

## Chapter Ten (10:1-42)

### THE SON OF MAN EVANGELIZING AND EDIFYING

#### IDEAS TO INVESTIGATE:

1. If Jesus had twelve disciples helping Him, why did He need seventy more (10:1-12)?
2. How could the compassionate Jesus condemn whole cities (10:13-15)?
3. When did Satan "fall" and what did it involve (10:18)?
4. What has God hidden from the "wise and understanding" (10:21-22)?
5. Does the Old Testament Law really command the Jew to love his neighbor as he loves himself (10:25-28)?
6. Is being like the Good Samaritan all there is to inheriting eternal life (10:29-37)?
7. What is the "one thing" that was needful (10:38-42)?

#### SECTION 1

#### Preaching the Kingdom (10:1-24)

**10** After this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to come. <sup>2</sup>And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. <sup>3</sup>Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. <sup>4</sup>Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and salute no one on the road. <sup>5</sup>Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house!' <sup>6</sup>And if a son of peace is there, your peace shall rest upon him; but if not, it shall return to you. <sup>7</sup>And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages; do not go from house to house. <sup>8</sup>Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you; <sup>9</sup>heal the sick in it and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' <sup>10</sup>But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, <sup>11</sup>'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe

## THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

off against you; nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.' <sup>12</sup>I tell you, it shall be more tolerable on that day for Sodom than for that town.

13 "Woe to you, Chorazin! woe to you, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. <sup>14</sup>But it shall be more tolerable in the judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you. <sup>15</sup>And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You shall be brought down to Hades.

16 "He who hears you hears me, and he who rejects you rejects me, and he who rejects me rejects him who sent me."

17 The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!" <sup>18</sup>And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. <sup>19</sup>Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall hurt you. <sup>20</sup>Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

21 In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes; yea, Father, for such was thy gracious will. <sup>22</sup>All things have been delivered to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

23 Then turning to the disciples he said privately, "Blessed are the eyes which see what you see! <sup>24</sup>For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."

**10:1-20 Repentance:** Jesus had followers other than the Twelve who were fully capable of evangelizing or preaching the kingdom of God. This text documents an evangelistic campaign involving seventy "others." It is not to be confused with the campaign in Galilee (recorded in Mt. 10:1-42, Mk. 6:1-13 and Lk. 9:1-9). The campaign in Galilee preceded the Feast of Tabernacles (see notes in Lk. 9:51-59). The preaching tour of the seventy followed Tabernacles and was in Judea. Jesus' attendance at the Feast of Tabernacles is recorded only by John's Gospel (ch. 7:1—10:21). The Feast of Tabernacles is to be inserted, chronologically, between Luke 9:62 and Luke 10:1.

The fact that Jesus should conduct two evangelistic campaigns prescribing the same methods in practically the same words should not be confusing. It is certainly no basis for claiming that Luke copied from

Matthew. They are different incidents, involving different people, at different times, and geographically in different locales.

For notes on Jesus' methodology in evangelism study comments on the tour of the Twelve, Luke 9:1-9. We will not make comments here since His instructions in both cases are practically the same. The one striking difference between the two tours is that in Galilee Jesus told the Twelve to "go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans . . ." (Mt. 10:5). He would not have to give that instruction in Judea since there were not many Gentiles living there.

Almost a year prior to this time the Lord had pronounced divine condemnation upon three cities in Galilee: Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum. That was about the middle of His second year of public ministry, (see Mt. 11:20-24). Now, about the middle of the third year, He repeats the judgment. It is first, a warning to the seventy that as He was scorned and rejected by these cities in Galilee, they would probably suffer the same treatment in Judea. It was second, an encouragement that Christ was aware of all hypocrisy and unbelief and God's judgment would ultimately vindicate their faithfulness in the face of rejection. We will make extensive comments on the condemnation of the three cities because there are very important lessons to be learned.

Chorazin was about 2 miles north of Capernaum. It was probably an important city being at the northern most end of the land of Palestine of the first century. Trade routes and military garrisons were probably there. It ceased to be inhabited by the time of Eusebius (250 A.D.). Only a few of its carved stones remain today. Bethsaida (Julius) was east of the Jordan, near the river's entry into the Sea of Galilee. The tetrarch Philip raised it to the rank of "city" and called it Julius in honor of the daughter of Augustus Caesar, Julia. Some think there was another Bethsaida—a suburb of Capernaum. Whatever the case, neither can be found today except for a few ruins of a Roman road. It was apparently a place of great activity in the fishing business; the word Bethsaida means, "house of fishing." Capernaum was a customs station, the residence of a high officer of the tetrarch of Galilee (Herod) (see Mt. 9:9; Jn. 4:46) and was occupied by a detachment of Roman soldiers whose commander built the Jews a synagogue at his own expense. By the time of Josephus (50 years after Jesus) Capernaum was of such small significance, Josephus called it a "village." These cities apparently "exalted" themselves and considered themselves too sophisticated, wise and well-off to need the likes of the itinerant rabbi from Nazareth to tell them what to do. They flocked after Him for miracles of healing, but scorned His message of repentance.

Jesus had walked the streets of these cities, especially Capernaum, and so did His apostles. He had his home in Capernaum. There he had

## THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

healed a nobleman's son, a man let down through a roof, given the apostles a miraculous catch of fish, healed many of all kinds of diseases, cast out demons, healed Peter's mother-in-law, and, when the "whole city" came to Him at His door, he healed many more people. Finally, He healed the centurion's servant. Later in His ministry He healed Jairus' daughter at Capernaum, the woman with the flow of blood, two blind men, and a dumb demoniac.

Some of the Lord's greatest sermons were delivered in this immediate area. The Sermon on the Mount could have been close enough that many citizens of these cities attended. His sermon on the Bread of Life was in a synagogue in Capernaum; His sermon on human traditions was in Capernaum, as well as His sermon on childlikeness (Mt. 18).

Jesus condemned more often than most people like to admit. Most people want to think of Jesus as always positive, always encouraging, always forgiving, never condemning, and even indulging those who do not agree with Him. But check these scriptures: Mt. 7:21-23; Mt. 23:1ff.; Mt. 12:22-42; Jn. 3:36; 8:42-47; 9:35-41; 12:31. Practically every parable Jesus told ended with a condemnation or warning. The letters of the apostles in the New Testament contain much condemnation. Paul's instruction for fulling the ministry is to "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering."

God cannot be reduced to a vacillating, flaccid, spineless compromiser. If God doesn't condemn unbelief and unrighteousness, He cannot praise and reward faith and holiness. If He does not hate and judge evil, He cannot love and preserve truth and goodness. That goes for God's Son, for God's propositional word, the Bible, and for the messengers and preachers of His word. The Jews of the prophet's days would not accept this. They refused to believe that God would condemn their paganism and unbelief. They wanted Him to condemn and destroy their enemies, but to indulge them in their unbelief (see Jer. 5:12; 23:17). We cannot afford such ignorance of God's real nature. J.B. Phillips in his book, *Your God Is Too Small*, says some people's concept of the "meek and mild" Jesus makes their God too small. Of all the ideas about Jesus, he says, this one that Jesus never spoke a harsh word or never condemned wrong is the "least appropriate." It pictures Jesus as someone afraid to take a stand or give His hand against evil. A god that compromises truth in the face of falsehood or surrenders to injustice without challenging and condemning it, is a "god too small." He would be, in fact, a cruel god. Indifference to evil is more insidious than evil itself. The Son of God was not indifferent to impotence and unbelief. He condemned it in order to bring about repentance. In anger and condemnation against evil lies true compassion.

