

Gospel of Matthew

11:12-24

Contrarian – *friend of Sinners!*



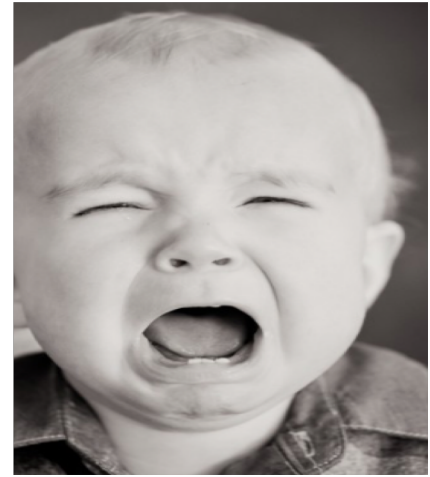


Vs. 12 - We left off last week with this verse. Christ's objectives require forceful people. Not obnoxious people, but relentless people that do not give up – that **pray for** opportunities, that **look for**

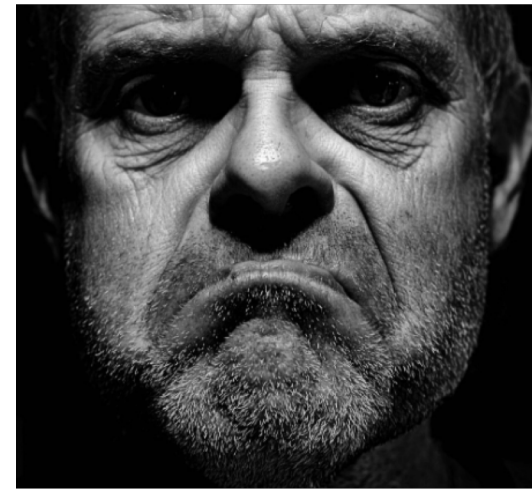
opportunities, that **create** opportunities, that **use** opportunities when they arise! But we do not give up. We cannot because the love of Christ compels us! We use gentle force, and our most effective weapon is love - but it is a type of force none-the-less!

Vs. 13-15 –John was the last in that long line of prophets who carried messages from God to the people. And John had pointed out Jesus as being the actual Christ!

16-19 – But no one was happy! John preached – called people to repentance! People did not like his disagreeable message so the religious authorities must have been saying that something seriously wrong with him! But he told people to prepare the way for the Christ, and he then pointed them to Jesus, of whom he said he was unworthy to even untie his sandal.



They weren't happy with Jesus either. Even John the Baptist wasn't happy. Jesus did not intend on taking power, John was stuck.



The religious people were not happy with Jesus because He sometimes associated with, and even befriended, sinners! Jesus did just about everything wrong in their opinion!

He was especially a contrarian! He was forever tweaking their noses - disagreeing with them, cleverly challenging their assumptions, undermining questioning their control of society and changing people's minds, shaking things up -and they hated Him for it! **[Jn. 5:41-47]**



“...proven right by her actions” – The memory of these doubters and detractors lives on in infamy. The fame of Jesus will live on in honor forever! Jesus ***WAS*** a friend of sinners and right to do so!

Jesus came to die to save human beings from the guilt of their sins, and to reconcile them with their Creator! But unless people have some kind of self-knowledge that are sinners, guilty and in need salvation from that guilt, they cannot possibly know that they need Him! We are made innocent by God – as if we never did wrong in the first place , so that we can be with Him in His home – heaven – forever!



From the beginning, Jesus has *always* targeted sinners! It is because sinners *know* they are sinners. They *feel* their guilt. They sense their need. They are self-aware enough to realize and admit their helplessness and confusion. They strongly suspect that they are lost!

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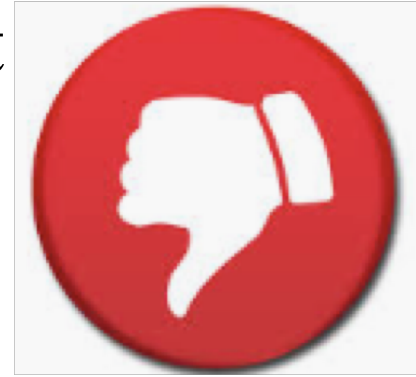


Vs. 20 – Jesus is angry here and lashes out at the cities that He and His disciples had been in. They had responded to the miracles that Jesus performed as a marvel, but in the way people marvel at a magician! There is a huge difference between a trick and a miracle! But although some responded with belief and repentance, the vast majority did not! That made Jesus angry!



*Nineveh

But these cities in Galilee and Judea didn't think they had anything to repent over. They didn't get it! They thought they were already righteous and had impressed God! It's what they had been told by their religious leaders. So the pleas of Jesus to repent were largely ignored!



Jesus makes an assertion that if the miracles that had been done in these Jewish cities had been done in Sodom – a city known for its unbelievable decadence, murder, and perversion – even THEY would have responded better than these Jewish cities. Why? Because they, at least knew they were sinners in need of saving!

