

Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church
Sunday Sermon

Date: May 2, 2021

Text: Matthew 11:16-30

Scripture Reading: Matthew 11:16-30

Subject: Generation like children in the marketplace

In the preceding message from Matthew 11:1-15, we considered:

1. We saw that after Jesus had finished commanding his apostles for their preaching to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, that he himself departed to teach and to preach in those cities. (Vs 1).
2. We considered how that John the Baptist sent two of his disciples to ask Jesus: "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" Jesus instructed them to show John AGAIN those things which they saw and heard, how that the blind received their sight, the lame walk, the lepers cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead raised, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. He ended by saying, "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."
3. We also considered our LORD's commendatory words to the multitudes concerning John the Baptist and his ministry.
4. We considered now "the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (John the Baptist.) We considered what it meant that the kingdom of heaven "suffereth violence," and the violent take it by force from the days of John the Baptist until the time of this writing.
5. Our Lord taught the people that all the prophets and the law prophesied until John, and that – if ye will receive it, this is Elias (Elijah), which was for to come.

Let us now proceed on verses 16-30 of this 11th chapter of Matthew.

Matthew 11:16-17 (KJV) *But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, 17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.*

But whereunto shall I liken this generation? – The term “this generation” speaks of the people of that particular time who were then living. It would have included all the people of Israel both of the upper crust Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, Scribes, but also the common people who had not received the words of John the Baptist and Jesus. These were the people of that age, the stubborn and perverse Jews; who were pleased with nothing, with no man's ministry, neither with John's, nor with Christ's, but found fault with whatever they heard, or saw done. Let us be sure we remember, that of those who did believe, there were the common people, but by no means the majority of them. We could rightly call those who believed a remnant who were being brought into the New Covenant, but the nation as a whole rejected the king and his message. And what was this generation like?

It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows – Children often copy or mimic their parents in their play time. So our Lord compares the generation to whom he is speaking to children sitting in the markets and calling to their playmates.

And saying, we have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. -- These our Saviour likens to a company of bad tempered children whom their companions could not persuade in any way to cause them to agree and participate. If they played the flute to them, they would not dance; or, if they sang to them some mournful songs, neither would they be affected with them. Nothing

they did to their fellows would please them. Let their companions sing what they would, they would not answer them. Then our Lord explains his meaning in the two verses that follow. Let's consider them.

Matthew 11:18-19 (KJV) *For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. 19 The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.*

For John (the Baptist) came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. – This and the following verse are an explanation of the foregoing saying about children in the market place. This shows, that John and his disciples are the persons that mourned. How is that? His austere life was a proof; for when he "came", being sent of God, and appeared as a public preacher, he was "neither eating nor drinking"; not that he did not eat or drink at all, otherwise he could not have lived. In caring for his needs and executing his office, it is clear that John ate sparingly, very little. What he did eat and drink was not the ordinary food and drink of the people, because he neither ate bread nor drank wine, but lived on locusts and wild honey. He shunned all feasts and entertainments; he abstained from all free and sociable conversation with men, in eating and drinking. Though the Scribes and Pharisees pretended to observe much abstinence and frequent fastings, yet they did not care to follow John's very severe way of living – no, they said John had a devil. and they said of him, *He hath a devil*; he is a melancholic, a kind of a madman.

The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. – Jesus was of a more sociable, pleasant temper, of a more free and less reserved manner, eating and

drinking as other men such things as the country afforded, not refusing to be present at feasts, though publicans and sinners were there. They said of him, *Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners*: he displeased the Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes and Herodians with too great freedom of his conversation. Considered by their rule John the Baptist was to be preferred before Christ. But Christ could please the Pharisees and lawyers, and their followers, no more than John did. They could not say he was melancholic or morose; but they blasphemed him to a higher degree, calling him a glutton and drunkard, and a friend of publicans and sinners. A godly man, let his temper and manner of life be what it will never please anyone who hates the truth of the gospel and life of godliness. If the person they scrutinize is reserved, then he is a morose, melancholic man; if he be of a more free and open way of life, then he is a drunkard, or a glutton. No matter what, the enemies of godliness will have something or other to say against a man that will not run with them to the same excess of riot. What an encouragement this is to those of us who meet with the same kinds of things from others.

But wisdom is justified of her children. – But Wisdom (Greek: Sophia – always translated as wisdom) is justified (Greek: δικαιοω dikaioo). This word is found 40 times in the NT and is translated as: “justify 37 times, be freed 1 time, be righteous 1 time, justifier 1 time.” Whether a person has “wordly wisdom” as the Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes clearly had or whether the two persons in question, John the Baptist and Jesus Christ had “the wisdom of God,” the children of either school of wisdom declares the rightness of their position.