Jesus' condemnation of these three cities is a result of their misappropriation of opportunities and privileges—the most evil form of

unbelief. He never condemned anyone for failing to use an opportunity they never had. He never condemned anyone for using an opportunity and falling short, if they recognized their shortcomings and asked for forgiveness. But He certainly had His severest judgment upon those who had opportunities and privileges and deliberately chose not to use them! These three cities had opportunity after opportunity to put His word to practice in their lives. They saw Him in action time after time. His word was validated as supernatural, powerful, and life-giving by the many miracles He wrought among them. They had clear, understandable, motivating sermons, one after another. They had a multitude of opportunities that Sodom, Tyre, and Sidon never had, and still they did not repent. These Jews to whom Jesus preached considered the Sodomites, Tyrainians and Sidonians incorrigible, worthless and unsavable. But Jesus knew that if they had had the opportunities afforded Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, they would have repented! "To whom soever much is given, of him shall much be required" (Lk. 12:48). Daniel Webster, scholar, statesman, Bible-believer was once asked, "What is the most sobering, searching thought that ever entered your mind?" Without a moment's hesitation, the great orator and educator replied, "My personal accountability to God!"

The seventy returned from their evangelistic tour of the cities and villages of Judea bubbling with excitement, feeling they had been especially blessed (Gr. *charas*, "graced") because the demons obeyed them in the name of Jesus. Jesus said He saw in this the forecast of Satan's defeat by the coming of the kingdom of God which they had been preaching. What appears as Satan's power to thwart the purpose of God for man is about to be defeated. Satan's assault on the heavenly sovereignty of God is about to be repulsed (Rev. 12:1-17) and the devil will be cast down. The devil's power, the fear of death (Heb. 2:14-15), is about to be destroyed and he will be "bound" when Jesus makes atonement for man's sin and conquers death in His resurrection. All this is foreshadowed by Jesus' power over demons.

Jesus' authority to the seventy to tread upon serpents . . . and that nothing should hurt them, was never intended for all believers of all ages any more than His power to cast out demons and raise the dead given the Twelve was. If He had intended His power to the seventy to be perpetuated why aren't these "seventy" still alive? He gave them authority "over all the power of the enemy"; they could have kept themselves alive forever. The apostles had the power to raise the dead—why didn't they raise themselves from the dead? Clearly, miraculous power granted from Christ to certain people was intended to have a cessation. Miraculous power serves only one purpose—to validate the message to be from God. Once that purpose is sufficiently served,

## THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

miracles are no longer needed. Miracles do not produce salvation or holiness—the *message* confirmed by the miracles does.

This is exactly the Lord's point in cooling the enthusiasm of the seventy. Their salvation is by the grace of God, not in their working of miracles. Some miracle-workers will be lost (Mt. 7:21-23)! Nothing man does earns him salvation—not even working miracles. Our salvation was earned by The Perfect Man (Heb. 2:5-18) and offered to us through His grace. We have access into that grace by faith (Rom. 5:2), obedient faith (Rom. 6:1-23). Our faith is expressed by accepting God's salvation, obeying the terms of His New Covenant (being immersed in water for the forgiveness of our sins, Acts 2:38, 22:16, etc.). What we must understand clearly is that although outward acts of piety should be the natural expressions of a heart and mind humbly surrendered to the Lord's will, they do not guarantee it (Mt. 6:1ff.). The Corinthian church, although it came behind no church in miraculous gifts, was one of the most carnal-minded churches of the first century! Jesus told the seventy that their enthusiasm was focused on the wrong aspect of their discipleship. Let them not rejoice in their power over demons; that was none of their doing and not by their choice, but by Christ's. They may rejoice, however, that by their choice to trust Christ God has graciously written their names in heaven. It is through choosing the will of Christ for our lives that we are saved, not by the exercise of relative amounts of piety. The essence of the kingdom of God is repentance. When Jesus sent the seventy to preach the kingdom of God, they were preaching that people should repent. They did not need to try to get people to be more religious—to go through more rituals, and add more temple services to their lives. Repentance means to accept the mind of God—to believe what God says about His kingdom instead of what men think it should be. Before man can accept what God says, God must say what He wants man to accept. God must *reveal* His will, and man must recognize and receive it in precisely the way which God chooses to reveal it. That leads into Jesus' next admonition to the seventy.

**10:21-24 Revelation:** God reveals His will in order to save man by correcting man's mind-set. Mind-set equals allegiance. Perspective determines values. Through Jesus Christ God has distinguished between the temporal and the eternal from a divine and infallible perspective. If man recognizes and receives Jesus' divine perspective he is able to focus his mind on truest and highest values. Thus man is saved from eternal deception and lostness. Without fully trusting in the divine perspective, man is left to be condemned to the human perspective. The human perspective cannot go beyond the human experience which is separated from the divine goal of the Creator for His creatures by an unbridgeable gulf of supernaturalism. Jesus pauses here, reminded

by the impenitence of these cities, to thank the Father that that unbridgeable gulf is bridged by the revelation of the Father in the Son. He had failed to win over those cities in which He had done mighty works, and yet He gives thanks! He uses the Greek word *exomologoumai* which means, literally, "I acknowledge what has happened and give you praise for it." Jesus acknowledges that the refusal of these proud and arrogant cities to accept His humble cross-bearing discipleship is evidence that God's plan for saving the teachable was working. The way of the cross is spurned by the worldly-minded (I Cor. 1:17-31). But that simply proves that the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom. So Jesus praises the Father. It is the Father's gracious will that only those who are childlike will accept His Son and His salvation. Jesus just finished teaching (Mt. 18; Lk. 9) that the unequivocal condition of kingdom citizenship is childlikeness. The tendency of faithless man in a situation where large masses reject the truth is to get discouraged, begin to doubt the power of the word of God, start to compromise by omitting part of the gospel message or by using unethical, shallow and pagan methods to manipulate people. The messenger of God who does his best, who is faithful to preach the whole counsel of God, and who still sees little visible result should rejoice, like Jesus, acknowledging it is evidence that God's plan for saving the teachable is working. Temporary setbacks, however heartbreaking, cannot defeat God. Rejoice that God is interested in *quality* as well as quantity.

The issue of revelation is crucial. It is the fundamental issue. What men are willing to have told to them by God is imperative—as opposed to what men think they already know and refuse to let God tell them. If men believe they already know all there is to know that is significant about life here and hereafter, then they will reject the Book that claims to be a revelation from God. When revelation is rejected, regeneration is impossible. Only God has the authority and power to re-create humanity. Regeneration is not determined by what men think or how men feel, but whether men believe and obey God's revelation or not! The people in the area of these three cities wanted Jesus to heal them and make their bodies feel good—to feed them and make their stomachs feel good—to entertain them with miracles and charge up their emotions, but they did not want to surrender their minds and wills to His teachings, or accept His vicarious death for their sins.

Whatever God wanted man to know for the here and the hereafter, He chose to reveal finally and fully, once and for all, in Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and Life—no one comes to the Father but by Him (Jn. 14:6). Whoever does not honor the Son, does not honor the Father (Jn. 5:23). God does not fully and completely reveal Himself or His salvation in any other Person or religion. As a matter of fact, there

## THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

is absolutely no access to the Father except through Jesus. God will not honor, recognize or accept any effort to repent toward Him except through Jesus (Heb. 5:11—6:8). Now that Christ has come, even an attempt to please God through Judaism is an abomination to God—He calls it apostasy (Heb. 6:6). Jesus is exclusive and inclusive in revealing God. Everything outside Jesus does not reveal God; everything in Jesus does reveal Him. In Jesus dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9).

To whom does Jesus choose to reveal the Father? To all who are childlike! To whomsoever will come to Him, He will reveal the Father. He will not coerce, force or manipulate men. Men must be left free to make their own choices. Jesus allowed these cities to choose, even against His divine wisdom and supernatural power. He did not force them to accept Him. The realistic picture of the Bible is that "many are called but few are chosen." The majority of humanity will not be saved, because they do not choose to be saved. Even the Son of God apparently failed where He did his most extensive works. But, in the end, it is not miracles or evidence of miracles which saves man—it is man's choice to surrender to the will of Him of whom the miracles testify, "He is God." The success of Jesus' ministry was measured by the Father's standards—not by men's standards. Jesus was anything but beaten and defeated. He did not cry out in ego-deflation; His image did not suffer; He did not quit the ministry because of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum. Jesus was realistic, acknowledging that the gospel of God will only be accepted by the childlike. Jesus taught others to count the cost—He knew how to count the cost too!

