

What Did You Expect?

Matthew 11:25-27; Luke 10:13-24

I want to begin by laying a little background leading up to Jesus prayer in Matthew 11 and the parallel in Luke 10. Matthew 4:23 records that “²³Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.”

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

Jesus had instructed and sent out the twelve into the towns and villages to do what he had been doing, and he continued doing the same. Luke’s parallel to Matthew 11:25-27 records the sending out of the seventy-two to do the same as the twelve did earlier. So these two gospel writers indicate that the area Jesus traveled was well covered with his message.

In John 3, a Pharisee named Nicodemus came to question Jesus. But Jesus stunned Nicodemus by saying that before any spiritual questions can be dealt with a man must be “born again.” Even though the concept of a spiritual rebirth has roots in the Old Testament, ‘how can this be?’ Nicodemus was totally confused. Jesus challenges Nicodemus to accept the testimony and goes on to explain the awesome cost to God of making eternal life available to humankind (vv. 16-17). ¹⁶“For

God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.” So, Nicodemus, salvation now becomes an issue of belief or unbelief.

John then turns to the witness of John the Baptist, who makes the statement that Jesus “must increase, but I (John the Baptist) must decrease” (vs. 30). By divine revelation John confirms what Jesus has said and the miracles have verified. Whoever believes the Son has eternal life. Whoever rejects the Son remains under the wrath of God.

Just before Jesus praises his Father in Matthew 11, he pronounced woe’s on certain cities where his miracles had been preformed because they had refused to accept what they had seen and heard and repent. Luke includes these woe’s and the praise to the Father, then adds a private statement for the disciples:

Luke 10:13-24; ¹³“Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. ¹⁴But it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for

you. ¹⁵And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths.

¹⁶“He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me.”

¹⁷The seventy-two returned with joy and said, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.”

¹⁸He replied, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.

²⁰However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” Here is the parallel in Matthew 11:25-27:

²¹At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, 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. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.

²²“All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”

And then Luke adds: ²³Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. ²⁴For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."

It has been said that, "Today we live in the midst of crooked deals, pet pills, cheap thrills, and sometimes you can't tell the Jack's from the Jill's." The world needs to see something that is real - and the church should be giving that to the world.

In verse 7 of chapter 11, Matthew poses a critical question to his Jewish brothers. He records: 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?"

What did you expect? Did you expect to see someone in fine clothes with slick-backed hair and a mouth full of howdy ready to pat you on the back and tell you how wonderful you are? Is that what you expected? Woe to you, Korazin!

What did you expect to hear? Didn't he say that you better get you act together and repent because God is about to bring forth judgment. Woe to you, Bethsaida!

Didn't he tell you religious leaders that you had to change the way you were living, because you are like snakes in the grass trying to slither away from the fire?

Didn't he tell the crowds, the tax collectors, and the soldiers, that they better change what they're doing? That they

better quit their lying and stealing and start loving people in the way God intended. That Hell is just around the corner, and if they don't change, they're heading for it. And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths.

Matthew asked, "What did you go out there to see, my brothers?" You had better figure it out and you better get it right. Because if you miss who John was, then you will miss who followed him; and he also preached a message of repentance.

Matthew's Jewish brothers saw something real when they went into the desert to see John. Some didn't like what they saw. Some didn't like what they heard.

How about the Messiah? What did they expect? Did they expect a warrior? Did they expect a military leader who would gather an army and free the people from the Romans? That is what they expected, isn't it?

What did they see? What did they hear? They saw the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those who had skin diseases cured, the deaf hear, the dead raised, and they heard good news preached to the poor. They saw something real, beyond their expectations, walking through Judea and Galilee, preaching and healing. Some didn't like what they saw. Some didn't like what they heard.

Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, 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." You are blessed, disciples. Prophets and kings haven't seen or heard what you have.

What did you expect when you became a Christian? Did you have any idea it would turn out the way it did?

While you are thinking about that, I want to give you an illustration about expectations from my recent basement project.

A few years back, when Ellen and I were remodeling our basement, I put in a light switch for future use. This last week, we bought the lights we wanted and I finished hooking up the lights to the switch. Now understand: this was light switch 101; basic simple wiring.

I expected lights when I flipped the switch. After I pulled my wiring back apart and scratched my head a little, I went out in the garage and reset the breaker. I didn't get what I expected.

To make a long story short, when I originally installed the light switch, I had nicked a wire and it grounded out when I flipped the switch. But I thought that I had flunked basic wiring 101.

Now, back to the question. What did you expect when you became a Christian? What did you think Christianity 101 was going to be? Did you think like I did and

so many do that you had to give up this and that? Oh, I can't do that any more: I can't go there; do not handle; do not taste; do not touch. Thank you Jesus. I'm so miserable.

Did you have any idea that it would be so sweet and simple as a personal relationship with the Messiah? What did you expect?

Thank you, Father, for what you revealed to your children. Thank you that we didn't get what we expected.

Jesus and his disciples ministered throughout Judea and Galilee looking for the lost lambs of Israel. They were looking for the lambs that were teachable, tender hearted; those that knew that they needed help to make it through life.

Is that you? Or do you think that you can make it by the do not handle, do not taste, do not touch philosophy? Do you think that what you give up satisfies God?

Listen to part of David's prayer in Psalm 51: ¹⁶ You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.

¹⁷ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

This is from the pin of a man after God's own heart.

Avoid anything that competes with your personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The greatest competitor of true relationship to Jesus is the service we think we do for

Him. It is easier to serve than to pour out our lives completely and allow Him to make and mold us. The goal of God is not simply that we do something *for* Him. God is looking for those who know that they can't make it without Him and that they are willing to become the salt and light He wants them to be in a world that is looking for the real deal.

If we look like the world to a world that is looking for something real, then they might as well stay where they are.

How are we doing, Church? Are we real? Or are we like the children that Jesus compared Matthew's brethren to?

^{11:16}"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."

They didn't like John or Jesus. Neither met their expectations even though they were the real deal.

What did you expect when you became a Christian? Did you realize that some people wouldn't like you; even some of your former friends? Did you realize that some of the things you would say would

offend people, even though it was the truth?

When you finally gave in to the Spirit, do you remember that clean freshness coming from the inside? It was more than a feeling, wasn't it? You knew it was real, didn't you? Did you expect so many rejections when you tried to explain this to your friends and family?

The Christian life is not a cakewalk, is it? What did you expect?

If it is true that we live in the midst of crooked deals, pet pills, cheap thrills, and sometimes you can't tell the Jack's from the Jill's," then when the world looks at us, they need to see the real deal. When they see us at work or play, or when they walk through our doors for a visit, they need to know that this is a place that they will hear and see the un-compromised truth as best we know it, even though it may offend; and even though they may reject it. If the world needs to see something that is real, then this church will be giving that to the world.

As unloving as it may sound, we need to be reminded that God despises a stiff-necked people, but is eager to work in those that are tender toward Him. We need to be reminded that God is working in hearts of people that are flexible, teachable, willing and ready for Him to mold and shape them.

I found that in this church about five years ago. Thank you for being real.

Well, Dave, what did you expect?