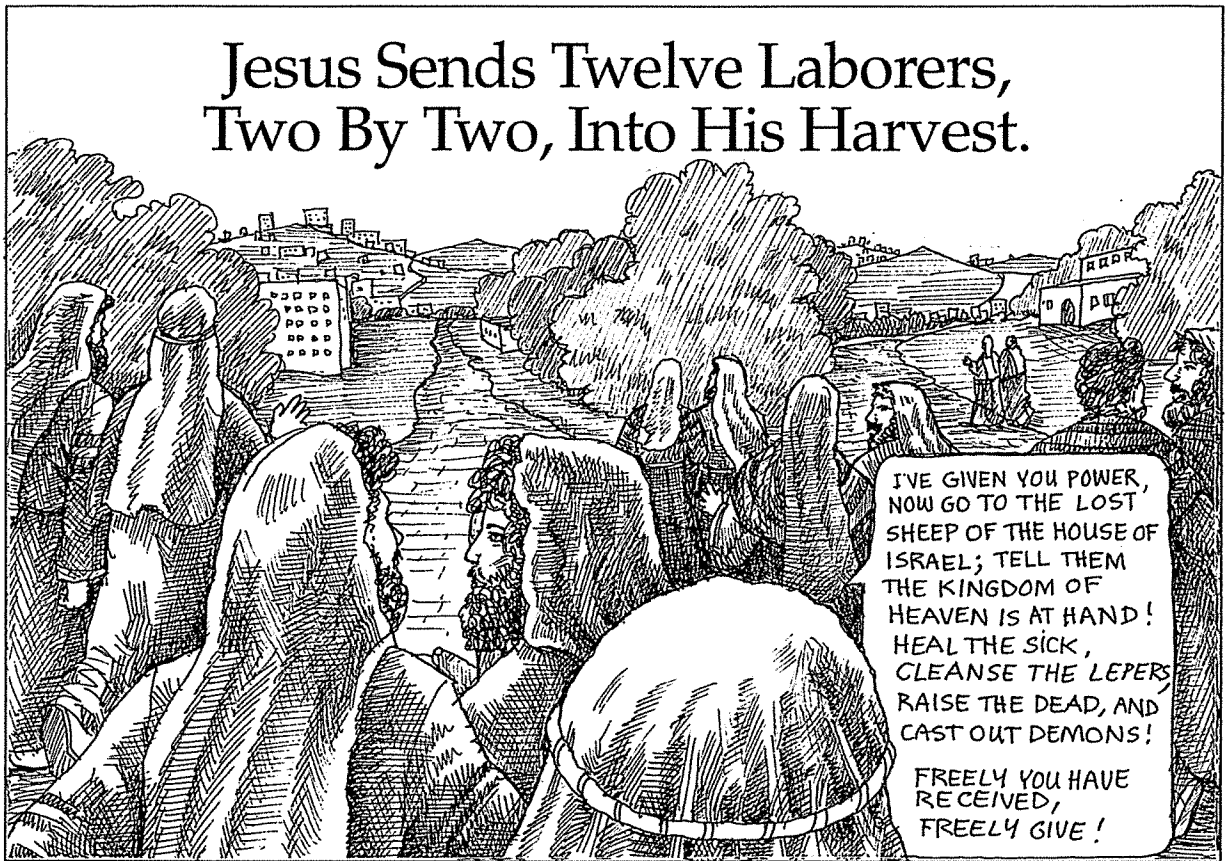


Jesus Sends Twelve Laborers, Two By Two, Into His Harvest.



And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first,

- Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother;
- James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;
- Philip and Bartholomew;
- Thomas and Matthew the tax collector;
- James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;
- Simon the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him (Jesus).

These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food."

"Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out. And when you go into a household greet it. If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!" -Matthew 10:1-15



DO YOU WANT TO BE A LABORER IN HIS HARVEST?

