

It is important to ensure fellowship with God before the study of the Word.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

Isaiah 55:11 So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

Once the Lord Jesus Christ reproached the religious leaders because they rejected God's purpose for themselves in **Luke 7:30-35**, He reproaches three Galilean cities in **Matthew 11**.

Matthew 11:20 Then He began to **denounce** the cities in which most of His miracles were done,

The three cities that Jesus Christ reproaches –

1. **Chorazin** (vv. 21-22)
2. **Bethsaida** (vv. 21-22)
3. **Capernaum** (vv. 23-24)



They all had three things in common -

1. Jewish Galilean Cities.
2. A majority of His miracles were done in them.
3. They did not repent!

➤ **Denounce** - ὀνειδίζω – ONEIDIZO – “To reproach, to heap insults upon”

²⁰ Then He began to **reproach** the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not **repent**.

➤ **Repent** – μετανοέω – METANOEO – “To change one's mind”

Definition of Miracle: An exercise of sovereign omnipotence in grace to validate who the Savior was and what He taught.

- Immediately after He cured many people of diseases and afflictions, cast out demons, and restored sight to the blind, He commanded John's disciples in **Luke 7:22 . . .**

Luke 7:22 “. . . Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: *the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM.*”

- That was enough to encourage John to endure suffering in prison unto death.
- To John, that was validation of who Jesus was and that He was Israel's Messiah.
- Despite the miracles the majority of people in Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum rejected Him and what He taught.

Matthew 11:21-24 “**Woe** to you, Chorazin! **Woe** to you, Bethsaida! . . .

- **Woe** - οὐαί – OUI – “A calamity or woe”

. . . For if the miracles

- αἱ δυνάμεις – HAI DUNAMEIS – “The power” – A reference to the manifestation of divine power

For if **the power** had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you [Chorazin & Bethsaida], they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

- Tyre and Sidon, two Gentile Phoenician cities, were being compared to two Jewish Galilean cities.
 - Extremely wealthy due to their location on the trade routes
 - Purple dye came from the mollusks in the bay of Tyre.
 - To their demise they became occupied with the Phallic Cult of the Canaanites – involved with the worship of Baal, a fertility cult.

Ezekiel 28:23 “For I will send pestilence to her and blood to her streets, and the wounded will fall in her midst by the sword upon her on every side; then they will know that I am the LORD.

- Over the course of history Sidon was conquered by:
 - Shalmaneser in 725 BC
 - Alexander the Great in 330BC
 - Fell to Muslim control during the Crusades
- Tyre was besieged by Nebuchadnezzar for 13 years 585-572BC.
 - Conquered by Alexander the Great 332BC
 - Mercilessly destroyed by the Muslims in the 13th Century

The Lord sent blood to their streets via the sword and He has done that throughout their History.

22 “Nevertheless I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in *the* day of judgment than for **y'all** [Chorazin & Bethsaida].

Degrees of judgment

Why will it be more tolerable for the residents of Tyre and Sidon than for Chorazin and Bethsaida?

- Chorazin and Bethsaida had greater opportunity because most of His miracles were done in them.
- Chorazin and Bethsaida were given greater grace.

Definition of **Miracle** - An exercise of sovereign omnipotence in grace to validate who the Savior was and what He taught.

- They had Greater opportunity!
- God holds people accountable to what is revealed to them in grace.

People are accountable for the opportunities they receive.

GOD IS A RIGHTEOUS JUDGE!

Psalm 119:137 Righteous are You, O LORD, and upright are Your judgments.

Greater opportunity demands greater responsibility.

Greater responsibility warrants greater accountability in judgment.

²³ “And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you?”

- The residents of Capernaum had even greater opportunity and privilege than Chorazin and Bethsaida.

You will descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day.

If the Lord Jesus Christ did the same things in Sodom as in Capernaum, the residents would have changed their mind about their sinful behavior; they would have believed what He taught and turned to faith in Him.

²⁴ “Nevertheless I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in *the Day of Judgment*, than for you.”

There are degrees of judgment and those degrees are based on opportunity.

Points of Doctrine that are application for us.

1. POD: God holds the believer accountable for doctrine and opportunity provided in grace.

- If the Lord uses your pastor to teach the greater dynamics of the Unique Spiritual Life, He holds you accountable for those dynamics.
- Rejection of what is provided warrants judgment.

Judgment - in being blinded to the greater blessings of the spiritual life.

- God holds us accountable to what is taught, NOT to what isn't taught.

2. POD: Greater privilege in doctrine demands greater responsibility in application.

Responsibility in application = advancing spiritually and seizing spiritual opportunities

3. POD: Greater responsibility warrants greater accountability.

4. POD: Greater accountability warrants greater *spiritual* blessing.

5. POD: Rejection of what God has provided in grace results in forfeiture of blessing in time and eternity.

After the Lord reproaches Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum - He prays this prayer of thanksgiving.

Matthew 11:25-27 At that time Jesus said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants."

God the Father does two things -

- 1st Thing: He hides – κρύπτω – KRUPTO – "To conceal or prevent something from being found"
- 2nd Thing: He reveals - ἀποκαλύπτω - APOKALUPTO - "To bring to light or to disclose"

6. POD: God conceals divine revelation or supernatural truth from the wise and intelligent.

➤ **Wise** - σοφῶν καὶ συνετῶν

σοφός – SOPHOS - "Learned" - BAGD "wise, learned of human intelligence and education above the average"¹

- - Immediate reference to the religious leaders and experts in the Law
- - The academicians, theologians, and scholars

1 Corinthians 1:26-29 For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise (σοφός) according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; ²⁷ but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise (σοφός), and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, ²⁸ and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, ²⁹ so that no man may boast before God.

➤ **Intelligent** – συνετός – SUNETOS - "sagacious, intelligent"

Isaiah 5:21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight!

Intelligence and wisdom are good things, the sickness is that the wise and intelligent consider themselves more highly than they ought to think.

Wise in their own eyes – arrogance; independent!

They fail to seek the Lord and His wisdom, so He prevents them from finding it.

²⁶ "Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight. ²⁷ All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."

All Scriptures quoted are from New American Standard unless otherwise noted.

¹Arndt, W., Gingrich, F. W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (1996, c1979). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature : A translation and adaptation of the fourth revised and augmented edition of Walter Bauer's Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der übrigen urchristlichen Literatur* (760). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.