LIFE BIBLE MINISTRY

Matthew 11 (Part 2) :16-27

Unrepentant Cities

Pastor Paul LeBoutillier · April 18, 2026

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

Matthew chapter 11 if you're there we're gonna take a few verses here and see what we've got beginning at verse 16 Matthew 11 16 Jesus is going to start to address the people who've been listening and not just listening but responding to his message and John the Baptist you'll remember last week we dealt with how Jesus talked quite a bit about John the Baptist and it says in verse 16 to what can I compare this generation meaning these people they're like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others we played a flute for you and you did not dance we sang a dirge which is a funeral song and you did not mourn or cry for John came neither eating nor drinking and they say he has a demon what that means is John came withholding himself from certain creature comforts of life he fasted and lived out in the wilderness and didn't involve himself in some of the comforts of living and the people said he always got a demon verse 19 the Son of Man came eating and drinking in other words Jesus partook of the creature comforts of life and they say here's a glutton and a drunkard a friend of tax collectors and sinners but wisdom is proved right by her actions pray with me father open our hearts to your word we pray in Jesus name Amen the Word of God has a way of kind of exposing us doesn't it who we are what makes us tick the things that should or shouldn't motivate us Jesus starts to talk to them here almost in parable form to describe some kind of a comparison of the people and their response to his ministry and that of John the Baptist and he essentially compares them with children bratty children who can't be pleased who will criticize no matter what they'll say we played a joyful song and you didn't dance so and then and we played a sad song and you didn't cry and what he's basically saying here is is that these people had just become critical and unhappy and for the sake of being critical they criticized no matter what they did they criticized they criticized John because he didn't partake in the creature comforts of life and they criticize Jesus because he did and what that proves is they really didn't want to be satisfied with either of these men they just wanted to criticize that's all have you ever met somebody who just wanted to be critical just was constantly repetitiously critical and it's it's really kind of a crazy thing I want to be careful that you don't misunderstand what I'm saying in terms of critical thinking don't don't ever mistake the two between critical thinking and just being critical critical thinking is something that we need to grow in because

critical thinking is the ability to weigh the evidence look at the information that is in front of us and come up with a practical and reasonable solution we are young people particularly need to be taught more critical thinking skills to be completely honest don't mean to offend anyone but it's just one of those things we need to grow in frankly even adults to be a critical thinker is not to be a critical person a critical thinker means to be able to assess rightly what you're facing to be a critical person in attitude means to just flat-out be negative about things in life and Jesus reminds us in the latter part of verse 15 if you look with me there that wisdom he says at the end of that verse is proved right by her actions your Bible may say if you have a different translation wisdom is proved right by her children and that's actually what the literal Greek says and it essentially means that the offspring of wisdom will be seen it will be recognized in other words what Jesus is saying here it's not what you say that makes you wise or makes you right it's what you do it's how you live and the fruit of how you live so you see being critical of something we do this usually is a some kind of a defense mechanism and will be critical of people or circumstances or things that people say or whatever because when we're critical it kind of sounds like we're right or we might be anyway and so if I don't like you or if I don't like what you're saying or something like that all I got to do is just criticize you and and that's what they were doing to John the Baptist that's what they were doing to Jesus and it kind of sounds like they're being righteous but all I got to do is be critical and what that accomplishes is it it kind of distances whatever you're saying or doing for me having to accept it it puts distance between those things and so you see we become critical as a mechanism to convince ourselves that it's okay that I don't listen to you or it's okay that I don't listen to your message because I'm finding all kinds of faults in you it's pretty easy to find faults in me if you don't have to go very far and you'll find plenty to work with the point is when we when we look to God's Word and we and we begin to find fault with that that that is a much more serious issue and and that's why Jesus said that it is it is by the fruit of our lives wisdom is seen by the the fruit of our lives and not our words so criticizing something isn't enough to prove that you're right just because you can find fault in something or someone because you know you can find fault in some any any anything or anyone so that isn't that isn't prove you're in the right let it be by how you live and and and so the question is what has your life produced in the way of good fruit and that's kind of why Jesus tells the following story in verses 20 and on and he says this is then Jesus began to denounce the cities in which most of his miracles had been performed why tells us here because they didn't repent he begins to speak of him by name woe to you chorus in he says woe to you Bethsaida if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes he even brings up a notorious example of a couple of cities that were on the Phoenician coast as to say if listen if they had heard what you heard and what did they hear what did what did what did the cities of chorus in and Bethsaida here what did they see they saw Jesus Jesus went