The word apostle, means "messenger, or one sent forth with orders." Jesus never sent them alone. Notice that He first called them individually, and each one left what he was doing to follow Jesus. Then after He taught them, He asked them to pray for laborers to be sent, then He sent them into the field - His harvest. When He sent them, He gave them power (later, He will give spiritual gifts) to perform the work He called them to do! They went where He sent them and spoke what He told them to say. They did what He told them to do. We must obey His command and orders if we want to be laborers in His harvest! He sent them to cities nearby (Jesus sent them to the Jews first, and later to the Gentiles). You can start in your home first!

Sodom and Gomorrah didn't have the advantage of seeing Jesus, or His power, (such as hearing that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, or seeing the cleansing of lepers, the raising of the dead, the healing of diseases, or demons being cast out). We are only accountable for the knowledge we have. To those who know more, more is required of them.

Jesus Sends Twelve Laborers, Two by Two, Into His Harvest Matthew 10:1-15

Vocabulary in Context with Today's Lesson

1. apostle- one sent forth; an ambassador
2. disciple- a pupil or learner; an imitator of his/her teacher
3. Gentiles- spoken of all who are not Israelites (Jews)
4. Greek- non-Jew
5. is at hand- has drawn near
6. Samaritans- a Gentile race who settled in Samaria in the place of the Israelites who had been exiled by the king of Assyria. The Samaritans had accepted the Pentateuch (The Law- Genesis to Deuteronomy). It is debated whether or not the NT Samaritans were of pure foreign blood or of mixed blood (Gentile and Jew). Hence there was severe animosity between the Samaritans and the Jews.
7. your peace- the blessing you have in Jesus Christ and share through greeting another
8. worthy- deserving

Discussion Questions

1. a. What were the twelve called in Matthew 10:1?
b. What are they called in Matthew 10:2?
c. Why do you think that there was a change in their title? (See vocabulary for help)
2. a. Read Matthew 10:1-6. Jesus was leading, guiding, and directing this mission. What did he do to equip them?
b. Does God call everyone to do the same thing? Explain. (Eph. 4:11-12)
c. What should be the foundation of our mission? Why? (John 15:5)
3. On this mission, to what people did Jesus specifically send the disciples to? (Matt. 10:5,6) Why? (Matt.9:36; Matt.10:6; Rom. 1:16)
4. Read Matthew 10:7-15. In Matthew 10:14, Jesus instructs the twelve apostles to "shake off the dust from your feet" to the one's that reject them. Why would Jesus say this? (Matt. 7:6)

Today's Memory Verse

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek." Romans 1: 16 (NKJV)

