

The Challenge of Kingdom Living

Series: Sustainable Faith: Vision

Matthew 11 (1001)

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John 5:19 NIV *I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.*

ELIZABETH ELLIOT *Plato, three hundred years before Christ, predicted that if ever the truly good man were to appear, the man who would tell the truth, he would have his eyes gouged out and in the end be crucified. That risk was once taken, in its fullest measure. The Man appeared. He told the world the truth—about itself—and even made the preposterous claim: “I am the Truth.” As Plato foresaw, the Man was crucified.*

I. Rising to the challenge when the going gets tough

a. When discouragement comes (v. 1-6)

Matthew 11:1-6 NIV *¹After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in the towns of Galilee. ²When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples ³to ask him, “Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?” ⁴Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. ⁶Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me.”*

William Barclay *The career of John had ended in disaster.*

b. What did you expect? (v. 7-15)

Matthew 11:7-15 NIV *⁷As John’s disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? ⁸If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings’ palaces. ⁹Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written: “I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.” ¹¹I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹²From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it. ¹³For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John. ¹⁴And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. ¹⁵He who has ears, let him hear.*

William Barclay *Jesus basically said, “Always my kingdom will suffer violence; always savage men will try to break it up. And snatch it away and destroy it; and therefore only the man who is desperately in earnest, only the man in whom the violence of devotion matches and defeats the violence of persecution will in the end enter into it.”*

c. The greatest temptation the people of God will ever face (v. 16-24)

Matthew 11:16-24 NIV *¹⁶“To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others: ¹⁷“We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.” ¹⁸For John came neither eating nor drinking, -*

*and they say, 'He has a demon.'*¹⁹ *The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners."' But wisdom is proved right by her actions.*²⁰ *Then Jesus began to denounce the cities in which most of his miracles had been performed, because they did not repent.*²¹ *"Woe to you, Korazin! 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."*²² *But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you.*²³ *And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day.*²⁴ *But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you."*

Matthew 28:19-20 NIV *go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*²⁰ *and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.*

Mark 16:15 NIV *Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.*

Luke 24:46-49 NIV *The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day,*⁴⁷ *and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*⁴⁸ *You are witnesses of these things.*⁴⁹ *I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.*

John 21:17, 22 NIV *Feed my sheep. ... You must follow me.*

II. Pursuing God in a very hostile environment

a. Not that one... the other one... (v. 25-26)

Matthew 11:25-26 NIV²⁵ *At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children."*²⁶ *Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.*

b. Learning to discern what God is doing (v. 27)

Matthew 11:27 NIV²⁷ *"All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.*

William Barclay *Sometimes a man can be offended at Jesus because Jesus cuts across his ideas of what religion should be.*

OSWALD CHAMBERS *Faith never knows where it is being led, but it loves and knows the one who is leading.*

c. Recovering the life God designed us to live (v. 28-30)

Matthew 11:28-30 NIV²⁸ *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."*²⁹ *Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*³⁰ *For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."*

TM *"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."*