to those cities walked through them and preached the gospel and not only that you guys he showed the power of God through miracles and he says listen you guys think that Tyre and Sidon were bad because they were notoriously sinful listen if they would have seen what you saw they would have repented you might think well what's so bad about Tyre and Sidon well like I said they were there on the coast they were considered Phoenician cities they're known for being the the the origin of Baal worship and one particular notorious person who came out of Tyre and Sidon was Jezebel you guys remember Jezebel from the Old Testament we use that term today to describe well it's kind of describing a derogatory it's a derogatory term describing perhaps a woman who is is evil she's a Jezebel they will say well Jezebel was a real true biblical character who married one of the Israelite kings and was credited with bringing Baal worship into Israel and so Tyre and Sidon were known among the Jews as well I don't want to go near there I mean God smoked those cities you know I wouldn't want to set foot in those places Jesus is oh yeah if they saw what you saw Chorazin and Bethsaida they would have repented they would have repented that's why he goes on to say in verse 22 I tell you it'll be more bearable for them for Tyre and Sidon then it'll be for you speaking to those cities and then he goes on with Capernaum he says will you be lifted up to the skies no you're gonna go down to the depths why if the miracles that were performed in you Capernaum had been performed in Sodom Wow it would have remained to this day he says but I tell you it'll be more bearable on the Day of Judgment for Sodom then it'll be for you Capernaum and you don't probably need me to tell you what Sodom is notorious for we still use the term today to describe sexual perversion and deviancy we call it sodomy because it originated or released it is first heard about in Sodom Sodom Gomorrah and you know what God did to those cities once again those are kind of the quintessential bad places and Jesus says you know what though they're not gonna have as bad a time of it in the judgment as some of the cities who I walked where I walked through and preached the good news and showed the power of God Wow I mean that's crazy you might ask yourself the question well what was it about what these what these cities saw that made them more responsible well they saw they saw they saw God in human flesh they saw the Word of God made man physically walking through their towns sharing you know the the good news showing the power of God and it says they refused to repent they refused and where there is more light and revelation there is greater responsibility let me show you a scripture that is taken right it's the words of Jesus from Luke 12 look at this on the screen it says for from everyone who has been given much much will be demanded and from one who has been entrusted with much much more will be asked see there is a biblical spiritual principle that says when you've been given much much is expected from you and and you can be given much information revelation insight and so forth and if you refuse to respond even when you've been given those things there is a greater form of responsibility that is on you kind of makes you wonder a little bit doesn't it about how nations like the

United States of America and other Western nations will fare in the judgment because we have been given so much I mean the the revelation of Jesus you think about it today you know years ago many years ago just owning a Bible was considered a privilege that that many people did not have and we've got Bibles galore we've got more Bibles than we can read you know I good grief this is my telephone I have about 19 Bible versions on this alone and they're all free of charge and I can read them anytime anywhere I want that's unheard of in our in our time and and it's just you know you drive around you see billboards with scripture references on them you see you see this and you see that you hear you turn on the radio you turn on the television you can hear the gospel being proclaimed you know it's just it's everywhere it's just even though our society is what it is the Gospels everywhere and you have to wonder what kind of responsibility do we bear before the Lord as it relates to what all that we've been given all the insight all the revelation all the wisdom and stuff that we we've been given we've been presented with such incredible opportunities and then Jesus turns to those who have responded and he does so now in the form of a prayer look with me in verse 25 he says at that time Jesus said I praise you father Lord of heaven and earth because you've hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children yes father for this was your good pleasure I love these couple of verses and I got to tell you why they present for us a unique opportunity to listen in on a conversation between God the Father and God the Son what you have here people are two of the members of the triune Godhead talking and you get to listen in and we always learn something whenever God speaks and he as Jesus speaks about things that you and I would have no insight or understanding of apart from him saying it here he tells you and I that there are some from whom God hides I don't know if that does anything weird to your theology or not but Jesus tells us there are some people from whom God hides he actually hides himself and who are they he says here you've hidden these things from the wise and the learned he's referring to those people in the world who are considered wise and learned now it's important as we look at these the statements by Jesus that we understand what Jesus is saying and what Jesus is not saying people please understand and and and don't get it wrong he is not condemning higher learning or having a degree of some kind that that proves that you have gone through you know higher learning he's not he's not condemning intellectual learning please understand he's condemning intellectual pride he's condemning the attitude that so often comes with learning that that causes us to be puffed up in fact that is exactly what Paul called it in in 1st Corinthians you remember this 1st Corinthians 8 the end of verse 1 is this he says knowledge puffs up but love builds up what do you what does he mean when he says puffs up he means inflates knowledge inflates it inflates a person's ego and and and and so forth it you could say it another way knowledge is egocentric or at least it has the the potential to be and and what's really interesting is that when man's ego gets stroked you know wisdom has this in this incredible way of getting tossed out the door knowledge comes in wisdom