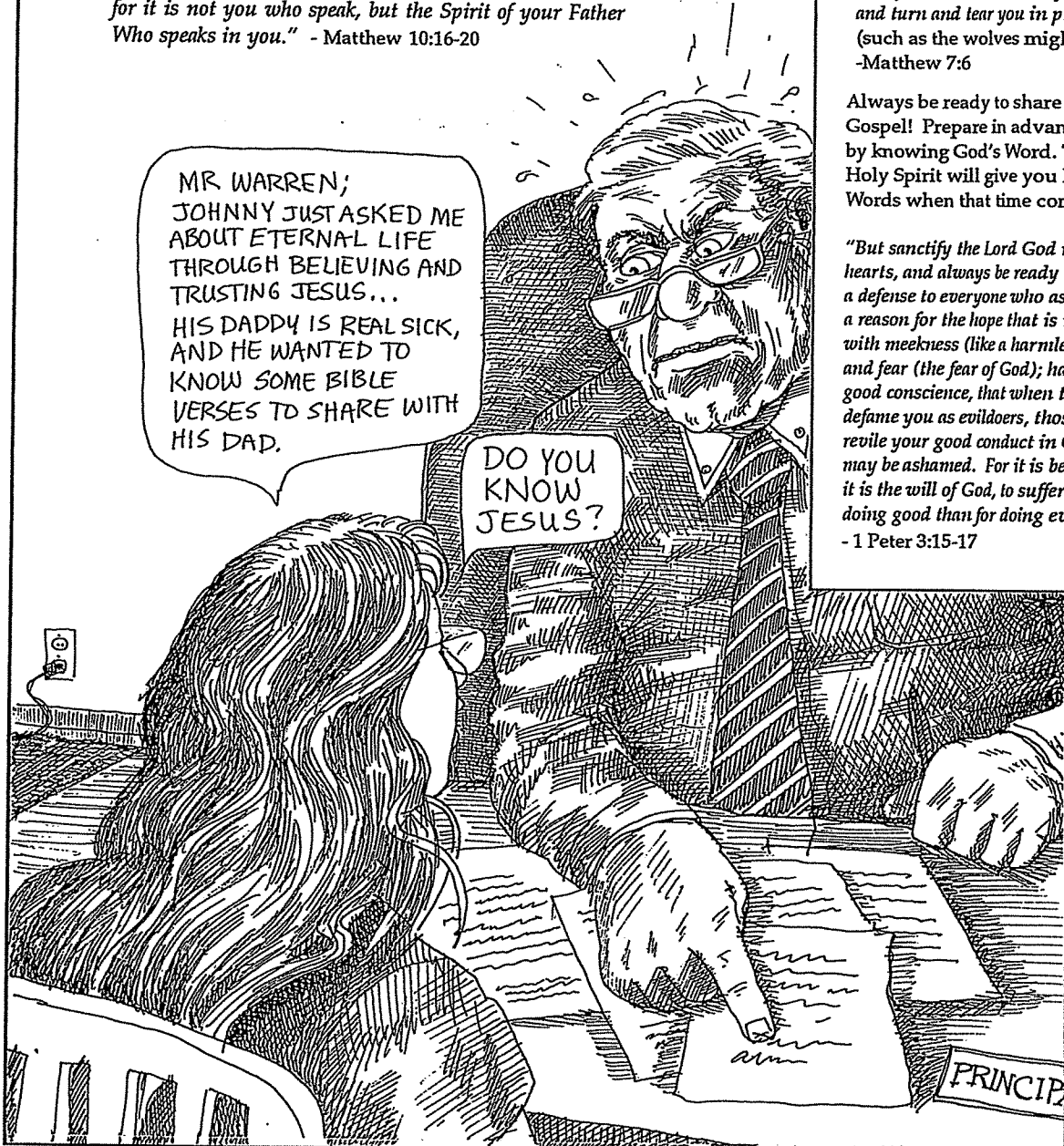
Be Wise as Serpents, and Harmless as Doves.

"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father Who speaks in you." - Matthew 10:16-20

- Sheep have no defense, other than the Shepherd.
- Expect troubles when sharing the Gospel. When opposition comes, use that opportunity to share even more!
- Be wise, pray, and *"Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces (such as the wolves might do)."* -Matthew 7:6

Always be ready to share the Gospel! Prepare in advance by knowing God's Word. The Holy Spirit will give you His Words when that time comes.

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness (like a harmless dove) and fear (the fear of God); having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil." - 1 Peter 3:15-17



**Be Wise as Serpents
And Harmless as Doves
Matthew 10:16-20**

Vocabulary in Context with Today's Lesson

1. Gentiles- non-Jew
2. harmless- innocent
3. scourge- to whip
4. synagogues- a local place where Jews could gather together for the reading and explanation of the Jewish sacred Scriptures and for prayer

Discussion Questions

1. In your own words, interpret what Matthew 10:16 is saying.
2. Read Matthew 10:16-20. Who does Jesus warn us to beware of? (Matt. 10:17)
3. a. Why are we brought before authorities and sometimes persecuted? (Matt. 10:17-19)

b. What does Jesus tell us not to do and why? (Matt. 10:19-20)

c. What does Jesus say about being falsely accused and persecuted? (Matt. 5:10-12)
4. a. We know it is God who speaks for us but what does I Peter 3:15-16 tell us?

b. How can we be ready to give an answer? (II Tim. 3:12-17)

