

Text: Matthew 11:1-24; Luke 7:18-35

Subject: Deep persistent problems

INTRODUCTION

1. The questions and doubts of John the Baptist

a) These were brought to the Lord Jesus

b) They were answered by the Lord

2. The Commendation of John the Baptist

a) This word was spoken to the multitude Matthew 11:7

b) The Lord Jesus spoke highly of John, despite his doubts

THE WORDS OF COMMENDATION

Stated in a flurry of questions and responses

a) The use of a Question

What did you go out into the wilderness to see? Matthew 11:7b

This question was repeated three times over Matthew 11:7-9

b) First time

What did you go out into the wilderness to see? Matthew 11:7

A reed shaken by the wind?

i) John was no common reed

ii) He remained strong and steady in life and ministry

c) Second time

But what did you go out to see?

A man clothed in soft garments? Matthew 11:8

i) John was no softie

ii) He was rugged physically and spiritually

d) Third time

But what did you go out to see?

A prophet? Matthew 11:9

i) John was indeed a faithful prophet

- ii) He was the forerunner of the Messiah
- iii) He was God's special messenger Matthew 11:10
- iv) No prophet greater than John the forerunner
- v) He was Elijah (in spirit and power) Matthew 11:14

THE WORDS OF ADMONITION

1. First word of Admonition

- a) From the days of John the Baptist until now
- b) The kingdom of heaven suffers violence
 - i) Violence inflicted by demonic powers
 - ii) Violence chosen by Herod against John the Baptist
 - iii) Violence attempted against the Lord Jesus Luke 4:28-29
- c) Violence
 - i) Chosen by many
 - ii) An expression of evil
 - iii) An intimation of what could be done against the kingdom of God

2. Second Word of Admonition

- a) Stated in a single question

But to what shall I liken this generation? Matthew 11:16a
- b) Observations of the generation of the Lord Jesus
 - i) Comparison to children playing in the market place
 "Calling to their companions" Matthew 11:16b
 - ii) First group of children inviting another group of children
 - iii) Second group of children refused to listen

"We played the flute for you;
And you did not dance.

We mourned for you;
And you did not lament.”

Matthew 11:17

3. Meaning of these words of admonition

a) John came neither eating nor drinking

Matthew 11:18a

Response: “He has a demon”

Matthew 11:18b

b) The Son of Man came eating and drinking

Matthew 11:19a

Response: “Look, a glutton and a winebibber”

“A friend of tax collectors and sinners”

Matthew 11:19b

4. The Path of Wisdom

“But wisdom is justified by her children” Matthew 11:19c

a) It was the path the Lord Jesus chose

b) It was the path that few understood

c) Wisdom’s children would be “justified” (vindicated)

i) Justified in the final analysis

ii) Justified by the Lord God Himself one day

LESSONS WE MUST LEARN

1. The Call to hear

He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Matthew 11:15

a) Many were not listening well

b) They had not heard the following:

i) The message of John

ii) The Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ

iii) The voice of wisdom crying out in the streets

c) Many had not responded well

- i) They had not repented
- ii) They had not believed in the Lord
- iii) They had not followed Him as His disciples

2. Comprehending Deep truths

“Greater than John”

Matthew 11:11

- a) John was hailed as the greatest of the prophets
 - i) Other prophets proclaimed the coming of the Messiah
 - ii) John bore witness of the identity of the Lord Jesus
 - iii) He even baptised the Lord Jesus

b) Understanding a Profound truth

He who is least in the kingdom of heaven
is greater than he

Matthew 11:11

- i) John proclaimed that the Messiah had come
- ii) His role was at the tail end of the prophetic ministry (Old Testament)
- iii) The New Covenant was ushered in by the Lord Jesus when He died
- iv) The Spirit of God would be given to all true believers
- v) The many New Covenant blessings would be given to all who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ

MIXED RESPONSES

1. The people and tax collectors

- a) They heard
- b) They justified God Luke 7:29

2. The Pharisees and the lawyers

- a) They rejected the will of God
- b) They were not baptized by John Luke 7:30