

Matthew 11:16–24

Childish Arrogance and Wicked Resistance of Unbelief

Saturday, September 7, 2024 • Read Matthew 11:16–24

Questions from the Scripture text: What does Jesus ask about whom in v16? What are His answer? What are these children doing? To whom are they calling? What do they say they have done (v17)? And what did their companions not do? What else do they say that they have done? What did John come not doing (v18)? How did they respond? What did the Son of Man come doing (v19)? How did they respond? Who is justified by whom? What did Jesus begin to do to whom (v20)? What had been done in these cities? But what had they not done? With which two cities does He begin (v21)? To whom does He compare them? What does He say those cities would have done under what conditions? What does He authoritatively say to Chorazin and Bethsaida (v22)? Whom does He address in v23? What is its condition, as a consequence of the works done there? But what will happen to it? To whom does He compare them? What does He say would have happened to Sodom, under what conditions? What does He authoritatively say to Capernaum in v24?

What should we say about an unbelieving generation? Matthew 11:16–24 looks forward to the morning sermon in public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these nine verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **those who hear the gospel but don't repent are childishly arrogant and wickedly resistant.**

The Childish Arrogance of Unbelief (v16–19). Although there were those who were brought to repentance and faith by the ministries of John and Jesus, the generation as a whole was not. So Jesus now gives a warning to the generation that had the privilege of hearing them. And He calls them children.

And not only children, but petulant children. They are full of folly, desiring the wrong things at the wrong time, but presuming that their demands should be met. They found John too serious, with his insisting upon repentance and that they were unable to produce it themselves (cf. 3:7–10). They found Jesus too welcoming, with His provision of repentance even to tax collectors and sinners (cf. 9:10–13).

When they found themselves disagreeing with the greatest of the prophets (cf. v11, 13) and the Son of Man (v19) Himself, they should have concluded that John and Jesus were right, and they were wrong. But not only did they assume that they themselves were right, but they asserted it with exaggerated accusations like "has a demon" and "glutton and drunkard."

People do that today—though they are little children with respect to the great questions of life, when they come across the preaching of the gospel, they insult it as not satisfying them, rather than humbling themselves before it.

The Wicked Resistance of Unbelief (v20–24). Just as unbelief is childishly arrogant, so also it is wickedly resistant. As the Lord now addresses Chorazin, Bethsaida, and CapernaHe highlights how wickedly resistant their unbelief has been.

Despite all they had heard and seen from Christ, they refused to repent. Considering how evil had been the wealthy port towns of Tyre and Sidon, and considering the quintessential wickedness of Sodom, Jesus's statements here are extremely strong.

It is more wicked to hear Christ's preaching and see Christ's work, but refuse to repent, than it is to be a sodomite! This should alarm everyone who has had opportunity to sit under gospel preaching and see the fruit of gospel power. If you do not repent, if you are not converted, you will be more guilty and suffer a worse hell than sodomites who have not had the same opportunity.

How True Children Respond (v19c). How, then, must we respond? Happily, the petulant "children" of v16 are not the only children in this passage. Wisdom, too, has children. The wisdom of God, on John's lips and Jesus's lips, has children like the (literally) Proverbial "son," addressed throughout the book of Proverbs as "my son." God's children are also His wisdom's children.

When God's wisdom comes, by John, and urges us to bear fruit in keeping with repentance, the true children say, "You are justified in this; I am a miserable sinner and must have a new mind and new life!"

When God's wisdom comes, by Christ, and welcomes us to Him and to receive repentance from Him, the true children say, "You are justified in welcoming us; we praise You for welcoming us to Yourself in Christ!"

God's wisdom is justified by her children (v19); or, as v25 puts it, the Father has taken to Himself babes to whom He reveals the truth. He does this not only by causing them to hear faithful preaching, but by giving them humility to give their assent to the truth of this preaching. God give you, by His Spirit, to be a true child, dear reader.

What opportunities for hearing and responding to the Word of God have you had? How have you responded to His calls for your conversion? How have you responded to His welcoming you to Christ? Whom are you tempted to think of as being the worst sorts of sinners? How would your sin compare, if your life is unchanged by the gospel preaching that you hear?

Sample prayer: Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank You for announcing repentance and welcome to us in Christ. Give us light and life from Him, by Your Spirit, to respond to Your Word. Give us humility to understand that we are but children, so that we will justify Your wisdom in Your word, we ask through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP2 "Why Do Heathen Nations Rage?" or TPH456 "Jesus! What a Friend for Sinners!"