Jesus was aware of the magnitude of His mission and ministry. He wanted the Twelve and the seventy to be aware of it also in order that they might experience a blessing in the face of rejections and persecutions to come. The coming of the kingdom of God and the coming of God's King was what many prophets and kings of history longed to see (cf. I Pet. 1:10-12). Those disciples who were privileged to join the Son of God in His earthly visit and those who have joined Him in His return in the Spirit should praise God for their blessing.

### SECTION 2

#### **Promoting Kindness (10:25-37)**

25 And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 He said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read?" 27 And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with



all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.”<sup>28</sup> And he said to him, “You have answered right; do this, and you will live.”

29 But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”<sup>30</sup> Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead.<sup>31</sup> Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side.<sup>32</sup> So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.<sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion,<sup>34</sup> and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.<sup>35</sup> And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’<sup>36</sup> Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?”<sup>37</sup> He said, “The one who showed mercy on him.” And Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

**10:25-28 Love the Lord:** A lawyer had been sitting among the crowds listening to Jesus teach. Lawyer (Gr. *nomikos*) was a term applied to an elite class of Jewish men trained in the Scriptural law and in the oral traditions (which had the force of law). His duty was to settle questions and disputes arising about matters of the Law in everyday Jewish life and to perpetuate the office of lawyer by teaching all young Jewish men who would come to him to learn. The term *lawyer* is synonymous with *scribe*. They are often found in association with the Pharisees but are distinguished from them in that Pharisees were a religious party while the lawyers-scribes held an office. Undoubtedly the majority of the lawyers-scribes belonged to the party of the Pharisees (cf. Mt. 5:20; 9:3; 12:38; 15:1; 23:2, 13; Mk. 2:16; 3:22; 9:14; 12:38-39; Lk. 5:21, 30; 6:7; 7:30; 10:25; 11:45; 15:2; 19:39; Jn. 8:3, etc.). Lawyers and scribes were revered and feared by the people; called *rabbi* (meaning, master); demanded an honor surpassing that due to parents. Proudly they claimed the positions of first rank, and dressed in long robes like the nobility. Along with the Pharisees, they were thought to be, and thought themselves to be, the most pious of all mankind. Because Jesus refused to be bound by scribal traditions, they fiercely opposed Him.

The foregoing characterization of lawyers and scribes makes this confrontation rather amazing. Luke says the lawyer’s question, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” was asked in order to put Jesus “to the test.” Some commentators think the lawyer had some wicked

## THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

motive for the "test." Perhaps he hoped to trap Jesus in some statement that would appear to be anti-rabbinical. Whatever the motive, Jesus put the onus back on the lawyer by asking, "What is written in the law? How do you read?" The answer of the lawyer is very impressive in view of his rabbinical background. One would expect a lawyer to have answered with a long list of rabbinical traditions one should "do" to inherit eternal life. But he said, "You shall love the Lord your God . . . and your neighbor as yourself." Jesus told him he had spoken correctly.

It would take an uncommonly spiritually-minded Jewish rabbi to make a statement such as this lawyer made. The popular theology of the Jews (going all the way back to the days of the prophets; cf. Isa. 1:11ff.; Jer. 7:21-26; Micah 6:6-8) was that the sacrificial ritual was the heart and core of their covenant relationship to God. But it wasn't! God made covenant with their father, Abraham, long before the Mosaic sacrifices, based on Abraham's loving God with all his being. Eternal life is in a Person—not a religion. Of course, man must have some systematic way of expressing his devotion to his Loving Father so God ordains certain rituals and deeds acceptable to Him for such expression. Man was created in the image of His Creator; man *must* love. What, or whom, he loves determines his character (cf. Hosea 9:10). It is not just the "doing" of religious rituals or deeds of piety, but the motive for doing that makes what is done godly or not, (cf. Mt. 6:1-24). How does one love God? By loving his neighbor! There is no possibility of loving God without loving one's neighbor, (I Jn. 4:20-21).

Another lawyer asked Jesus practically the same question in the last week of His ministry (Mt. 22:34-40). Jesus gave the same answer, and added, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." In other words, the essence of the law of God and the teaching of the prophets was to reveal God's nature (faithfulness, justice, mercy, love, purity, etc.) so that men would trust Him, love Him and obey Him. Since the law of God reveals Him as loving all men, the essential core of man's relationship to God is that he love his fellow man just as God loves him. When God's law to Moses required the Jew to be separate from the heathen, it was not meant to kill the love of man for man. It was intended to keep the Jew separate from the heathen wickedness which was spiritually destructive. The commandment to love the Lord is from the Hebrew *shema* ("hear, obey") in Deuteronomy 6:4-6. The commandment to love one's neighbor is found in Leviticus 19:18. There are many more commandments in the Old Testament urging the Jew to be kind and merciful to his fellow man, even to "aliens and sojourners," (cf. Lev. 25:35-38; 16:29; 25:6; Num. 15:15-16; 35:15; especially, Lev. 19:33-34 and Ex. 22:21). Jesus makes it very plain in other teachings that if one loves God and His Son, he will keep Christ's commandments (Jn. 14:15; 14:21; 14:23-24; 15:10; 15:12, etc.).

**10:29-37 Minister to Man:** Theologically and theoretically, the lawyer knew the essence of God's will for man. He was honest-hearted enough to see that the ritual observance of sacrifice and ceremony was not the core of man's relationship to God. He had seen from God's revelation that surrender of the total man, heart-soul-strength-mind, to God and love of one's neighbor was the key to eternal life. But when it came to putting what he knew to practice, he was apparently not ready to give complete surrender. He wanted to reserve the right to be selective as to whom he should love among mankind. Knowing that he had loved some men, he sought to justify his own selectivity by asking Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Perhaps he expected Jesus (considered to be a Rabbi, since He had disciples) would define "neighbor" in the classical rabbinical exclusiveness as being, "one of my fellow scribes." Jewish society in Jesus' day was regimented within a strict caste system. There was first of all the religious fanatics (Pharisees, scribes, lawyers); then there were the pragmatic, vacillating politicians (Sadducees, Herodians); then there were the *am-ha-aretz* ("the people of the land,"), most of whom were poor and oppressed. Scribes were hated! Rabbi Akiba said to his disciples, "Before I became a scribe myself, I thought, 'Ah, if only I had one in my grasp, I would bite him like an ass.'" One of his disciples replied, "Master, would it not have been enough to bite him like a dog?" Akiba replied, "No, like an ass, for an ass bites better: he crushes the very bones." Pharisees and scribes considered all *am-ha-aretz* as ignorant of the law and therefore "accursed" (cf. Jn. 7:49). One Pharisee was shocked that the rabbi Jesus would allow a "sinner-woman" to touch Him (Lk. 7:39). If a Jewish scribe had difficulty considering a lower-class Jew his "neighbor" to love as himself, what would he think of neighborliness to a Gentile? So this Jewish scribe or lawyer was hoping Jesus would follow the traditional definition of "neighbor." He could thus justify himself for he had probably acted quite neighborly to his fellow lawyers.