goes out check out another proverb on the screen from the 11th chapter of Proverbs it says when pride comes then comes disgrace but with humility comes real wisdom and then Jesus reveals why man's pride gets in the way so often of him knowing God look at verse 27 in your Bible all things Jesus says have been committed to me by my father no one knows the son except the father and no one knows the father check this out except the son and then further he says and those to whom the son chooses to reveal him do you understand the the implications of the statement that Jesus just made if this were made by any human being he'd probably get burned at the stake immediately because it would be a prideful statement what if I said to you as a teacher there's no way you can know God apart from me you know you guys would roll your eyes and make your way for the exit signs and you would be justified in doing so but Jesus is making a statement that he is uniquely qualified to say and please don't miss the implications he is saying apart from me you will not know God apart from me I'm the only one who has a true relationship with God the Father if you want to have a relationship with God the Father you got to do it through me I am the only one who knows God the Father you want to know God you got to know him through me do you understand what that does to a prideful person's attitude of themselves because you see what happens when we become intellectually prideful what happens when our learning increases and we begin to think we're all that and even a little more pretty soon I see myself now as a self-made man I now have a doctorate in this and I which I don't by the way but you know when somebody has all that kind of learning they're kind of walking around like you know I've done my studying I've been around I know a thing or two you know you can't you can't tell me much because I've studied it I know it and we become prideful and then Jesus comes along and he smacks us right in our pride and he says to all those self-made men or women he says listen I know you are delighted with yourself and I know you think yourself quite able to know pretty much anything you want to know but you need to know this knowing God and having a relationship with God is impossible apart from me apart from me do you see how that assaults pride it says you can't do this except by me and someone kind of hears that and they're like did you just say what I think you said are you telling me that I can't know God isn't that kind of narrow yeah so Jesus said the way to life is narrow and hard right and we are offended we're insulted you've insulted my intelligence I'm a I'm a bright person I've got an IQ of whatever it is and I can I've learned and I've grown and I've studied And I know these things and now this Jesus character comes along and says there's something I can't know God well, you think you're so hot and you're the only way to know God. Well, that's exactly what Jesus is saying You cannot know God apart from me because I choose Jesus says who I reveal him to And you know who I reveal him to the humble Those who are like little children people that doesn't mean that God only goes around revealing himself to little children And we better talk to them to get our story straight. That's not what he's saying He's talking about those who are likened unto children because when you think

about a child children aren't usually I Suppose there's exceptions to every rule, but you know, usually they're not Sitting around like, you know, they know everything until they get a little bit older, but the little kids little children just like, huh? They're just they're just learning about life they're learning about stuff and and and it's it's you know There's this innocence and there's this humility that goes along with that heart of a child that doesn't know It's like I didn't know that you know, I didn't they're ignorant. They're naive Now Jesus isn't saying here that you got to be ignorant and naive.

