

Text— Matthew 11:16-24

Fellow redeemed sinners, redeemed by the blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,

As we behold current events in this world, it's sad to see increasingly widespread disregard for the Lord and His directives found in His Holy Word—the pure, preserved, Holy Bible.

For example, masses of people are protesting the overturning of “Roe versus Wade” which had permitted and encouraged the murder of babies since the early 1970's, calling such heinous acts part of a “woman's right to choose.” Nevertheless, the Holy Bible teaches that one is a human being from the moment of conception, for the psalmist David confesses in Psalm 51:5, “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” Yes, David knew he was a sinful human being from the moment of conception, for God the Holy Ghost moved David to pen those words. Furthermore, throughout the Holy Bible, the phrase “with child” is used 25 times in describing pregnancy in women. Thus, each and every abortion is the murder of a child, a real human being, a person.

Some folks are also currently demanding that the U.S. government protect so-called “marriages” between people of the same sex, despite the fact the Holy Bible clearly describes homosexuality and lesbianism as vile and sinful, while defining marriage as being the lifelong union of one man and one woman. In Mark 10:6-9 we read, “from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” Thus, Holy Scripture clearly defines marriage.

Widespread gambling is near constantly promoted by state-run lotteries, despite the fact the Holy Bible condemns and forbids coveting and stealing— the very sins involved with gambling.

Therefore, it's evident in multiple current events that God's will as revealed in His pure, preserved, Holy Word is ignored and/or mocked by the majority of people, who are pridefully stuck on themselves with their high self-esteem.

Accordingly, the old expression, “history repeats itself,” is shown to be true. Yes, it's exactly as Ecclesiastes 1:9 declares, “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.” Hence, God's Word, the Holy Bible, is proven to be absolutely true.

My friends, our sermon text, like the rest of the Holy Bible, IS GOD'S WORD; consequently, we need to heed it. We will therefore consider the fact that, in our Scripture selection, Jesus Christ warns:

“DO NOT DESPISE THE LORD AND HIS WORD!”

With that as our theme, may we, in view of our text and with the help of the Holy Ghost, see—

- 1) What are some common characteristics of people who despise the Lord and His Word
- 2) What will happen to those people who persist in despising the Lord and His Word

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Verses 16-19, ----. (Matthew 11:16-19)

Observe that Jesus drew a parallel between the behavior of certain children and that of the majority of the people present during His visible sojourn on earth.

In those days, the villages and towns had market places, public outdoor areas, where tables and carts full of goods for sale would be set up. Families would go shopping, just as happens to this day. The children often played while the adults looked at the various goods on display for sale. The children would play by imitating marriage festivals, piping music and dancing; or, by imitating funerals, with pretended weeping and a slow march.

Nevertheless, there were those kids who would not join in playing with the other children no matter what the activities were, whether happy or sad. Some kids just sat there and did nothing—spoiled sports with a sour attitude, never wishing to play, never pleased with anything their fellows were engaged in.

Jesus applied the same sour attitude to the majority of adults who were present during the years of His public ministry; and, during the public ministry of John the Baptist who preceded Him.

We learn in Luke 1:14-15, before John the Baptist was born, the angel of the Lord said to his father Zacharias, “thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.” Furthermore, Matthew 3:1-4 relates in regards to John as an adult, “In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.”

Accordingly, John the Baptist lived in a simple, humble way, avoiding alcoholic beverages and fine foods, while dressing in very basic attire. However, the majority of the people failed to heed the preaching of John the Baptist, for they did not repent of their sins and believe on the Messiah, the Christ, to whom John pointed them. Indeed, it was John who pointed people to Jesus Christ, saying, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29) “Behold the Lamb of God!” (John 1:36)

Instead, the majority of the people, including the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees, said of John, *He hath a devil*— as our sermon text relates.

So, we note from the case with John the Baptist, that some common characteristics of people who despise the Lord and His Word are: they blow-off and reject God's Law by failing to honestly admit they are sinners who have not kept the Law and cannot keep it perfectly as it demands; and, they blow-off and reject the Gospel of Christ by failing to acknowledge Jesus is true God and true man, the very Savior they desperately need to avoid damnation; and, they mock and deride those who preach God's truth, Law and Gospel, finding fault with the preacher's appearance or habits and so forth. However, it's not surprising, since the people who despise the Lord and His Word see themselves as better than everyone else, for they are filled with high self-esteem and sinful pride.

Now, consider how the pride-filled impenitent Jews treated Jesus Christ, for He freely ate and drank with people who invited Him to their homes. The unbelieving Jews, with their high self-esteem, said, in regards to Jesus: *Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.* Oh, horrors, Jesus actually drank wine and ate well at times with folks whom the self-righteous labeled notorious sinners— but were people who were willing to admit they were sinners.

For example, we read in Matthew 9:9-13, “And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him. And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Then there was a case with a man named Zacchaeus, for we read in Luke 19:2-7, “And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see

Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner." So, we see the repeated murmuring of the self-righteous Jews against Jesus Christ.