Matthew 11:20 (KJV) *Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:*

Our Lord began to upbraid (to reproach or chide) the cities wherein, etc. Because they repented not.

This actually occurred after the other seventy had been sent out and had returned. Here is the account from Luke 10:13-24:

Luke 10:13-24 (KJV) *Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. **14** But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you. **15** And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell. **16** He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me. **17** And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. **18** And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. **19** Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. **20** Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. **21** In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. **22** All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him. **23** And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: **24** For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have*

desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

Matthew 11:21 (KJV) *Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.*

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CF: Luke 10:13-15 (KJV) *Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14 But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you. 15 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell.*

Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! – The city of Chorazin cannot now be specifically located. It is mentioned only two times in the NT, in this verse and in Luke 10:13. Bethsaida was the hometown of Philip, Andrew and Peter.

John 1:44 (KJV) *Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.*

For if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. – Tyre and Sidon were cities of Phoenicia, formerly very magnificent, prosperous, and distinguished for merchandise. They were situated on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea and were on the western part of Judea. They were, therefore, well known to the Jews. Tyre is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament as being the place through which Solomon derived many of the materials for building the temple. The people who inhabited these towns called themselves Phoenicians, but a study shows they

were part of the Canaanites who dwelt in the land promised to Israel. The city of Sidon was evidently named after the first-born son of Canaan whose name was Sidon (Gen 10:15). Therefore, these people were not Israelites, but were Gentiles.

The mighty works mentioned include both the ministry of the word by Christ, which was with power and authority, and the miracles of Christ, which were the works of almighty power, and showed him to be the mighty God. These were not done in Tyre and Sidon, cities in Phoenicia; for though our Lord was on the borders of those places, yet not in them because they were Gentile cities to which he was not sent. Therefore, he did not preach there nor do miracles in those cities. But he did both in Bethsaida and Chorazin, and they repented not of their sins; nor did they embrace his doctrine, though confirmed by miracles. And Jesus, knowing all things, said ... *if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.* The Lord knew those gentiles would have repented if these mighty works had been done in them, but he nor the apostles were sent to none but the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Matthew 11:22 (KJV) *But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.*

Here is a remarkable truth. There shall be degrees of punishment as well as degrees of rewards for service. "*For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required:*" (Luke 12:48).

Matthew 11:23-24 (KJV) *And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. 24 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.*

And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, -- The city of Capernaum was actually the home base for Jesus who did so many miracles there and preached to them. This city, therefore, had great advantages given them. They saw the King of the kingdom of heaven; they heard his gracious words; saw him heal lepers, cast out devils, give sight to the blind, saw him heal a man with the palsy and so much more.

Shalt be brought down to hell: -- This tells us that the majority of the people in this city rejected both the Lord and his message to them. "Didn't the miracles turn them to the Lord," someone asks. The miracles served to authenticate the message which Jesus preached, but still they rejected him. This city shall be brought down to hell in their rejection.

For if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. – This is a remarkable statement, is it not? The scriptures cannot be broken, therefore, this verse is as true as any other verse in scripture. Think about this with me. Makes us ask ourselves this: If God knew that if the mighty works done in Capernaum would have been done in Sodom, it would have remained to the day of this writing. Why did not God choose to send these works to Sodom? Because it pleased him to send the works to Capernaum. There are many such cases seen in scripture.

But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee. – Again, we see in this verse the truth that there shall be degrees of judgment in the last day. God alone is qualified to make such judgments.

Matthew 11:25 (KJV) *At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.*

We have seen that these words are spoken after the return of the other seventy which had been sent forth by the LORD to preach in the cities where he would come.

O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. -- This is Jesus' address to his Heavenly Father, by way of thanksgiving; glorifying and praising him, confessing and acknowledging his wisdom, power, grace, and goodness, discovered in the things he after mentions. Was Jesus discouraged and dejected at the poor success of the Seventy? Of his ill treatment by the Pharisees? and at the general lack of repentance and unbelief of the cities where he preached and wrought his miracles? Never! God forbid! Jesus was abundantly thankful and rejoiced in the distinguishing grace of God in the calling of a few in those places. These words show the sovereignty of his Father in the conversion of men.

Because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, -- God is said to have hid these things from the wise and prudent, that is, from the worldly wise and prudent, the professed atheists and religionists of the world – what things? the gospel of the kingdom; the fact that Jesus is the king and the savior. How did the Father do that? because he had not revealed them to them. The preaching of the word cannot be understood by a mere external revelation but is revealed to God's elect by an internal revelation by the Holy Spirit. This revealing by the Spirit moves men and women to embrace those things and believe them.

