

Jesus: No Spin Matthew Chapter Eleven: Why Won't You Dance?

personal / group study for use with the message of November 29th and 30th, 2008

"To what can I compare this generation? It is like children playing a game in the public square. They complain to their friends, 'We played wedding songs, and you didn't dance, so we played funeral songs, and you didn't mourn.'"
Matthew 11:17 (the Message)

John the Baptist is languishing in Herod's prison. He had been so sure that Jesus was the One.

John lived and ministered as an Old Testament prophet. Jesus lived and ministered as the bridegroom to His church. One came mourning, one came dancing, but both were rejected by the teachers of the Law. John abstained from foods and the people said: "He has a demon!" Jesus ate with and mingled with people and they said: "He is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend to tax-collectors and sinners!" No matter how the message of the kingdom of God is delivered, this generation doesn't want to dance!

Introduction.

Jesus wants to be first in our heart and life. In Matthew 11:27, Jesus speaks of His relationship to the Father and the Father's relationship to Him. When you look at Jesus you learn Who God is.

Read.

Matthew 11:1-30: " *1After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in the towns of Galilee.*

2When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples 3to ask him, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?"

4Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: 5The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. 6Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me."

7As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? 8If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces. 9Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 10This is the one about whom it is written:

*" I will send my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.' 11I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. 12From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it. 13For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John. 14And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. 15He who has ears, let him hear.*

16"To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others:

17" 'We played the flute for you,

and you did not dance;

we sang a dirge

and you did not mourn.' 18For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' 19The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners." ' But wisdom is proved right by her actions."

20Then Jesus began to denounce the cities in which most of his miracles had been performed, because they did not repent. 21"Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you. 23And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day. 24But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you."

25At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. 26Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.

27 "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

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

*All scripture taken from the New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise noted.

Questions.

Jesus challenged His followers to fulfill the Law from the obedience of the heart. Jesus' yoke is easy to bear because we are connected to Jesus. He never leaves the weight or the burden on us alone. He is the One who calls to each of us, "Come to me." He gently invites even the generation that hardened their hearts to His message, to "come to me, all of you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

ThinkAboutIt...

1. Have you ever had doubts about who Jesus is?
2. What do you need rest from?

ReflectOnIt...

3. How does Jesus' response to John's disciples answer John's question?
4. What Old Testament prophecy does John the Baptist fulfill?
5. What is the rebuke that Jesus gives to those that have hardened their hearts to His message? (16-19)
6. Why does Jesus' prayer fit with the strong words He was speaking to the people? (20-24)
7. Does Jesus' prayer fit with the strong words He was speaking to the people?

RespondToIt...

8. Are you involved in ministries or missions for Jesus or so that people will praise you, for visibility in the community, or some other reason?
9. In John 15 Jesus tells us to remain (or "abide") in Him. How can you remain (abide) in Jesus?

"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me" means to become a disciple of Jesus. You work the harvest beside Him. The word "disciple" is found 269 times in the New Testament. All who trust in Jesus as Savior are called to be disciples, true students of our Master Jesus. Working closely with Him each moment of each day, He wants to guide you through life. He wants to empower you in His service.

Extra.

If you want to read to see what happens to John the Baptist, jump ahead to chapter 14.