When Jesus told His story of the Samaritan who had helped the robbed and beaten Jew on the road to Jericho, this lawyer and many others standing near must have gasped in utter shock! There was a violent hatred between most Jews and Samaritans in that age. "Samaritan" was one of the vilest epithets a Jew could use against any man (cf. Jn. 8:48). The animosity between Judeans and the people of the north of Jerusalem probably began with the division of the Solomonic empire when the ten northern tribes withdrew and formed the nation of Israel (about 935 B.C.). The two remaining tribes formed the southern kingdom, Judah. Israel formed its own religion, government, priesthood and army. Upon Israel's captivity by the Assyrians in 722 B.C., most of the able-bodied Israelites were deported to Mesopotamia and heathen

## THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

peoples were immigrated into that territory. The heathen immigrants intermarried with the Hebrews who had been left behind and this formed a "half-breed" Jewish population known as Samaritans. Judah was taken captive in 606-586 B.C. and its people deported to Babylon. Seventy years later, 536 B.C., fifty thousand Judeans were allowed to return to their homeland by Cyrus, king of Persia. The Judeans reoccupied their farms and villages and this dispossessed many "Samaritans" who had moved into the southern part of Palestine when the Judeans had been carried off to Babylon. That added fuel to the fires of animosity between these two peoples. The Samaritans wanted to help the Judeans rebuild their Temple and their cities (cf. Ezra 4:1ff.), but were told bluntly and unceremoniously their help was not wanted! From that point on, the hatred intensified. Rabbinic tradition soon declared the Samaritans "excommunicated" from the Hebrew covenant (*Talmud, Tanahim* 17:4). About 333 B.C., Manasseh, grandson of the Judean high priest, but also son-in-law of Sanballat the governor of Samaria, persuaded Cyrus, king of Persia, to allow him to build a temple to Jehovah on Mt. Gerizim that would be a rival to the temple in Jerusalem. He made himself the high priest, convinced some priests from Jerusalem to join him there, and allowed them to marry heathen women, (cf. Josephus, *Antiquities*, 11:8). John Hyrcanus, Hasmonean king of Judea, destroyed the Samaritan temple on Gerizim along with the city of Samaria. Herod the Great rebuilt Samaria and called it Sebaste (Greek for "Augustus") in honor of the Roman emperor. Herod also built the Samaritans another temple in the city of Sebaste, but the Samaritans refused to use it, preferring to continue their worship at the ruins on top of Mt. Gerizim (cf. Jn. 4:20-21). Conflict and invective continued between Jew and Samaritan for centuries. Around A.D. 6-9, according to annual custom, the gates of the temple in Jerusalem were opened at midnight, whereupon some Samaritans who had secreted themselves nearby, polluted the Jewish temple by scattering human bones in its porches. Samaritans were thereafter excluded from the services (Josephus, *Antiquities* 18:2:2). In 52 A.D., Samaritans attacked some Jewish pilgrims travelling south to one of their annual feasts. The Jews counterattacked and the struggle became so fierce the Roman legate of Syria had to send in troops. These troops crucified a number of Jews as punishment for the riot. The Samaritans were cursed by the Jewish people. One Talmudic proverb says, "A piece of bread given by a Samaritan is more unclean than swine's flesh." Remember, Samaritans refused lodging for Jesus and His disciples as they were on their way to Tabernacles (cf. Lk. 9:51-56). But apparently not all Samaritans were like this. Jesus here relates that one Samaritan knew better than Jewish priests and Levites what

mercy and neighborliness was. Another time (Lk. 17:12ff.) a Samaritan was the only one of ten who knew how to express gratitude for being healed of leprosy. A Samaritan woman changed her life as a result of Jesus' preaching and evangelized a whole city (Jn. 4). Multitudes of Samaritans became Christians at the preaching of Philip (cf. Acts 8:4-8).

Jesus began His parable, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers." The road from Jerusalem to Jericho was called *Adummim* (Josh. 15:7; 18:17) which means, "The Pass of Blood." It was a notoriously thief-infested, steep, long road, crowded along its sides with caves and hiding places. Josephus records that Herod had dismissed 40,000 workmen from the Temple shortly before Jesus told this parable and a large part of them became vicious highway robbers. The Jewish traveler of the Lord's parable was set upon by such thieves and robbed, stripped, beaten and left half-dead. A priest and a Levite came upon this man as they traveled the road, but they passed by on the other side. The Greek word *antiparelthen* is very expressive. It is a triple compounded word: *anti*, against; *para*, alongside; *erchomai*, come, go. These two Jewish "holy-men" came upon the victim, one of their own people, but quickly crossed over to the other side of the road. We really don't know why they crossed over to the other side of the road. Perhaps fear of ceremonial pollution from touching a dead body (as far as they could see he was dead); perhaps they were afraid to get involved lest the robbers might still be around. Whatever, Jesus doesn't give their reasons, because no reason they could give would be justifiable. But a Samaritan came along—and incredibly, unexpectedly, inexplicably stopped and helped the victim. Jesus said the Samaritan had compassion on the victim. The Greek word is *esplagchnisthe* and describes a "gut-feeling" type of compassion; one that describes literally hurting because someone else hurts. *Splagchnon* is a word often translated "inward parts, bowels or tender mercies" in the KJV. The Samaritan bound the man's wounds, put medicine on them, took him to an inn, cared for him, and paid the bill in full.

Now the point of this parable is not who is my neighbor, but—be sure you are always a neighbor when someone needs one! Neighborliness has nothing to do with geographical boundaries, but it has everything to do with need, anywhere one finds it. It was not the victim but the Samaritan who was the neighbor!

The Samaritan was a true neighbor. He could see need above other less important matters. He could have thought of just as many excuses that he shouldn't help the victim as the priest and Levite, but his conscience would not let him justify himself as had the others. There is only one justifiable way to love God and that is through helping people in need (I Jn. 4:20-21). We may do many other things and say we love

## THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

God, but if we do not help those in need our profession is hypocritical. Mercifulness is the Christian way of life—"Blessed are the merciful. . . ." (Mt. 5:7). The Samaritan got personal. We like to organize our goodness through benevolent organizations. If we hire others to do benevolence we don't have to get our hands dirty, smell unpleasant odors, lose sleep and get involved. We want to institutionalize goodness so we can spend our own time searching for our own happiness. And we never find happiness that way because it is found in doing good personally (Acts 20:35; Jn. 13:16). The Samaritan didn't turn the man over to anyone else until he was sure he had personally done everything he could for the man. He didn't give the victim money and tell him to go find an inn and a doctor. The Samaritan got down on his knees in the dirt—exposed himself to danger—got his hands dirty, and helped. The Samaritan was flexible. The priest and Levite probably rushed on past because they were on very important missions with tight schedules and just didn't have time to stop. The Samaritan didn't do his goodness on a schedule—he did it when the need arose, no matter what his schedule was. The Samaritan was brave. There is always an element of danger in every effort to help someone; danger to one's reputation, to one's safety; to one's possessions. Helping others puts one in a position of vulnerability to be rejected, ridiculed and misunderstood. One must be brave to be good.

Finally, the Samaritan was realistic. He did not try to do more than he could. We are not commanded to be a miracle-worker or a slave to everyone we help. Not every cry for help will be a permanent assignment. The Samaritan did not take the victim home with him and adopt him into the family. He did what he could and departed. Some have to take over the victim's life and manage it or dominate everyone they help. There are subtle pitfalls in too much helpfulness. Some want to help in order to put those they help forever in debt to them in order to hear the constant "thank yous" which build ego and identify and earn merit. The Samaritan did *all* he could, the *best* he could, and let it go at that. It is not even recorded that the victim thanked the Samaritan!

When asked, "which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the man," the lawyer apparently gagged on the word "Samaritan" and so he said, "The one doing the mercy to him . . ." The Lord's reply, as recorded by Luke in Greek is, *poreuou kai su poiei homoios*. The word "Go" is in the imperative mood. Jesus is not suggesting this, He is commanding it! Literally translated, Jesus said, "Go! and you keep on doing likewise."

## SECTION 3

**Prescribing Knowledge (10:38-42)**

38 Now as they went on their way, he entered a village; and a woman named Martha received him into her house. <sup>39</sup>And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. <sup>40</sup>But Martha was distracted with much serving; and she went to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." <sup>41</sup>But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; <sup>42</sup>one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her."