"(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Matthew chapter 11 verses 16 through 24. These are God's words. But to what shall I like in this generation? It is like children. Sitting in the marketplace and calling to their companions and saying we played for the flute for you and you did not dance and we mourned to you and you did not lament.

For John came, neither eating nor drinking and they say, he has a demon. The son of man came eating and drinking and they say look a glutton and a wine pepper, a friend of tax collectors and sinners. Part wisdom is justified by her children. Then he began to rebuke the cities in which most of his mighty Works had been done because they did not repent.

World to you, courtson. To your bedside. For if the mighty Works, which were done in, you had been done in tire and sidon Have repented long ago in sackcloth and Ashes. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for tire and sidon in the day of judgment than for you.

And your Capernaum who are exalted to Heaven? Will be brought down to Hades for. If the mighty Works, which were done in. You had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment.

Than for you. So, for the reading of God's inspired, and And they're in tort.

There were those who were brought to repentance and Faith by the ministries of John, and Um of the Lord Jesus we're going to hear about them, Lord willing in the next passage, when Jesus thanks his father for revealing to those who are babies The things that are hidden from those.

who are The wise and The Prudent. So, there are some who are being brought to repentance. But the generation as a whole was not. And so Jesus upon announcing the greatness of John's Ministry and the necessity. Not only of initial conversion, but Of pressing by force. Persisting in the faith.

He now turns to the people as a whole who are not like John, And have not been converted and are not pressing into. He And he says, to what shall I liken this generation? in other words to what shall I liken? The unbelievers, The unconverted of this generation, the ones who have had the preaching of John and the preaching of Jesus.

And so there are very unique generation. The generation that had been waiting for the Elijah to come, and now he had come for the Messiah to come and now he had come. And yet. This generation has not. the most part come to Faith in Christ. And so he calls them children.

But to what shall I like in this generation? It is like children. And what we see in verses 16 through 19 is the childish arrogance. Of the unconverted or the childish arrogance of unbelief. And then it would go on in verses, 20, 20 through 24, to rebuke the cities in which the mighty Works have been done.

They'd seen the mighty Works done and still Have not repented and have not come to the Lord Jesus Christ. And so, He announces or rebukes them for the wicked resistance. Of unbelief. So the childish arrogance of unbelief in verses 16 through 19. And the wicked resistance of unbelief in verses, 20 through 24.

You know, those who hear the gospel and They don't repent and believe they're not changed. They don't come to Faith in Jesus Christ. they're likely to think that They just haven't heard enough. to convince them or to be seen enough to be persuaded. They do not realize.

being unmoved by the faithful preaching of God's word and Christ himself. Preaching. by his spirit and his word. This. Displaying something about them and their wickedness. And so, when we are, Are unmoved by the word of God. We need to look to God for Grace and not be.

Childishly, arrogant and wickedly. Resistant. So let's see how the Lord Jesus talks about that. Childish arrogance. He says it is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their companions. And already even before we get to, Verses 17-19. We see how. They're treating spiritual things like a game.

child sitting in The marketplace and saying, let's play wedding and let's play funeral. They're playing at religion, they're playing as spirituality. It is important for you that you do not play. At the condition of your soul before. God. And the Eternal Destiny. Of your soul. And that you do not treat.

God himself and his word on his servant's lips. As if you are on the same level as it is. One of the problems with the way, these people treated, the preaching of John and the preaching of Jesus. As as if they were all at the same level, like children speaking to their companions or speaking to their counterparts.

And so already, we see the arrogance of these the childishness And now we see the childishness of the arrogance, I said we played the flute for you and you did not dance. We have warned to you and you did not lament. Well, out in the marketing place Marketplace is not time to have either a wedding or a funeral.

The that which they were trying to do. Was inappropriate to the occasion. And when he further explains that though, we played the flute for you and you did not dance. So they wanted something light and merry But John came neither eating nor drinking. And they say he has a demon.

So they want to be light about. What John is coming about? What was John coming about? He's coming. He was saying bear fruit. In keeping for repentance, repent for the Kingdom of Heaven. As a hand, don't say to yourself. I'm the child of Abraham. No, you're a stone. You need God.

To make a child of Abraham out of you. And God is about to come in judgment and wrath. And the acts is laid. to the root of the tree. And so, John is appropriately. Serious about repentance and wrath? The need for conversion and The hopelessness of it. Unless God does it in us.