And has revealed them unto babes. – God has revealed these wonderful things to foolish ones, comparatively speaking, who have not the natural learning and worldly wisdom others have. These ones are those in the estimation of the world who are as babes, helpless, defenseless, and who have no power of themselves to do or say anything that is spiritually good. These babes realize that of themselves. To such souls God reveals his grace, reveals Christ, and all the blessings of grace in him, the mysteries of the Gospel, and the unseen glories of another world. The veil of darkness and ignorance is removed from them; spiritual sight is given them; these things are set before them; they see a glory and blessedness in them. Their desires are turned to them; their affections are set on them; their hearts are impressed with them; and they are helped to truly perceive them.

Matthew 11:26 (KJV) *Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.*

One might ask why did God do this – to blind the wise and prudent and reveal the gospel to babes? Here is the answer through all the scriptures: Because it seemed good in His sight. Because it pleased him to do so according to the counsel of His own will.

Matthew 11:27 (KJV) *All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.*

All things are delivered unto me of my Father: -- This means that the Father has given all things into the care of Christ for the good of God's people and for the ruling of the entire creation.

John 3:35 (KJV) *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.*

Colossians 1:16-17 (KJV) *For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: **17** And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*

And no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; -- That is, no natural man who is not yet born of God knows the Son. He may have some knowledge of the name, but doesn't really know who Jesus is. He knows nothing of the glories and perfections of his nature as being truly God and truly Man in a single person as the Son of God. Unsaved persons know not the whole of Jesus' work and office, as prophet, priest, and king. They truly know nothing of all that he did, and suffered, for his people; all that he had done for them, and should communicate to, and bestow upon them.

Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the son, -- Men and women take the name of the Lord in vain and speak of God, but do not know him. But the Son of God knows him, for He came to earth from Him and to do His will.

And he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. -- which Jesus does by the Holy Spirit; who is a Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him and reveals the Father by his own sovereign will and pleasure.

Matthew 11:28-30 (KJV) *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. **29** Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. **30** For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, -- This call is to those who labor and are heavy laden under the burden of sin both the guilt and the power of it. All those, and those only, are invited to rest in Christ, because that are sensible of sin as a burden, and groan under it. These are not only convinced of the evil of sin, of their own sin, but have a godly sorrow in their soul for it; they are really sick of their sins, weary of the service of the world and of the flesh. These see their present circumstance and state as sad and dangerous by reason of sin, and are in pain and fear about it.

And I will give you rest. – In Jesus, there is rest for the sinner who is sick of his sin and has a godly sorrow for it. O the blessing of the forgiveness of all sin and peace with God!

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; -- To take Christ's *yoke upon us*, is to place ourselves into the relation of servants and subjects to him, and then to conduct ourselves accordingly. We purpose to have a conscientious obedience to all his commands, and a cheerful submission to everything he brings into our life, whether those things are in themselves good or bad. In this we obey the gospel of Christ and yield ourselves to the Lord. A yoke speaks of some hardship. How is that? If a yoked beast must pull, the yoke helps him. Christ's commands are all in our favor. We are yoked to work, and therefore must be diligent; we are yoked to submit, and therefore must be humble and patient: we are yoked together with our fellow-servants, and therefore must keep up the communion of saints.

We learn more of him experimentally and by the ministry of the Word of God.

Philippians 2:5-8 (KJV) *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought*

it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

For I am meek and lowly in heart: -- The meekness, humility, and lowliness of Christ is shown in his partaking of human nature. They are shown in his subjection to his Father; in the whole of his manner of life among men; in his submission to baptism; in the whole course of his obedience to God, and in his sufferings and death.

Zechariah 9:9 (KJV) *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.*

And ye shall find rest unto your souls. – It is a rest that is a gift; not a rest found in our experience by degrees, but given at once. We possess it at once, and it is ours forever. It is a present rest, rest now; not rest after death; not rest after a time of probation and growth and advancement; but it is rest given when we come to Jesus, given there and then. And it is *perfect* rest too; for it is not said, nor is it implied, that the rest is incomplete. We do not read, "I will give you partial rest," but "rest," as much as if there were no other form of it. It is perfect and complete in itself. In the blood and righteousness of Jesus our peace is perfect.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. – Praise the LORD! When we come to Jesus Christ burdened and under a heavy load of sin, we submit ourselves to him and take his yoke upon us. But his yoke is very unlike the yoke of sin under which we have lived. Though there are difficulties, trials and tribulations, there is

sweet rest. He is with us through all our difficulties. His burden is light and wonderful. We have the forgiveness of sins and eternal life – and His presence is with us every hour of every day forever.

Let's hear it again as we close:

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Matthew 11:27-30 (KJV) *All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. 28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

Are you burdened with your sin? Are you sick of living in sin? Do you seek rest for your soul instead of the turmoil within? Jesus forgives all sin and gives rest to one's soul.