Bible uses this phrase "little children" to describe real the kind of person Christ saves?

(Mat 19:14) but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven."

(Luk 10:21) In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these

things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.

(Joh 13:33) Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, 'Where I am going you cannot come.'

(Gal 4:19) my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you!

(1Jn 2:1) My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

(1Jn 2:12) I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for his name's sake.

(1Jn 2:28) And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming.

(1Jn 3:7) Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous.

(1Jn 3:18) Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in

truth.

(1Jn 4:4) Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

(1Jn 5:21) Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

The “wise and understanding” are neither wise nor understanding, you see. But they won’t admit it. They insist that they “know.” That their way of finding God is quite adequate and even superior.

Here it is stated very plainly by Jesus:

Joh 9:39-41 Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind." (40) Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, "Are we also blind?" (41) Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, 'We see,' your guilt remains.

Only Christ can reveal the Father to us. Only Christ, as His physical miracles show, can give us spiritual eyes to see and ears to hear. The sinner in his unregenerate state is blind and deaf – even his mind is blinded to any true understanding of God. This blindness **MUST** be admitted by a genuine

humbling or a man will remain guilty before God.

Now, let’s carefully think about this. How many professing Christians today are genuinely “little children?” Genuinely humble? Is it not true to observe that the churches are full of people who are really quite arrogant? Yet a true church and true believers can be accurately called “little children.” This is the beginning of any presentation of the gospel – “*you must become as a little child.*” You must admit that you are blind and deaf when it comes to knowing, seeing, and understanding God and His way of salvation. Helpless in other words.

1Co 2:6-11 Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. (7) **But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God**, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. (8) None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. (9) But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him"-- (10) these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. (11) For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that

person, which is in him? **So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.**

Theology must be approached with childlike humility. The wisest theologian in the world must constantly acknowledge that the things of God are *spiritually* revealed only to little children. This is how we must always read our Bibles. In humbleness, admitting that unless the Lord by His Spirit opens our eyes and ears and minds to Himself and His Word, we remain blind and deaf to it.

All false doctrine and man-made traditions that claim to be “biblical” are the result of arrogant handling of God’s Word.

1Co 2:1-3 And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. (2) For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. (3) And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling,

Now, look at this again:

(27) All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

At the close of the First World War, a terrible influenza epidemic broke out in this country, probably brought back here from Europe. Thousands of people died. Most all from that generation have passed away but if you ever had the opportunity to talk with any of them, they probably told you that someone they knew died in that epidemic. One old timer I knew said that 1/3 of the people in his rural community perished. Almost no household escaped a loss. Listen to this report I found online at the CDC website:

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the 1918 influenza (flu) pandemic that swept the globe in what is still one of the deadliest disease outbreaks in recorded history.

It is estimated that about 500 million people or one-third of the world’s population became infected with this virus, and the number of deaths was estimated to be at least 50 million worldwide with about 675,000 occurring in the United States. The pandemic was so severe that from 1917 to 1918, life expectancy in the United States fell by about 12 years, to 36.6 years for men and 42.2 years for women. There were high death rates in previously healthy people,

including those between the ages of 20 and 40 years old, which was unusual because flu typically hits the very young and the very old more than young adults.

The Emerging Pandemic

The 1918 flu pandemic occurred during World War I; close quarters and massive troop movements helped fuel the spread of disease.

In the United States, unusual flu activity was first detected in military camps and some cities during the spring of 1918. For the U.S. and other countries involved in the war, communications about the severity and spread of disease was kept quiet as officials were concerned about keeping up public morale, and not giving away information about illness among soldiers during wartime. These spring outbreaks are now considered a “first wave” of the pandemic; illness was limited and much milder than would be observed during the two waves that followed.

Deadly Second Wave and Third Waves

In September 1918, the second wave of pandemic flu emerged at Camp Devens, a U.S. Army training camp just outside of

Boston, and at a naval facility in Boston. This wave was brutal and peaked in the U.S. from September through November. More than 100,000 Americans died during October alone. The third and final wave began in early 1919 and ran through spring, causing yet more illness and death. While serious, this wave was not as lethal as the second wave. The flu pandemic in the U.S. finally subsided in the summer of 1919, leaving decimated families and communities to pick up the pieces. Scientists now know this pandemic was caused by an H1N1 virus, which continued to circulate as a seasonal virus worldwide for the next 38 years.

We live in a generation that has known almost nothing of such things. The average person today does not live with an awareness of the reality of death and of departing this life at any time to stand before God. Our generation is like the church at Laodicea:

Rev 3:17 For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.

And like the Pharisees-

Mat 9:11-12 And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" (12) But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.

And the Israelites-

Deu 8:10-17 And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land he has given you.

(11) "Take care lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today, (12) lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them, (13) and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied,

(14) then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, (15) who led you through the great and terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty rock, (16) who fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not know, that he might

humble you and test you, to do you good in the end. (17) Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.'

Is that not our generation? Isn't it true that most people today – our neighbors and co-workers and acquaintances – really are telling themselves, "I am rich, I have prospered, I have need of nothing"? "Influenza? Who needs to fear that? Our medicine can fix anything."

Now, what is going to happen to such people who refuse to admit they are blind and deaf to the things of the Lord? *They are going to remain blind and deaf and sick. And eventually they will die in their sins.*

But to people who see their need, to "little children" as Jesus calls them, to people who admit they are perishing under the heavy load of their sin, Christ turns to them and extends this sincere and certain invitation, giving them ears to hear it:

(28) Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (30) For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."