**10:38-40 Listening Prudently:** Sometime during this later Judean ministry of three months (between Tabernacles and Dedication), Jesus visited in the home of Martha and Mary, special friends of His. We know from John's Gospel (ch. 11-12) that their home was in the village of Bethany, about two and one-half miles southeast of Jerusalem, just over the crest of the Mount of Olives. Martha *received* (Gr. *hupedexato*, a word denoting warm hospitality, see Mt. 10:40-41) Jesus into her house. Jesus probably had a standing invitation to visit them anytime He was in that vicinity. During Jesus' last week in Jerusalem, He went in and out of the big city almost every night. He probably stayed in this home at night. Martha had a sister named Mary, and a brother named Lazarus (Jn. 12:1ff.). Martha seems to have been the oldest of the family. Most commentators assume the house belonged to Martha since she seems always to be "taking charge." Some suppose she may have been a widow; some think her husband might have been Simon the leper (cf. Mk. 14:3 with Jn. 12:2ff.). Every opportunity Jesus had, He taught. Upon entering the home of His friends in Bethany, He sat down and began to teach (probably concerning the kingdom of God). Mary sat "beside Him at His feet" in the customary place of a pupil. The Greek says Mary "also" sat listening to Jesus teach. Perhaps some of His disciples or other friends of Martha and Mary were present. The "also" may indicate Martha too had at first listened to Jesus teach but quit and busied herself with serving.

While Mary was not helping, Martha became distracted with "much" serving. The Greek word translated distracted is *periespato* which means, "to agitate, to wheel about, to twist and convulse." Martha was running around in circles, agitated and distracted. So Martha exploded and interrupted the Lord (the Greek word *epistasa* means, "to come suddenly upon, to press upon, to assault," cf. Acts 6:12; 17:5), saying, "Lord, doesn't it matter to you that my sister has left me all alone to do

## THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

all the serving?" Then Martha directed the Lord to order Mary to help her. Martha's direction in Greek is *sunantilabetai*, literally, "take hold over against," meaning, "Tell Mary to carry her end of the load around here and help me."

**10:41-42 Learning Priorities:** Jesus reacted tenderly to the scolding from Martha. The double use of her name, "Martha, Martha . . ." indicates His patience with her. Jesus said, ". . . you are anxious (Gr. *merimnas*, split-minded) and troubled about many things; one thing is needful." The most ancient and best manuscripts (Sinaiticus, Vaticanus and Ephraemi) have the answer of Jesus, ". . . you are anxious and troubled about many things; there is need of just a few things, or one." Either way, what Jesus is emphasizing is that just a simple meal was all that Martha needed to be concerned about. Jesus did not rebuke Martha for her hospitality; He did not say her service was wrong. The "one thing" is not even something spiritual, but "one" or two simple dishes as compared to the "many" dishes Martha was fretting about. Jesus was chiding Martha for involving herself in so many unnecessary things. All she need do, as far as He was concerned, was make a simple meal and then come join Mary in the best part of the whole visit—listening to His teaching. He took this occasion to remind Martha that spiritual things are the only abiding things. Martha was not wrong in serving the meal, she simply made that the first priority. Mary chose that which should really be first priority—opportunity to learn from Jesus. That should always come *before* food or drink or any other thing. If the choice must be made between a meal or an opportunity to learn from Jesus, the latter must have first priority, because that will never be diminished or lost.

Luke alone records this intimate scene. There is much to be learned from it. It contrasts beautifully with the parable of the Good Samaritan which emphasized service to humanity. This incident shows that earthly things are not ultimate. Mary knew the secret that love cannot finally express itself in physical things. Love must ultimately cling to the things of the spirit—that which abides eternally in the next world. What Martha must learn was that in discipleship to Jesus you must not learn to give, but also to receive from Him, especially learn from Him. Martha was trying to express love totally in physical service. It caused a reaction; a sad reaction. She got so totally engrossed in the doing and so agitated at the apparent indifference of those being served she rushed in and scolded both Mary and Jesus.

Jesus recognized the need for hospitality, but He corrected Martha for her fretfulness and fussiness. Hospitality that gets in the way of making spiritual things first in priority is superfluous. If there is an opportunity to learn from Jesus, the only hospitality that is needed is just



enough to make the first thing possible. Jesus wants Martha to understand that the principal thing is what He has to say to mankind. His words are spirit and life; His word is the bread of life (cf. Jn. 6:63). His food is to do the will of the Father (Jn. 4:34). Man lives, not by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God (Mt. 4:4). It was not Martha's kindness Jesus rebuked, it was her order of priorities, her anxiety and her burst of jealousy. The kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14:17). The primary mission of the church—the preaching of the word of God—must never be second to ministering to the body (Acts 6:2). It is a false benevolence that feeds a man's stomach and starves his soul! The rebirth of the spirit, the sustenance of the soul is of first priority. All other things will perish. The physical order of all creation will soon die. All we can gain physically we must leave. But the spirit of man lives forever—either in the presence of God or banished from Him. What is needful is to listen to Jesus!

### STUDY STIMULATORS:

1. What does it indicate to you about the progress of Jesus' ministry to learn that He had seventy other disciples He could send out to evangelize besides the twelve apostles?
2. What do you think of Jesus as a "condemner" of great masses of people?
3. Why is indifference the most evil form of unbelief?
4. Why did the casting out of demons by the seventy disciples cause Jesus to speak of the fall of Satan?
5. Is there still available for believers today the power to tread upon serpents? Why?
6. Why did Jesus tell the seventy to put a check on their enthusiasm? Is the same admonition needed in Christendom today?
7. Why is the idea of God revealing Himself to man so fundamental? Why is the issue of God's revelation a continuing issue for Christians?
8. What do you think was behind the lawyer's question to Jesus about eternal life?
9. Do you really believe that the two commandments the lawyer quoted will give eternal life? Why?
10. Does Jesus' teaching in the parable of the Good Samaritan apply in our lives? How far should we go to help someone? Should we help any stranger who appears to need help?
11. Is it possible for a Christian to be overly hospitable? Are you ever too busy with hospitality to learn Jesus' teachings?

# THE CONDEMNATION, CHALLENGE AND COMPASSION OF THE KING

(Matthew 11:20-30)

By Paul T. Butler — OBC Chapel, 10-24-78

## INTRODUCTION

### I. POINT IN TIME OF JESUS' MINISTRY

#### A. Some time after the Second Passover (2nd year of ministry)

1. He has returned to Galilee
2. He has healed many
3. Named the 12 apostles
4. Delivered the sermon on the mount
5. Raised widow's son from the dead

#### B. Question from John Baptist probably precipitated His focusing on the refusal of these cities to recognize Him as the Messiah.

1. Jesus is now in Capernaum
2. Chorazin was about 2 miles north of Capernaum (which was on the coast of Galilee [Sea]). It is mentioned only here in Jesus' condemnation (and in Luke 10—another time of condemnation). It was probably an important city being at the northern most end of the land of Palestine of the 1st century. Trade routes and military garrisons were probably there. It ceased to be inhabited by the time of Eusebius (250 A.D.). It lasted only about 200 years after Jesus' condemnation of it. Only a few carved stones remain today.
3. Bethsaida (Julius); east of the Jordan, near the river's entry into the Sea of Galilee. The tetrarch Philip raised it to the rank of "city" and called it Julius in honor of the daughter of Augustus Caesar, Julia. (If there is only one Bethsaida, instead of two, this is the one.) Some think there was another Bethsaida—a suburb, as it were, of Capernaum. Whatever the case, neither can be found except for a few ruins of a road. Probably a place of much activity in the fishing business (the name means: "house of fishing").
4. Capernaum: It was a customs station; the residence of a high officer of the king (Mt. 9:9; Jn. 4:46); occupied by a detachment of Roman soldiers, whose commander built the Jews a synagogue at his own expense. By the time of Josephus (40 or 50 years after Jesus) Capernaum was of such small significance, J. called it a village.

Capernaum seems to have exalted itself and this became the cause of its rejection of Jesus.

## CONDEMNATION, CHALLENGE AND COMPASSION OF KING

### DISCUSSION

#### I. CONDEMNATION (11:20-24)

A. Jesus walked the streets of these cities, esp. Capernaum, and so did His disciples.

1. He had His ministerial headquarters there
2. He had healed a nobleman's son (by remote control from Cana)
3. He had healed a man let down through a roof and forgave his sins
4. He had given the disciples a miraculous catch of fish and called the four fishermen
5. He healed many of all kinds of ills
6. Cast out a demon from a man on the sabbath in a synagogue
7. Healed Peter's mother-in-law
8. The whole city came to the door that evening for healing and He healed many again.
9. Healed the centurion's servant.