These are not things to take lightly or to play with. But then, They want to. They want to be. And, Heavy. About what Jesus? openly and lovingly welcomed. people to, because we see the we mourned to you, and you did not lament in verse 17 has its follow-up in verse 19.

The son of man, Came eating and drinking. The son of man, the great king. The one who. God himself. Came eat came eating and drinking and they said, look a glutton and a wine pepper. A friend of tax collectors, and sinners. You remember the occasion? On which this happened, or at least the one that Matthew has recounted to us.

Evidently there have been many occasions like this. And it was when Jesus was welcoming the repentant, And, Welcoming repentant people. Of All Sorts from all sorts of. Former. ways of And yet Jesus, welcomes them and welcomes their repentance and you remember how others? perhaps not the same group, although Pharisees are definitely in both parties.

The ones who Did not. Approve of The seriousness of John the baptizer or the welcoming of the Lord Jesus. And then now, you know, that group instead of thanking God and being grateful and seeing his compassion and being moved by how gracious and merciful he is. And Participating in the compassion and the welcome of the Lord Jesus Christ to Sinners.

How did they respond? They responded. by assuming That either Christ didn't really know what kind of people these were or As we see here, Even accusing him of being. A glutton and a drunkert. Because he was a friend of tax collectors and sinners. And so again, childish arrogance, Either the childish arrogance to treat that, which is eternal eternally weighty as if it is light or the childish arrogance.

To think that you can be more serious about righteousness than Jesus is. Notice it doesn't say merely the Christ or the Lord Jesus. He says the son of man. The great king. The god man, the Glorious one. Came eating and drinking. They really think that they're going to be more righteous than he is.

And you can see. even the childishness of it. By their exaggerated language. Didn't just say, John is over serious about these things? Or he's a little bit odd or he's out of step. He has a demon. And people will often use exaggerated inflated language. And even accusing of the Lord Jesus of being a glutton.

Drunkert. When we hear the word of God, And we find that. Our heart and our mind are at odds with it. What we need to do. Is humble ourselves before it? Knowing ourselves to be children. Knowing ourselves to need instruction and correction. To need maturation. To need to grow in wisdom and in favor with God.

And with men, And so, whenever we come, The word of God. We need to come in humility and sit under it. There are many today who, although they are little children. With respect to the great questions of life, they've come up with the most Preposterous answers to where everything came from.

But they still have no answers. For the, why questions? Why is there anything instead of nothing? Why is there such a thing as good or evil? is there good or evil? What can be done about evil? What is the standard? For what is good? Since we know that good and evil are objectively exist.

Yet, there are many disagreements among men. About what the standard they their children, their babies. And they come and they hear the gospel preach. They hear the truth about God, the one, true, and living God, the Triune God, the creator of all things to hear the truth, preached And, They and all of their self-important self-assured.

Wisdom, think those people are way too serious about that. Repentance stuff. Or they think. Or they think that. They are. righteous about things. That those Christians are wicked about. And they accuse Christians of being intolerant and exclusivist. And use even the word hate speech. To talk about the Glory of Christ is God and the free offer of the Gospel, with the necessity of repentance and faith in Christ.

It's childish, arrogance. They don't know that they're children. We need the Lord Jesus to come in places like Matthew 11 and show us. That were children. But the unbeliever the unregenerate. Does not understand that, he's childish or arrogant. He may even as he Rejects. What? What he hears from the word of God congratulate himself.

On being Wise and prudent sincere and authentic. And so there's the childish arrogance of unbelief but then there's the wicked. Wicked resistance. of unbelief. That we see in verses 20 through 24. You begin to rebuke the cities in which most of his Mighty Works have been done. Because they did not.

Repent. He tells Tyre and Sidon. That Tyre and Sidon. Have been less hard-hearted than they. It's pretty amazing to think of at the time. he first uses the most wicked cities you could think of at the time perhaps accepting Rome. But maybe not. Tyre inside and where port cities?

They were obscenely wealthy. and they were full of all manner of wickedness. synonymous. with evil And, Considering how evil Tyre and Sidon have been Jesus's statement here about Tyre and Sidon Really strong. It was more wicked. For them to hear, Christ's preaching and see Christ's work and not repent than it was for Tyre and Sidon.