He's saying you have to be humble That's the issue You see he's not telling you and I to sit around and never read a book and never learn and never grow and just be Stupid so you can be Christians It's not what he's saying He's saying in your learning in your growing Don't get prideful stay humble Understand from my word that when you talk about God, this goes beyond your ability No, don't don't think to yourself that I can do this I can know God in all of his splendor and majesty. All I have to do is just is just Direct myself my intellect, you know heavenward You like that pose heavenward and and and and then I can you know, no Jesus says no It's not gonna happen just flat-out not gonna happen It's only through me And you can imagine can't you that if people get upset and offended and insulted when Jesus tells them they can't know God Without him. Can you imagine how upset they get when he tells them they can't be saved apart from him either You want to get to heaven Got to go through me What you're kidding see now what you're telling now, you're really insulting me Now you're saying that God will not accept me the way I am is that what you're saying to me Yeah, so what I'm saying I'm saying that apart from Jesus Christ Listen, I'm not saying anything. I'm saying what Jesus said Jesus said I am the gate I am the door for the sheep I Am the way The truth and the life no man comes to the father except by me and And you can believe in this Universalistic world religious idea that all Religions have a part of God or have a desire for God and they all show us ways to meet God, but I'm sorry Jesus politely disagrees and He says to you and I that it's just him. He's the only way Don't be insulted Be humble and recognize what the Word of God says Where we cry out to God and we say Lord apart from you I have nothing Apart from you.

I'm lost and There's no hope there's no hope for my salvation There's no hope for me to know God or to be saved by God apart from you You know, that's the interesting thing about this. We read these scriptures here in Matthew chapter 11, and if our hearts are humble We're going to be delighted with what they have to say if our hearts are prideful We're going to be offended by what they have to say, you know So you can kind of gauge your own response here today And if you if you are delighted when God comes along and says to you apart from me, there's no life apart from me There's no salvation apart from me There's no knowledge of God if that delights, you know, and then you're probably you know on the right track if it frustrates you and angers you and insults you then there's pride standing between you and him

and and That's what pride does When we think about communion, which we're going to do here in just a moment It's all about rejoicing and what he did not what you did what he did. Oh I tell you I just So many times people come up to me after I've shared How you can be saved and they'll and they'll come after after the service. Maybe this is you today So I'm saving you a trip. So just hang with me here I've had people come up to me on a repeated basis over the years and say to me.

I heard what you said about how we're saved through what Jesus did on the cross and I can always hear the butt coming and it always does but and Then you know what they do They start talking about something they've done They start talking about their past Sometimes it's vague. Sometimes it's specific but they start just talking about their past but pastor I And then they'll say something like this. I just feel like God can never forgive me people Knock off the feeling thing We are never told to trust in our feelings ever Sometimes I feel hot. Sometimes I feel cold. Sometimes I'm happy.

Sometimes I'm sad if I'm gonna base my life on those feelings I'm in for a rollercoaster ride of my life But you know what? We are not to live by feelings. We are to live by faith and So I have to sit him down and say, you know, God gave you your feelings but not to dominate you He gave you your you your feelings but not to control you you are to control your feelings That's called self-control, by the way So you'll be surprised maybe to learn that it's a fruit of the Holy Spirit And what you and I are told to do is to embrace by faith the truth of God's Word Whether you feel it or not you would be shocked to know how many people will not come to Christ because their feelings aren't right and I say to you Trash your feelings forget about your feelings for a minute and look at what the Word of God has to say because the Word tells you he Loves you with an everlasting love I and you know what? He loves you even though he knows what you've done people come up to me and they say pastor You don't know what I've done and my response usually is no, but God does and he loves you still And and you know what Jesus died for you for you That you might have life If you'll be humble enough to accept it and stop thinking about yourself Do you know the reason we we put barricades or think barriers in the way of? Salvation is because we're thinking about ourselves.

Stop it You know just knock it off Think about him. Just put yourself aside for a moment. Think about him. What did he do? What did he accomplish What did he say about you what did he say about the salvation he earned for you on the cross think about that Put your focus on that And you know all those other issues about you will start to fade into the background Because you'll start to realize that the God who was represented on the cross in the person of Jesus Christ was enough To take care of even the stuff you did to Kate take care of even your past and To die bearing that penalty on the cross so that you could be saved You You