Later, He:

10. Stilled the tempest near the city of Capernaum
11. Raised Jairus' daughter
12. Healed woman with flow of blood
13. Healed two blind men and a dumb demoniac

Some of Jesus' greatest sermons were delivered in this area:

1. Sermon on the Mount could have had some of their citizens attending
2. Sermon on the Bread of Life
3. Sermon on Human Traditions (Mt. 15)
4. Sermon on True Greatness; Stumbling-blocks, Mistreatment and Forgiveness

#### B. Would Jesus condemn?

1. *Oneidizein* means to *blame, charge, accuse, rebuke, justifiably*.
2. Jesus condemned more often than some want to acknowledge. Most want to think of Jesus as always positive—always encouraging—always forgiving, even indulging those who do not agree with Him.
3. Jesus condemned: Mt. 7:21-23; (here in Mt. 11); Mt. 23:1ff.; Mt. 12:22-42; Jn. 3:36; 8:42-47; 9:35-41; 12:31, etc.
4. It was predicted by the Old Testament prophets that the Messiah would come to condemn and judge (Isa. 11:1-9, esp. v. 4; Mal. 3:1f.; Dan. 2, 7, 11; Micah 5; Zech. 9:9f.).
5. Practically every parable Jesus told has a condemnation at the end.
6. By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the letters of the apostles contain much condemnation.

## THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

7. Paul even told Timothy, to "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering."

THIS KIND OF JESUS WOULD NOT BE RECOGNIZED IN THE CITIES AND FARMS OF AMERICA TODAY!

AND THIS IS EXACTLY WHY HE WAS NOT RECOGNIZED IN THE CITIES AND VILLAGES OF THAT DAY!

WHO WANTS A MESSIAH THAT DEMANDS RIGHTEOUSNESS AND CONDEMNS YOU IF YOU DON'T PRODUCE IT!

A CHRIST WHO DEMANDS NOTHING, CONDEMNS NOTHING AND SAVES NO ONE.

### C. Revelation teaches it and reason demands it.

1. God cannot be reduced to a vacillating, flaccid, spineless compromiser.
2. If your God doesn't condemn unbelief and unrighteousness, He cannot praise and reward faith and holiness. If God does not hate and judge evil, He cannot love and preserve truth and goodness.

THAT GOES FOR HIS SON, JESUS, FOR HIS PROPOSITIONAL WORD, THE BIBLE, AND FOR THE MESSENGERS AND PREACHERS OF HIS WORD!

3. This is what the Hebrew people could not and would not accept—this absolute faithfulness of Jehovah to act according to His nature.

THEY WANTED GOD TO CONDEMN AND JUDGE THEIR ENEMIES . . . BUT TO INDULGE THEM IN THEIR PAGANISM.

4. Where do you stand in your concept of Jesus? Have you accepted Him as an indulgent, compromising Savior?

Is this the cause for the lack of commitment and holy living in the church today? Why have so many Christians compromised their confession by their public lives today—because they have reduced Jesus to a non-condemning, never-judging Savior.

5. J. B. Phillips, in, *Your God Is Too Small*, says some people's concept of the "meek and mild" Jesus makes their God too small.

"Of the epithets that could be applied to Christ this seems one of the least appropriate . . . it conjures up to our minds a picture of someone who wouldn't say 'boo' to the proverbial goose; someone who would let sleeping dogs lie and avoid trouble wherever possible . . ."

"Christ might well be called meek . . . but mild, never!"

"We hear, or read, of someone who was a real saint: he never saw any harm in anyone and never spoke a word against

## CONDEMNATION, CHALLENGE AND COMPASSION OF KING

anyone all his life. If this really is Christian saintliness then Jesus Christ was not saint. It is true that He taught men not to sit in judgment upon one another, but He never suggested that they should turn a blind eye to evil or pretend that other people were faultless."

People who have such a "totally sentimental" concept of Jesus meek and mild find their actions, and even their thoughts, inhibited by a false consideration of what is loving.

They can neither use their critical faculties nor speak the plain truth nor meet their fellow man naturally for fear they sin against the meek and mild god. The love they attempt to exhibit toward others is all too often a pathetic travesty of the real thing.

For, like other sentimentalists, the meek and mild god is in reality cruel.

I like the way Abraham Heschel says it in his book, *The Prophets*, pp. 64-66: "Indifference to evil is more insidious than evil itself . . . all prophecy is one great exclamation: God is not indifferent to evil! . . . There is no divine anger for anger's sake. Its meaning is . . . to bring about repentance . . . so that beyond justice and anger lies the mystery of compassion."

D. The condemnation is very simply directed toward misappropriation of opportunities and privileges, the most evil form of unbelief.

1. Jesus never condemned anyone for failing to use an opportunity they never had.
2. But He certainly had His severest judgment upon those who had opportunities and privileges and deliberately chose not to use them for the kingdom.
3. Jesus wrote 7 letters to 7 specific churches. Most of them were condemned for failing privileges and opportunities.

HE DIDN'T CONDEMN THEM BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT POWERFUL, RICH, LARGE, FAMOUS.

HE CONDEMNED THEM BECAUSE THEY DID NOT LIVE ACCORDING TO THE TRUTH THEY KNEW!

4. If Jesus walked in San Francisco, and New York, and Dallas today, would He condemn them?

If He walked in Joplin, or your home town today, would He condemn it?

If He walked in the halls of Dennis, Boatman, or your dorm would He condemn it?

ARE YOU LIVING ACCORDING TO THE OPPORTUNITIES AND PRIVILEGES YOU HAVE? WOULD OTHERS, LIVING IN YOUR PRIVILEGES, HAVE REPENTED LONG AGO?

## THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

5. The one time Jesus is said to have been angry (Mk. 3:5) it was because men failed to see the Sabbath as an opportunity to use for mercy and good works. God made the Sabbath as an opportunity . . . they preserved it. God has made this place (OBC) as an opportunity for you . . . what are you doing? Really studying to learn or just to get credits and a degree? THAT IS A PERVERSION OF OPPORTUNITY JUST AS SURELY AS THE PHARISEES!

Daniel Webster, scholar, statesman, Bible-believer was once asked, "What is the most sobering, searching thought that ever entered your mind?" Without a moment's hesitation, the great orator and educator said, "My personal accountability to God!"

### II. CHALLENGE (or CONVERSION . . . but conversion is really a correction of our allegiance and thought processes)

#### A. To Realism (11:25-27)

1. Men must be left free to make their own choices. Jesus allowed these cities to choose, even against His divine wisdom and supernatural power.

2. He did not force them to accept Him; He did not psyche them into acting against reason and will.

(Jesus and the Rich Young Ruler: Jesus would not even so much as appear before Herod when summoned; and when He was taken by force, answered Herod not a word!)

3. The realistic picture of the Bible is that many are called out but few are chosen; the majority of men will not be saved!

4. Even the Son of God apparently failed where He did His most extensive works.

5. But the success of His ministry is measured by the Father's standards—not by man's.

JESUS IS ANYTHING BUT BEATEN AND DEFEATED. He does not cry out in ego-deflation; His image does not suffer; He does not quit the ministry, because of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum!

JESUS WAS REALISTIC . . . YOU MUST BE TOO! JESUS TAUGHT OTHERS TO COUNT THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP . . . YOU MUST TOO! DON'T PROMISE EASE AND INDULGENCE WHERE CHRIST HAS DEMANDED HARDSHIP AND REALISM!

IF YOU ARE LIVING IN A WORLD OF MAKE-BELIEVE, FANTASY, "PSYCHE" ABOUT LIFE AND CHRISTIANITY . . . YOU'D BETTER CORRECT!

