

Luke 10:1~16, part 2

Here we find Jesus, sending out His disciples to proclaim the message of the Kingdom... And as He does so, He instructs them concerning the way they are to respond, according to the responses of the hearers.

(Vs 8~9) That of Blessing...

(Vs 10~11) That of Cursing and Warning...

To those who reject them, they are to declare that the judgment of God abides upon them...

Jesus instructs His disciples, that upon being rejected, they were to go out into the streets of that city, and publicly declare the judgment of God, abides on that city. They are to do this by shaking off the dust of that city, against them as a show of judgment. *"Shaking off the dust"* against someone, was a well-known Jewish custom, as a show of contempt and rejection of the person. Jesus instructs His disciples that they are to do this, while making it clear to the people, that they could have been citizens of the kingdom. But as a result of their rejection, they have brought upon themselves the judgment and wrath of God!

Look at what He says... *"be sure of this...that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."* Think about that...the Kingdom of God *was at their doorstep!* Think about how close these folks are to the kingdom! It was right there, in arms length, all they had to do was reach out and grab it. But because they have rejected God's generous offer of His Kingdom, they have brought upon themselves the judgment of God!

Listen, it's important to not miss the fact, that men will not be rejected and condemned on the basis of their sin...but rather on the basis of their rejection of God's remedy for sin, His son Jesus Christ. Men will not be excluded from the Kingdom because God has rejected them...but rather they will exclude themselves by rejecting His Son. It will be men's rejection of God's gracious offer that will bring upon them the judgment of the Lord.

Beloved, there are two kinds of people in the world...

- Those who hear the message of the kingdom, in turn *"reject this world"* to follow Jesus...
- Those who hear the message of the kingdom, and yet *"reject Christ"* to follow this world...

It's one of the two...you are either a citizen of the kingdom of God, and live your life unto Jesus Christ... Or, you are yet a citizen of the kingdom of this world, and yet live your live unto this world... It's one of the two. You cannot serve God and Mammon, you cannot serve two masters... As Jesus said, *"He that is not with me, is against me."*

(Vs 12~15) Jesus pronounces "Woes" on those that reject Him...

¹²But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city. ¹³Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. ¹⁴But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you. ¹⁵And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell.

To hear the message of Christ, and then reject it, by continuing to live one's life to himself and this world, will bring upon a man/woman, the most horrific, terrorizing judgment one could possibly imagine. Jesus declares that it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for them. Given what happened to Sodom, this is a frightening statement. Sodom was a wicked city that God destroyed because of its great sinfulness. The Lord brought judgment on that city, by raining fire and brimstone out of heaven on it. It was utterly destroyed, all that remained was a pile of ashes...

Sodom will face God's wrath at Judgment Day, but cities that rejected Christ and his kingdom will face even worse wrath from God. A city as evil as Sodom would be *better off ... on the judgment day* than

these towns because they had been given the opportunity to believe in Christ—they had seen great miracles and had the Good News preached to them—but they had turned away and had refused salvation. Their punishment would be severe.

Woe unto you *Chorazin* (**Koh-RAY-zin**)... Woe unto you *Bethsaida*... Woe unto you *Capernaum*...

Chorazin was a small village nestled in the hills about 2 ½ miles north of Capernaum...

Bethsaida was the hometown of Philip, Andrew and Peter, located just further north...

Capernaum was “*the headquarters*” that Jesus worked from.

All three of these cities serve to signify the places where He had already ministered and performed miracles, and such, but to no avail. He performed more miracles and preached more sermons in this area, than any other place. Even though they had seen these things for themselves, they still had not repented.

In response... Jesus declares woes unto them, and incites them for their indifference to Him. Declaring, that given all they had witnessed, and still hadn't repented, meant they stood to receive the greater judgment!

The more you know, the more accountable you are... And in turn, greater the punishment! It is far better to have heard nothing of Christ, than to have heard the truth about Him, and reject Him!

We need to keep in mind, that the rejection spoken of here is not necessarily mistreatment, or violent opposition, but rather... *just indifference*. We find no gross moral sin associated with these cities. The cities here are not characterized by the immoral sins of Sodom. Most of the people were upright, law-abiding, decent people. Yet, because they had both seen and heard the message of the kingdom of God, and had not repented and turned from the kingdom of this world... their fate on the day of judgment would be worse than Sodom!

Along with Sodom, Jesus mentions two other cities... Tyre & Sidon... These two cities epitomized, pagan, Gentile corruption and worthlessness. The people in these two cities were the descendants of the ancient Phoenicians. People notorious for their immorality and godlessness. The prophet Ezekiel referred to one of their kings as a picture of Satan. The cities violence, profanity, pride, injustice, greed and immorality were so excessive, the Lord destroyed it.

Yet... Jesus says, if they would have had the privileges of Chorazin, and Bethsaida... they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. (*Sign of genuine repentance*)

The overall intent here is, that because of how much they had heard and seen, and given the fact they had not repented... greater will their judgment be. Declaring that the immoral, godless city of Tyre & Sidon, and Sodom, will be much better off than the unbelieving of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum!

Hell will be hotter for *the respectable and upright unbelievers* of these three cities, then it will be for *the immoral, wicked unbelievers* of Sodom, Tyre and Sidon!

Beloved, if this is the case for these those cities... I cringe at the thought of the judgment that awaits those in our day, who been given the entire account of God's plan of Salvation, and yet do not repent! There are many, who KNOW the word of God, they have sit under the preaching of the word many times. They are fully aware of what it says about Jesus Christ, they have heard the commandments, yet have not repented! They yet continue to live unto this world, and to the things of this world... Going to church, hearing the word of benefits no one, if they don't heed it! Matter of fact, we learn here, that to the more you know, the more accountable you will be!

The kingdom of God is nigh unto you this morning... God's gracious offer of the Kingdom, is offered to men and women freely...in spite of their sin. But it requires that you receive it, and to receive the Kingdom of God, requires you turn from the Kingdom of this world. For all hear the word of the Kingdom, the message of the cross...knowing how He suffered and died for us, and then, be indifferent, by continuing to live one's life to self, and to this world...WOE unto you! It shall be more tolerable for Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum...than for you!