Is full of Filth and violence. And greed and covetousness. As they were. But he doesn't just use the Most wicked, or Quintessentially, wicked cities towns of their own day. He now refers when he's addressing Capernaum The most quintessentially, wicked City in the history of mankind. Sodom. You see, it is more wicked to hear, Christ's preaching, and see Christ's work, and refuse to repent.

Then it is to be a sodomite. This should alarm everyone who's had opportunity to sit under gospel preaching. This should alarm those who especially are in churches. Where not only is the doctrine faithful, but where Christ is active. And people are genuinely transformed. You know, when there is Reformation and Revival taking place.

And many people and many households in a congregation. That actually makes it all the more urgent. For those who, who hear the word and see the work to repent. Because he tells Capernaum. That. It would be it's going to be more tolerable for the land of Sodom. In the day of judgment.

Then it will be for the generation in Capernaum. Who heard Christ to preach? And who saw Christ's work. Resisting the preaching of the Gospel. Or. To put a finer point on it because it's, they did not repent. Hearing the preaching of the Gospel. And not being changed. Is worse, more guilty.

More dangerous under more wrath. Than being a sodomite. From the time of Lot, when the city of Sodom. Was destroyed. And so if you do not repent, if you are not converted, You will be more guilty and you will suffer a worse. Hell Then sodomites who did not have the same opportunity.

That you do. So how are true children to respond? When I say true children, because praise God, the children. Of which Jesus speaks in verse 16 are not. The only children in the passage Thankfully, there are also The children of wisdom. In verse 19, when he says wisdom is justified by her children.

Now, in God's mercy to us. Gave us to get through Romans and Stark Proverbs just in time that we would hear just this past midweek meeting the sermon with Lady wisdom. Actually. not this past week. Not this past midweek meeting but the previous one last week's midweek meeting lady wisdom.

Inviting giving this urgent invitation to come and hear her when he says wisdom is justified by her children. He's saying that the wisdom of God on John's lips and Jesus's lips. Has children like, The proverbial son who is addressed as my son throughout the Book of Proverbs. God's children here are called wisdom's children.

When God's wisdom comes by John. And urges. His children and wisdom's children to bear fruit in keeping with repentance. The true children say you are right to say That I need to repent. You are right to say that I must bear fruit. You are right to say that I cannot give myself this repentance, wisdom is justified by her children.

They are sent to. They give their agreement with they. submit themselves to what the wisdom of God says. And so we say, you are right, I am a miserable sinner, I must have a new mind and a new life. Or when wisdom comes, when God's wisdom comes by Christ, And says come and welcome to the Lord.

Jesus Christ with whom there is abundant forgiveness and life and cleansing. to give you repentance and sanctification to give you Faith. So that you may be joined to the Son of God and have his righteousness. Welcome, all sinners.

The children of wisdom who are also the children of God, the true children say, You are justified. In welcoming us, we praise you. for welcoming us to yourself in Christ. God's wisdom is Justified. By wisdom's children. Wisdom is justified by her children or He changes the illustration and from verse 19 wisdom justified by her children to God the father And his babies.

When he turns, and he prays, Next week's passage I thank you Father. Lord of Heaven and Earth. That you have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them. Two babes. And so this is how true children respond. For soft-hearted under the word. We take our cues.

For how to think and how to respond what God says is weighty. And, and serious. We take seriously. And we give weight. What when God? Freely welcomes. We freely come and rejoice over his free. Welcome to us, and to others. Where he is compassionate and merciful, you're compassionate and merciful.

We must be. These Vapes of God, these babies of the father. Or as we have in verse 19, these children. Of wisdom. Who justify her. The father has taken to himself babes to whom he reveals the truth, not just that he gives them to hear good preaching. But by opening their hearts and opening their eyes, giving them humility.

To give their Ascent to the truth of his preaching. May God give us by his. To be his true children. And then, let's pray.

Our Father in Heaven, we pray that you would make us soft-hearted under your word. To have our attitudes and our thinking. Brought into line. With the scriptures pressed into the shape of the Bible pressed into the shape. Love the mind of Christ given us in the Bible. We pray that you would have mercy on us who are sinners.

That you would give us. By your power of the repentance that we need. And that you would make us the children who justify wisdom. Don't allow us. We pray to be. hard-hearted. Towards you or your word? We ask.

Thank you for. Giving us your son to be. Our Savior. And, Receiving Us in him through whom, we do come to you. And even now pray to you. Amen.