

Living in the midst of opposition

Matthew 11-12 (part 6)

I. The Jesus strategy:

Jesus told them, "Go back to John and tell him what you have heard and seen—⁵ the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor." Matthew 11:4-5

a. Starts with a demonstration of loving compassion

"When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them..." Matthew 9:36

b. Continues with a demonstration of divine authority

"The crowds were amazed, 'Nothing like this has ever happened in Israel' they exclaimed." Matthew 9:33

c. Leads to the gospel in wise words

"...and the Good News is being preached to the poor." Matthew 11:5

"Look, I am sending you out as sheep among wolves. So be as shrewd as snakes and harmless as doves." Matthew 10:16

II. The Jesus words

Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. See Matthew 12:31

a. Truth is revealed to the childlike

"At that time Jesus prayed this prayer: "O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for revealing them to the childlike."²⁶ Yes, Father, it pleased you to do it this way!" Matthew 11:25

b. Mercy is valued not religious rules or sacrifice

"But you would not have condemned my innocent disciples if you knew the meaning of this Scripture: 'I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.'" Matthew 12:7

c. Beware, judgment is coming

"I tell you, Tyre and Sidon will be better off on judgment day than you.

²³ "And you people of Capernaum, will you be honoured in heaven? No, you will go down to the place of the dead. For if the miracles I did for you had been done in wicked Sodom, it would still be here today. ²⁴ I tell you, even Sodom will be better off on judgment day than you." Matthew 11:22-24

"And I tell you this, you must give an account on judgment day for every idle word you speak." Matthew 12:36

d. He calls everyone to come to Him for rest

"Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light." Matthew 11:28-30

"I tell you, there is one here who is even greater than the Temple...Jonah...Solomon!" Matthew 12:6, 41 & 42