

REVELATION AND RESPONSIBILITY

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Matthew 11:15-30

1. Jesus ended His comments on John the Baptist with the admonition, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”
2. God’s self-revelation requires or demands a response.
3. Mankind is universally condemned because of its rejection of God’s revelation through the Creation. Romans 1:18-20
For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.
4. Those like the Jews, and those like us, have an even greater responsibility because we have received direct revelation in that we are possessors of the Word of God.
5. Additionally we are the chosen of God and objects of His mercy and grace.
6. The ministry and message of John the Baptist was familiar to most people when Jesus spoke these words.
7. Additionally Jesus had clearly demonstrated by word and deed that He was the Messiah.
8. Yet in spite of the mercy and grace of God most people responded negatively.
9. Two groups of people are highlighted here.

I. The critical. 16-19

- A. There are always those who not only reject the truth, but they also actively resist and fight against the truth.
- B. Jesus compared them to capricious children who played “wedding” and “funeral” games in the market place.
NOTE: They constantly criticized other children for not meeting their expectations or playing the game according to their rules.
- C. Those who do not want to embrace God and His Christ can always find an excuse not to.
- D. Their criticisms are often contradictory and untrue.
 - a. John the Baptist lived a lonely, austere life-style, and they accused him of having a demon.
 - b. Jesus participated in the normal patterns of Jewish life, and they said that He was a glutton, drunkard, and friend of sinners.
- E. The distortions and criticisms of men do not in any way affect God’s truth, but they do hinder His work.
- F. Even well intentioned people can get caught up in causes that are hindrances rather than helpful, and in doing so they do harm rather than good.
NOTE: For years there has been an ongoing dispute in the evangelical church related to Bible translations that has done nothing to advance the cause of Christ.

II. The indifferent. 20-24

- A. Jesus' harshest words and warnings were directed at those who responded with indifference rather than hostility.
- B. Those who are indifferent refuse to take God and His Word seriously.
- C. Jesus declared that indifference would characterized the world when He returned.
"And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27 they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 "It was the same as happened in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; 29 but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. 30 "It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed." Luke 17:26-31
- D. John McArthur wrote, "The greater the privilege, the greater the responsibility, and the greater the light the greater the punishment for not receiving it."
- E. Jesus used two illustrations.
1. He compared Chorazin and Bethsaida, two Jewish cities in which He ministered, to Tyre and Sidon, two pagan cities in which He did not minister.
 2. He then compared Capernaum, a city populated by people who were outwardly pious, moral, and religious, to Sodom, a city that God destroyed because of its perverseness.
 3. In both instances He declared that the pagan cities would have repented had they had the advantages that the Jewish cities had.
- F. Jesus clearly declared that all the cities mentioned would be judged by God, but it would be worse for those who had received the greater light.

APPLICATION

1. Both groups of people exist today.
 - a. There are those, both religious and irreligious, who openly criticize and fight against the truth.
 - b. There are those, both religious and irreligious, who are simply indifferent.

NOTE: I have a hard time understanding the careless and indifferent approach to the Christian life that is evidenced in the lives of many professed followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Their judgment is sure.
3. Yet there is reason to rejoice.
 - a. God is ready to reveal Himself to those who humbly and expectantly wait upon Him.
 - b. As objects of God's mercy and grace they have the Truth revealed to them.

NOTE: There is a big difference between knowing about God and actually knowing God.

 - c. To them is extended the invitation contained in verses 28-30.
"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, 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."