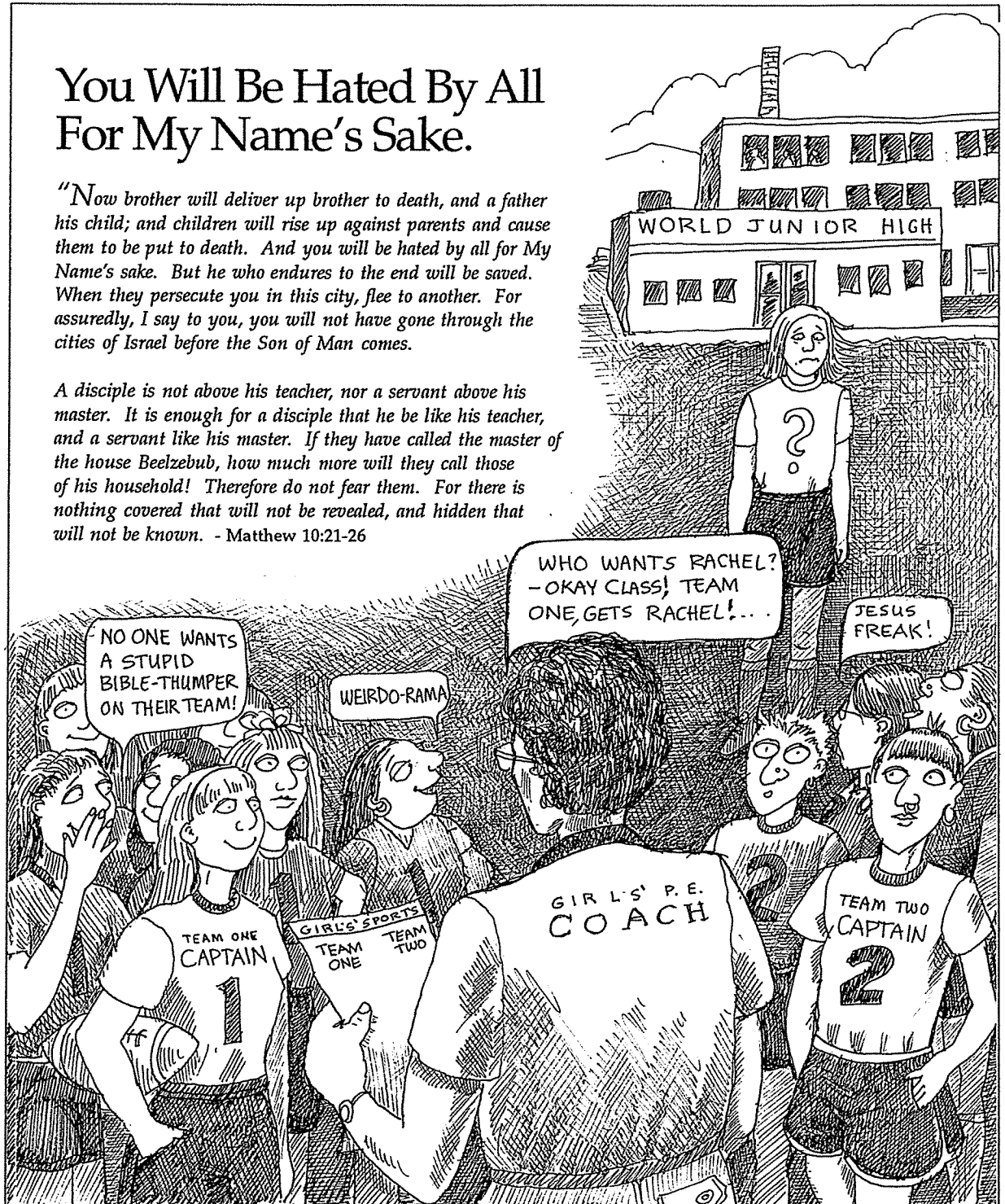
Today's Memory Verse

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."
I Peter 3:15

You Will Be Hated By All For My Name's Sake.

"Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. And you will be hated by all for My Name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household! Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known. - Matthew 10:21-26



Jesus was ridiculed, mocked, spit on, beaten and crucified. If they did that to the Master, then they will do those same things to His servants. Many throughout history, and even now, have been martyred for their faith in Jesus Christ. Stephen (See Acts 6:8 - Acts 7:60.) was an excellent example of a believer who was full of faith, but some from the synagogue accused him of blasphemy, stirred up the people and brought false witnesses against him. Stephen, upon being falsely accused, was given the opportunity to preach an awesome message that cut them to the heart. They cast him out of the city and stoned him to death. While dying, he prayed for them in his last breath! Acts 8:1 says that Saul (Paul, prior to being born again) was consenting to Stephen's death. Jesus said to pray for those who persecute you! Who knows? Maybe that person will become the next Paul and lead many to Jesus! Deny yourself (your anger and hurt feelings), obey Jesus, and pray for them!

**You Will Be Hated By All
For My Name's Sake
Matthew 10:21-26**

Vocabulary in Context with Today's Lesson

1. Beelzebub- Satan's title as the prince of the demons
2. endures- to remain under; to persevere; sustain
3. saved- spiritual salvation

Discussion Questions

1. Read Matthew 10:21. Have you seen or heard of this going on today? Explain.
2. Read Matthew 10:22-23. We are called to be separate from the world. Why? (John 3:20-21; Rom. 12:1-2; II Cor. 6:14 - 7:1)
3. a. What does Jesus say we can expect if we live separate from the world and follow Him? Why? (Matt. 10:22-23; John 15:18-21)

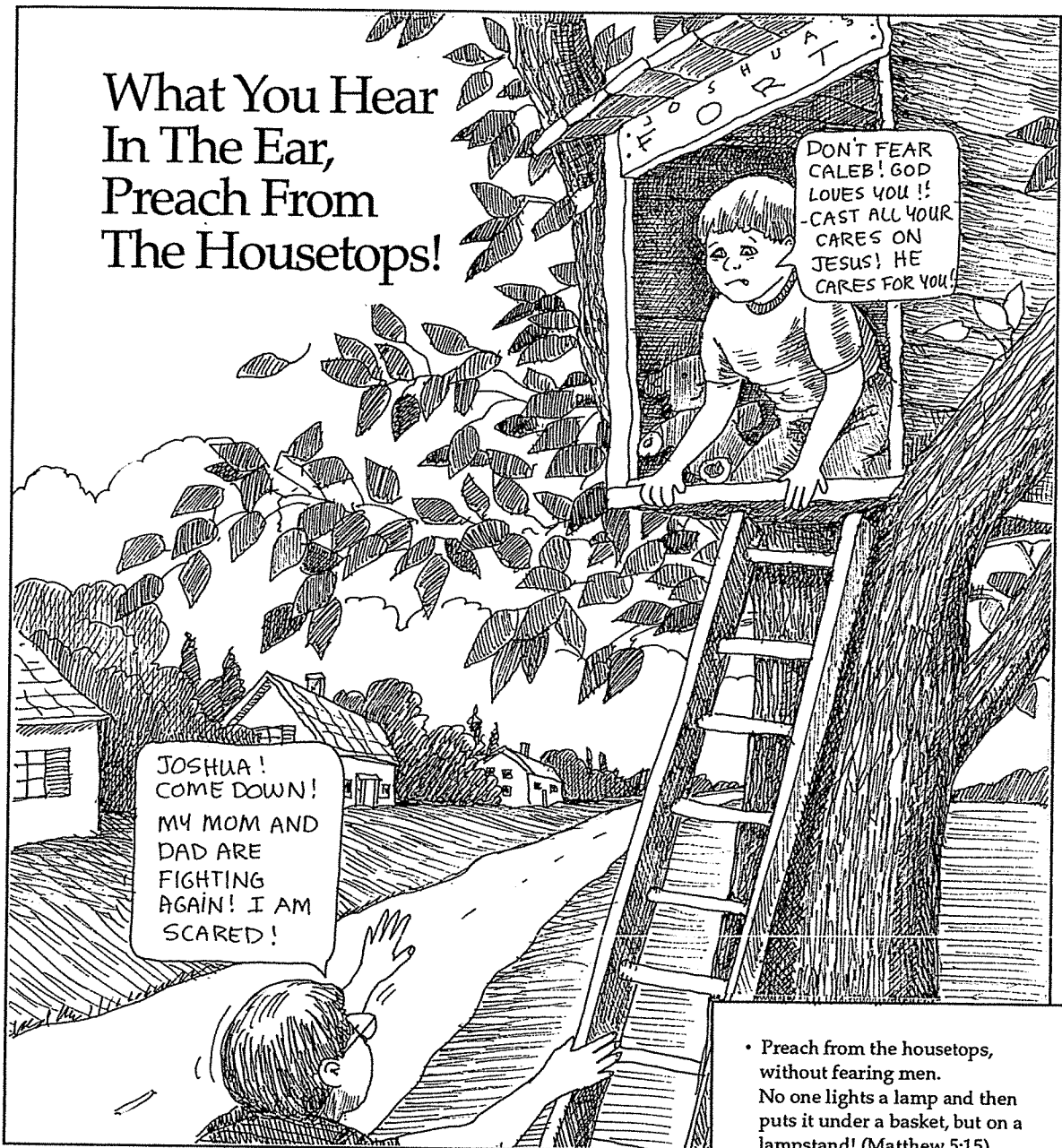
b. What does Jesus say to do when we are persecuted? (Matt. 5:10-12)
4. a. Read Matthew 10:24-26. What does Jesus tell us not to do? Why? (Prov. 18:10; Nahum 1:7; Habakkuk 3:19; II Tim. 1:7)