Once again, it is plainly evident that people who despise the Lord and His Word are people who are stuck on themselves and their own works; people who have a very high opinion of self, thinking they are so very good that they already have everything they need without sincerely repenting of their sins and believing on Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord. Nevertheless, such people who despise the Lord and His Word are in deep trouble, since they remain stuck in their sins and headed for hell, because Holy Writ plainly states: "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; [And] the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (Romans 3:23; 6:23; John 3:16-18; 1 John 1:8-9)

Looking again at Matthew 11:19, observe that despite the majority of people despising the Lord and His Word, there are SOME who do positively respond to the Lord and His Word, for Jesus says: *But wisdom is justified of her children.*

Think about Jesus' words and the power of TRUE WISDOM. Oh, there is worldly wisdom and there is TRUE WISDOM, as 1 Corinthians 1:21-31 informs us, where we read, "after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Accordingly, despite the fact that most people despise the Lord and His Word, it remains true that some people do come to faith in Christ, the Wisdom of God, and are thereby children of God. Thus, *wisdom is justified of her children.*

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As we ponder our sermon text to its conclusion, let us see what will happen to those people who persist in despising the Lord and His Word.

Verses 20-24, ----- (Matthew 11:20-24)

When we think about Jesus' public ministry as related to us in the Holy Bible, we are astounded by His numerous mighty miracles which accompanied His perfect preaching and teaching.

For example, on two occasions, Jesus fed thousands with a couple fish and a few loaves of bread. Jesus raised dead bodies back to life. Jesus healed the sick and infirm, the blind and the deaf. Jesus cast out devils from folks possessed by them. Jesus stilled stormy winds and waves on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus' preaching was perfect, for the people "were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes." — relates Mark 1:22.

Fellow Christians, can you imagine what it must have been like to be present during Jesus' visible sojourn on earth, beholding Him preach, teach and perform mighty wonders? Why, it makes us wonder how people could possibly reject Jesus, when hearing His perfect preaching from His own lips and seeing Him do miracles, which proved He is indeed true God in addition to being true man.

But consider what happened: the majority of folks failed to repent and believe— they persisted in despising the Lord and His Word. Nevertheless, they will not go unpunished, for our sermon text reports that Jesus began *to upbraid* – to reprove with severity – *the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not.*

Chorazin and Bethsaida were cities located a couple miles north of the Sea of Galilee. Tyre and Sidon were rich trade cities which were located 20 miles apart on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea— cities of commerce, which were big in worldly wealth, idolatry and wickedness.

Chorazin and Bethsaida had been privileged to have Jesus Christ personally preach and teach within them, proving the truth of His Word by performing mighty works, miracles. Nevertheless, the vast majority of the people remained impenitent and unbelieving. Consequently, Jesus, who always speaks the truth, declared that even wicked Tyre and Sidon would have repented long before that time in sackcloth and ashes if those folks had been so privileged to have Him preach,

teach and perform miracles in their sight. Thus, Tyre and Sidon will have it better on Judgment Day than will Chorazin and Bethsaida.

Oh, those who persist in despising the Lord and His Word will suffer for it big-time when Judgment Day comes, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Corinthians 5:10) Yes, "that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." (Luke 12:47-48) Hence, there are degrees of punishment in hell; so, Tyre and Sidon will have it better on Judgment Day than will Chorazin and Bethsaida.

The city of Capernaum was located on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum was Jesus' "own city," relates Matthew 9:1. Capernaum was Jesus' base of operations, so to speak, during His public ministry. Numerous mighty works, astounding miracles, were done by Jesus in the city of Capernaum. And yet, despite the powerful proofs the people of Capernaum were given – which proved Jesus Christ is true God and true man, the one true Savior – the majority of the people rejected the Lord and His Word in unbelief.

Hence, Jesus remarked that if the *mighty works* which had been done in Capernaum *had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until that day.* Thus, *it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for Capernaum.* Sodom, the gay capital in Old Testament times, would have responded more positively to the Lord Jesus and His Word if He had been visibly present among them, doing miracles among them, than did the people of Capernaum respond. Think of it: the queers would have repented if they had the advantage of Christ visibly

preaching and teaching among them in their city.

My friends, our sermon text is clear: those people who persist in despising the Lord and His Word will suffer terribly, will be sentenced to severe punishments in hell, on the great Judgment Day.

Now, we people today have not had the advantage of having Jesus Christ visibly present among us, preaching and teaching His Word and doing miracles. However, we people today have not only the Old Testament Holy Scriptures available to us, we also have the New Testament Holy Scriptures available to us; both faithfully translated into English in the King James Version Holy Bible. Thus, we have clear God-given and preserved testimony of Jesus Christ's work on earth, His preaching, His miracles, His redeeming us with His blood which He willingly shed while nailed to the tree of the cross, His triumphant bodily resurrection after three days in the grave, and His visible ascension into heaven forty days later. Therefore, WE PEOPLE TODAY have no excuse not to sincerely repent of our sins, laying hold on Jesus Christ in faith as our personal Savior and Lord.

We, in the United States of America, have been abundantly blessed by the Lord in many ways; yet, sadly, the majority of people are stuck on themselves with high self-esteem and sinful pride. Let us regularly pray for widespread repentance in our land while there is yet time, for Jesus will visibly return to earth to judge the quick and the dead; and, Mark 16:16 clearly states, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Yes, let us never forget what John 3:36 tells us concerning God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Indeed, Jesus Christ is the ONLY WAY to God and heaven! Therefore, do not despise the Lord and His Word!

Let us daily and sincerely repent of our sins. Let us keep our full trust and confidence in Christ Jesus as

our personal Savior and Lord. And, let us go forward, continuing in the Lord's Word, for Jesus promises, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32) Amen.

m.e.l.