#### B. To Rejoice

1. The Lord had failed to win over those cities wherein most of His labor had been expended, and yet He gives thanks!

## CONDEMNATION, CHALLENGE AND COMPASSION OF KING

2. It is not the expression of stoicism or resignation
3. The word in 11:25 is *exomologoumai* primarily means, "I acknowledge" and its secondary meaning is "to praise."  
Jesus is really saying, "I make acknowledgement with praise."
4. Jesus is acknowledging and praising the Father that the refusal of these cities to accept His discipleship gives evidence, God's plan for saving the teachable was working.

SOME OF US, WHEN GREAT MASSES DO NOT RESPOND TO THE TRUTH, GET DISCOURAGED, BEGIN TO DOUBT THE POWER OF THE WORD, START TO COMPROMISE BY USING UNETHICAL, SHALLOW AND PAGAN METHODS AND MESSAGES TO COMPENSATE.

5. Harold Fowler, *Matthew, Vol. II*, pg. 556, says, "The things which caused the Lord Jesus to rejoice and give thanks, should give us reason to reflect upon what pleases us. His strange thanksgiving challenges us to inquire into our easy satisfaction with those irrelevant, superficial symbols of success.

IF YOU DO YOUR BEST, IF YOU ARE FAITHFUL TO PREACH THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD IN YOUR MINISTRY, AND THE VISIBLE RESULTS ARE LIKE THOSE OF JESUS, REJOICE, GOD IS STILL YOUR FATHER AS HE WAS HIS.

TEMPORARY SET BACKS, HOWEVER HEARTBREAKING CANNOT DEFEAT GOD!

Rejoice that God's plan of salvation leaves man autonomous and does not turn man into an unthinking, unfeeling, unwilling robot or thing.

Rejoice that God is interested in quality as well as quantity . . . not just quantity without regard to quality.

WHAT DO YOU REJOICE ABOUT? WHEN DO YOU REJOICE? ONLY WHEN THINGS WORK THE WAY MEN HAVE CATEGORIZED AND STANDARDIZED? YOU'D BETTER CORRECT THAT!

### C. To Recreation

1. Jesus' response to the rejection of the cities is a challenge to childlikeness.
2. It is the Father's gracious will that only those who are "babes" will accept His Son and His salvation.
3. Jesus will make it unequivocally a condition of kingdom citizenship later (Matt. 18). ". . . unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."
4. Harold Fowler's characterization of "babe"
  - a. honest enough to admit he does not know everything
  - b. openness and willingness to learn from anyone
  - c. able to distinguish truth from error, the precious from the worthless

## THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

- d. those who evaluate by the evidence and do not distort the evidence to suit their own preconceptions and rationalizations.
  - e. acknowledge that their lives are unmanageable without a Father's guidance.
5. *Reveal* is the crucial issue in recreation or regeneration. What men are willing to have *told* to them by God is the issue; as opposed to what men think they already know and refuse to let anyone tell them.

If men believe they already know all there is to know that is significant about life here and hereafter, then revelation to them is impossible.

Regeneration or recreation is not determined by how you feel—it is determined by whether you believe and obey God's revelation or not! Feeling may be a consequence of regeneration, but it does not prove regeneration. Surrender of the mind and will to the *revelation* of God produces regeneration.

The people in the area of these three cities wanted Jesus to heal them and make their bodies feel good—to feed them and make their stomachs feel good—to entertain them with miracles and charge up their emotions; but they did not want to surrender to His teachings in their everyday living, or accept His vicarious death for their sins.

HAVE YOU REALLY ACCEPTED THE REVELATION THAT JESUS DIED FOR YOUR SINS . . . OR ARE YOU TRYING TO WORK YOUR WAY INTO HEAVEN?!

HAVE YOU ACCEPTED THE REVELATION OF GOD FOR YOUR RELATIONSHIPS TO YOUR FELLOW MAN . . . TOWARD HUMAN INSTITUTIONS . . . FOR YOUR MARRIAGE?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING ABOUT THE REVEALED WILL OF GOD ABOUT YOUR LIFE AS A DISCIPLE (LEARNER), A MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, A MISSIONARY . . . ? I mean what it says in the Bible!

You don't have to wait for a call . . . you are called by the gospel.

You don't have to wait for a vision of the lost . . . that vision is in the Bible.

You don't have to wait for a challenge or a commission . . . they are in the Bible.

ARE YOU LETTING GOD TELL YOU . . . OR DO YOU THINK YOU KNOW EVERYTHING THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT WHAT YOU OUGHT TO DO WITH YOUR LIFE AND HOW IT SHOULD BE RUN?

If you are waiting for another revelation . . . if you think somehow Christ should come back from above or below or wherever He is and say something else . . . THEN YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT ROMANS 10 says.



## CONDEMNATION, CHALLENGE AND COMPASSION OF KING

THE WORD OF FAITH . . . THE REVELATION OF GOD . . . ALL THERE IS UNTO SALVATION . . . IS NEAR YOU . . . IN YOUR VERY PRESENCE . . . IN THE APOSTOLIC MESSAGE! JUST AS SURELY AS JESUS WALKED IN THE PRESENCE OF THOSE CITIES, HIS SPIRIT IS HERE, ALL AROUND YOU, IN YOU, THROUGH HIS WORD.

### III. COMPASSION (11:28-30)

#### A. First, look at who offers rest.

1. Have you noticed all through this text the audaciousness of this itinerant Hebrew rabbi? He claims the authority to pronounce judgment on whole cities! He claims the exclusive right and power to reveal God to whomever He chooses and however He chooses!
2. Now, He claims the power to give to anyone who wants, rest for troubled, burdened and weary psyches.
  - a. He will give what Solomon and millions like him could not find in pleasure, wisdom, possessions, great works, entertainment (see Eccl. 2:23 . . . his mind did not *rest*).
  - b. He claims to do what psychiatry, philosophy, governments of all kinds, science, and religion has not been able to do. MONEY, POWER, INDULGENCE, MYSTICISM, STOICISM, ASCETICISM HAVE ALL BEEN TRIED AND FOUND WANTING . . . TRIED OVER AND OVER AND OVER, IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES AND ALL TIMES . . . STILL WANTING.

And this Hebrew teacher offers it! What audacity—to claim to provide the most sought after and unattained goal known to the human race!

EITHER HE IS GOD, OR THE WORLD'S MOST PREPOSTEROUS CHARLATAN.

#### B. What is it He offers?

1. Rest! *Vines, Expos. Dict.* says, "Christ's rest is not a rest from work, but in work . . . not the rest of inactivity but of the harmonious working of all the faculties and affections . . . because each has found in God the ideal sphere for its satisfaction and development."
2. It is the rest the Old Testament prophets predicted would be found in the Messiah and His kingdom.
3. It is the rest the writer of Hebrews says the Hebrew Christians were then entering into (Heb. 3-4). (And they weren't exactly sitting back relaxing in their rocking chairs!)
4. It is a rest of yoked discipleship that refreshes the soul . . . actually it is a new birth! a regeneration!

## THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

5. THERE IS NO REAL REST WITHOUT THE WORK OF CHRIST . . . CHRIST CANNOT GIVE YOU HIS DIVINE COMPASSION UNLESS YOU TAKE HIS YOKE UPON YOU.

IF YOU THINK YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO CHRIST MEANS EASY LIVING . . . SELF-INDULGENCE, CESSATION OF STRUGGLE, OR HAVING EVERYTHING DONE FOR YOU . . . YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT REST IS!

THERE IS NO REAL COMPASSION WITHOUT WORK. YOU CANNOT BE COMPASSIONATE TOWARD SOMEONE BY TAKING AWAY ALL THEIR LABOR. YOU MAY HELP, ENCOURAGE, BUT TO TAKE AWAY WORK TAKES AWAY DIGNITY, PURPOSE, SATISFACTION, FULFILLMENT, IDENTITY!

THIS IS WHERE THE SOCIALISTIC, BIG-BROTHER, GOVERNMENT FAILS! WELFARE, TRUE WELFARE INVOLVES WORK!

