

Introduction:

- As we closed last week, we were looking at what it means to refuse Christ. Jesus was speaking of the cities of Korazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum and what would happen to them for refusing him. He spoke of the severity of judgement that would come against them for not receiving the Christ.
- From those words of Jesus, we arrived at the truth: "To refuse Jesus is the ultimate tragedy."
- The last section of chapter 11 is very interesting. It speaks an incredible amount of truth about Jesus and also of those who received Him. In five verses we have a prayer, a declaration, and an invitation.
 - Jesus speaks of the cities that refuse Him and what will happen to them.
 - Then Jesus gave an invitation to receive Him and enjoy the rest, not judgment, that goes with that choice.
- Chapter 12 then shifts to those who once again oppose Jesus and specifically attack His authority. The authority of Jesus is a huge theme in the book of Matthew.

"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. Yes, Father, it pleased you to do it this way! "My Father has entrusted everything to me. No one truly knows the Son except the Father, and no one truly knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him." Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. 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. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light." (Matthew 11:25-30, NLT)

I. A Personal Prayer

- A. Jesus prayed like he knew the Father.
 1. Father/pater - is a term that makes a personal connection between the child and the father.
 2. The term reflects relationship! Jesus is all about relationship. The lack of desire for this relationship is the reason for the judgment in the prior verses. It is used 17 times in the sermon on the mount, alone.
 3. The beginning is another example of Jesus modeling the relationship that one can have with God. We must remember that Jesus is the perfect picture of a man interacting with God.
 4. Jesus also reveals that Father is also God...Lord of heaven and earth.
 - a) Lord, speaks of authority.
 - b) Authority over heaven and earth. Again, Matthew is pointing out the authority of Jesus, which is a major theme in his book.

- c) Jesus calls Him both Father! And God! Highly personal! Reminds us of Lord's prayer in the Sermon on the mount.
- B. Jesus personally thanked the Father.
 1. Gratitude is highly personal. "Thank you Father!"
 2. You hide yourself from those who think they are smart and clever. (Pharisees-who are always trying to trick Jesus.) Pride keeps God hidden while humility causes him to reveal himself.
 3. Childlike, 'little children' do not rely on themselves or their own resources. They are simple and rely on revelation.
 4. The 'little children' receive the truth while the intelligent remain in the dark. For this Jesus gives the Father thanks.
- C. Jesus praised the Father's wisdom.
 1. *"Yes, Father, it pleased you to do it this way!"* (Matthew 11:26, NLT)
 2. Jesus releases His excitement at how the Father works!
 3. *"So don't be afraid, little flock. For it gives your Father great happiness to give you the Kingdom."* (Luke 12:32, NLT)

II. A Powerful Declaration vs. 27

- A. Verse 27 is a powerful declaration of Jesus. In one verse Christology (the study of Christ) explodes!
 1. It makes Jesus the indispensable intermediary between God and the 'little children'
 2. The Father reveals everything to the Son. And the Son reveals the Father to the humble.
 3. *"The Father has entrusted all"* resonate Mt 28:18 All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. There we are back at authority. You would think Matthew is really trying to cause his audience to grip that.
- B. In Biblical literature, "to know" is more than just knowledge. It screams relationship. The very thing that Father wants from the mission He sent the Son to accomplish.

III. A Wonderful Invitation

- A. Verse 28, "Come to me!" If I know the Father and He has entrusted all things to me, then I invite you to come to me that you may know the Father.
 1. This is the mission of Jesus to reveal the Father to his children that through Him they might return.
 2. The movement of these verses to shift the people from just having knowledge of God to experiencing God. When you experience God you find rest for your souls.
 3. Knowledge of God is available but you have to "Come!" If you are willing to come, I am willing to reveal. This is an invitation that the wise and intelligent will refuse. I.e. Many people in the medical profession struggle with healing because they know too much. Therefore it is harder for them to come in humility to God regarding healing.

- B. The invitation is for all to come. But not everyone will.
- C. The Pharisees will load you down. But I have come that may experience an easy yoke and light burden.
 - 1. Yoke was an apparatus placed on the shoulders that enable a person to carry a heavier load. A yoke in itself is not comfortable. You put the yoke on to carry the load. With a yoke you could easily double and triple the load.
 - 2. The Pharisees were known for putting the loads on burdening men down. *"They crush people with unbearable religious demands and never lift a finger to ease the burden."* (Matthew 23:4, NLT)
 - a) So their yokes were very uncomfortable.
 - b) Their burdens were very heavy
 - c) Their burdens were impossible to keep or to carry.
- D. Jesus yoke is easy and His burden is light.
 - 1. It is easy because it is He we are yoked to Him. He is doing the work. I.e. the picture is one of me helping my 2 year old grandson carry something heavy. He has no idea he is not carrying it, but that I am. The burden is not me.
 - 2. It is light because He is the one actually carrying it. When he carries it, I am able to rest.
 - 3. It is this new relationship with God that makes possible the demands of righteousness. God is gentle with the "little children." He will not put on them something that they cannot carry.

Conclusion:

- Chapter eleven reveals the Messiah with authority. It also shows the fate of those who ignore the Messiah. The end of 11 shows the favor those who receive Him receive. And chapter 12 will show the depths one falls to when not only ignoring but opposing the Son.