

Monday, March 6, 2023
Season of Lent
Day 11

Matthew 11:25–30

²⁵ 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 is what you were pleased to do.

²⁷ “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.

²⁸ “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.”

Reflection

If we walked into a prayer meeting and heard Jesus’s prayer we might think it was very nice. And, we’re so used to our *idea* of Jesus speaking, we might miss what is being said here by the *real* Jesus. What “things” has God hidden and revealed? What’s the context? The context is Matthew 11:20–24, “Woe to you!” And, “You won’t be exalted to heaven but descend to Hades.” Jesus’s prayer in our passage is connected to the rejection of Jesus and the resulting judgment that comes. “These things” refers to the truth of Jesus’s message that the kingdom has come in him. That the long awaited and hoped for New Age of the kingdom had begun (or was about to begin with Jesus’s own resurrection).

However it might sound to us, Jesus is not being overly harsh. He is doing what prophets do, he’s warning with the truth those who will perish if they do not believe. Jesus is also not thrown by his own rejection. He understands that even in that act, the Lord of heaven and earth (creation) is at work. The gospel of the kingdom is good news for all and to be extended to all, however it is very difficult for the rich to enter. They just have too much “stuff” to hold on to. In our context rich is more than wealth, though it includes it. In the vernacular of the day we could say too much privilege. Whereas, the poor, the lowly are hungry for the kingdom. It is their only hope for justice, *shalom*.

So, those who are not interested in the kingdom, even when it is displayed right before their eyes, then Jesus turns away with a prophetic word. Not in anger or rejection, but in warning. And, he focuses not on rejection, but on acceptance. Those who are lowly like infants (no/low status culturally at the time) are hearing the word and are repenting and believing. These are the ones who the Father will reveal the Son to, and to whom the Son will reveal the Father.

Jesus’s final word is one of invitation, not warning. Those who are longing for the kingdom, those for whom the kingdom is the only hope for good, simply come to Jesus. He is the source of your good. You will find rest. You will learn of God. You will not be weighted down, but will be lifted up. Good news indeed.

Again, Lent is about putting aside our privilege in order to become lowly. It is a return to infancy and simplicity. It is a coming to Jesus for rest, for instruction and revelation, and for being built up. It is intentionally turning aside from those things that make us deaf and blind to the kingdom. As you enter a new week of Lent, come to Jesus. He is gentle and humble in heart. He will give you rest.

Prayer

Lord, we confess that we are rich and, at times, those riches fill our hands, keeping us from laying a hold of the kingdom. Open our eyes and ears we pray, so that we might let go of that which has a hold of us, so that we might lay hold of Him who holds us. Make us hungry for your yoke. Remind us of our desire for rest and for the Father. Amen.