EVEN THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A STRENGTHENER . . . NOT A SUPERNATURAL GENIE TO WORK YOU A MIRACLE EVERY TIME YOU COME UP AGAINST A STRUGGLE, OR AN UNPLEASANT TASK IN YOUR DISCIPLESHIP!

THE ONLY WAY YOU ARE GOING TO FIND REST IS IN DOING THE WORK OF GOD . . . YOU MIGHT AS WELL MARK THAT DOWN IN YOUR LITTLE BLACK BOOK AND BOW YOUR BACK AND GET WITH IT!

WE TALK ABOUT SOCIAL UNREST, POLITICAL UNREST, RESTLESS PEOPLE. . . IT ISN'T THAT THEY AREN'T TRYING TO FIND REST AND PEACE . . . BUT THEY ARE NOT DOING THE WORK OF GOD!

THEY ARE NOT YOKED TO CHRIST . . . JESUS CHRIST WAS THE MOST RESTED, PEACEFUL BEING EVER TO WALK THIS EARTH . . . AND HE WAS THE MOST PERFECTLY YOKED TO GOD PERSON WHO EVER WALKED HERE TOO!

HIS REST IS HIS YOKE, AND HIS YOKE IS *CHRESTOS*, (TRANSLATED GENTLE) MEANS PRIMARILY, FIT FOR USE, GOOD, PURPOSEFUL. . . .

O.K., SO YOU HAVE BEEN HERE, HOW LONG IS IT NOW? A MONTH, A YEAR, TWO YEARS, THREE . . . AND YOU STILL HAVEN'T FOUND REST AND PEACE FOR YOUR SOUL!

HAVE YOU FOUND THE YOKE OF CHRIST'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE? DO YOU HAVE HIS AIMS AND GOALS FOR LIVING? HAVE YOU MADE A FIRM DECISION TO SURRENDER TO BEING YOKED TO HIS PURPOSE?

WHAT IS HIS PURPOSE? "GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL THE NATIONS. . . ."

THAT IS WHY HE DIED! THAT IS WHY HE ROSE AGAIN! THAT IS WHY HE INSTITUTED THE CHURCH! THAT IS WHY HE REVEALED THE NEW TESTAMENT AND CAUSED IT TO BE RECORDED AND PRESERVED! THAT IS WHY HE MADE THE MESSAGE AVAILABLE TO YOU SO YOU MIGHT BECOME A DISCIPLE!

THAT IS WHY HE HAS SUSTAINED OZARK BIBLE COLLEGE FOR 36 YEARS . . . THAT IS WHY WE ARE HERE AT THIS VERY MOMENT . . . THERE IS NO OTHER REASON FOR US TO BE HERE!

## CONDEMNATION, CHALLENGE AND COMPASSION OF KING

### CONCLUSION

#### I. THE CONDEMNATION OF THE KING IS SURE AND CERTAIN UPON ALL WHO WILFULLY REJECT AND SPURN OPPORTUNITIES.

"This is the judgment, that the light has come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light. . . ."

- A. "Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole of man. . . ."
- B. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.
- C. Yes, perfect love casts out fear. . . . THE FEAR OF PUNISHMENT, BUT NOT THE FEAR OF GOD!
- D. Even the New Testament has much to insist about the fear of God.
  1. ". . . rather fear Him who can destroy both soul and body in Hell. . . ."
  2. Christian slaves were to serve their masters in the fear of the Lord (Col. 3:22).
  3. Paul wrote, "knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men" (II Cor. 5:11).
  4. He also wrote, "work out your salvation with fear and trembling. . . ." (Phil. 2:12).
  5. Even the perfect Son, was "heard for His godly fear" (Heb. 5:7).
  6. Part of the "eternal gospel" is to "fear God and give Him glory" (Rev. 14:7).

IN COMPARING OUR OPPORTUNITIES AND PRIVILEGES WITH THOSE OF THESE GALILEAN CITIES . . . WE HAD BETTER HAVE SOME GODLY FEAR. THE MEN AND WOMEN OF MOSCOW OR PEKING . . . OR THE VILLAGES OF RHODESIA AND INDIA MAY STAND IN THE JUDGMENT AND CONDEMN US!

The world has had too much of the indulgent grandfather in the sky God and the willy-nilly, weak kneed Jesus preached. Even the church has forgotten Jesus' threat to make war against her if she does not repent (Rev. 2:16).

#### II. THE KING'S CHALLENGE IS INFINITELY HIGH, DEEP, WIDE!

- A. His challenge is rebirth
  1. See things and people as God sees them realistically.
  2. Rejoice in the way God has chosen to make Himself known to man . . . rejoice that the kingdom of God and the revelation of God cannot be usurped and manipulated by the sophisticated, self-made, independent-of-God wisemen.
  3. Surrender to a child-like relationship with Christ . . . let His revealed Word be your only rule of faith and practice.

## THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

- B. His challenge is that you allow His Word in you to conform you to the image of His Son.

HIS CHALLENGE IS THAT OF BUILDING CHARACTER . . . HOLY, TRUE, HONEST, INDUSTRIOUS, SERVING, LOVING CHARACTER.

THE CHALLENGE IS NOT TO DISCOVER A CURE FOR CANCER, SIT IN THE OVAL OFFICE, HIT 850 HOME RUNS IN A YEAR, OR BECOME GREATER THAN ELVIS. . . .

NO, THE CHALLENGE IS MUCH GREATER, MUCH HIGHER . . . AND IT IS YOURS AND MINE. . . . IT IS TO BE A PARTICIPANT IN THE REDEMPTIVE WORK OF ALMIGHTY GOD WHICH HE DETERMINED BEFORE THE DAWN OF TIME AND WILL CONTINUE THROUGHOUT ETERNITY!

### III. THE COMPASSION OF THE KING IS PERFECT!

- A. He offers what all men and women seek. He promises what most never find . . . REST, REAL REST!

- B. HE PROMISES PURPOSE, FUFILLMENT, SATISFACTION, WHOLENESS.

THEN WHY ARE SO MANY CHRISTIANS SO RESTLESS, FRUSTRATED, FRAGMENTED?

BECAUSE THEY HAVEN'T PUT THEIR NECK TO THE YOKE OF CHRIST. . . . THEY HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR A HEAVENLY BOSOM, AS PHILLIPS SAYS, INSTEAD OF A HEAVENLY YOKE!

Phillips says, "His (Christ's) understanding and sympathy were always at the disposal of those who needed Him, yet the general impression of his personality in the Gospels is of One who was leading men on to fuller understanding and maturity. So far from encouraging them to escape life He came to bring, in His own words, 'life more abundant,' and in the end He left His followers to carry out a task that might have daunted the stoutest heart. Original Christianity had certainly no taint of escapism."

The little orphaned, son-of-a-slave, George Washington Carver was teaching at Iowa State University when he got a letter from Booker T. Washington, president of a struggling Negro college.

"I cannot offer you money, position, or fame, . . . the first two you have. The last, from the place you now occupy, you will no doubt achieve. These things I now ask you to give up. I offer you in their place work—hard, hard work—the task of bringing a people from degradation, poverty, and waste to full manhood."

Of course, Mr. Carver took Booker T's offer, and the rest is history.

During the years Mr. Carver worked so long and hard and made so many great scientific discoveries he was offered what would now be millions of dollars in salaries to work for Thomas Edison, Henry Ford and many, many others. But Carver, chose to live in the South, living in relative poverty, wearing the same suit for forty years, forgetting to cash salary

## CONDEMNATION, CHALLENGE AND COMPASSION OF KING

checks, forgetting everything but his complete dedication to helping his people.

Many people argued with him that he could help his people if he had all that money Edison and Ford offered him. He always answered, "If I had all that money I might forget about my people."

And on his tombstone were carved fitting words: "He could have added fortune to fame, but caring for neither, he found happiness and honor in being helpful to the world."

What are you doing with your opportunities. Jesus invites: Take my yoke upon you and learn of me . . . and you will find rest (purpose) for your soul.