b. What is Jesus doing for us right now? (John 14:1-4)

c. How can we know the Way to this place? (John 14:5-6)

Today's Memory Verse

"The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; And He knows those who trust in Him." Nahum 1:7 (NKJV)



What You Hear In The Ear, Preach From The Housetops!

JOSHUA!
COME DOWN!
MY MOM AND
DAD ARE
FIGHTING
AGAIN! I AM
SCARED!

DON'T FEAR
CALEB! GOD
LOVES YOU !!
-CAST ALL YOUR
CARES ON
JESUS! HE
CARES FOR YOU!

- Preach from the housetops, without fearing men. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket, but on a lampstand! (Matthew 5:15)

- Expect troubles from men, but do not fear men. Proverbs 29:25 says, "The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe." (It's far better to choose obedience and please God, than disobedience to please man!) He values you far more than many sparrows! He even knows the number of the hairs on your head. You can fully trust Him.

"Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops. And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

"Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows."

"Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father Who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father Who is in heaven."
- Matthew 10:27-33



Paul said, ... "For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ." - Galatians 1:10

*When you serve the Lord,
you're going to rock the boat!*

What You Hear in the Ear, Preach From the Housetops! Matthew 10:27-33

Vocabulary in Context with Today's Lesson

1. confess- acknowledge
2. denies- to refuse someone, not to know or recognize someone, to reject someone
3. fear- referring to fearing men: be afraid of
4. fear- referring to fearing God: to reverence; to stand in awe of
5. housetops- the Palestinian housetops were flat and used frequently for public announcements or proclamations

Discussion Questions

1. a. In your own words, what is Matthew 10:27 saying?
b. What happens when we obey Matthew 10:27? (Matt. 5:14-16)
c. Who is the light that shines through us? (John 1:1-13)
2. Read Matthew 10:28. What is this telling us?
3. a. Read Matthew 10:29-31. How much do you think that Jesus loves you? (John 3:16)
b. If you are a Christian, do you think that there is anything that can separate you from His love? Why or why not? (John 10:27-29; Rom. 8:38-39)
4. a. Read Matthew 10:32-33. Have you ever confessed God to someone? (Rom. 1:16)
b. What was their response? Did you feel persecuted?
c. Did their response matter to what God called you to do?

Today's Memory Verse

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen." Matthew 28:19-20 (NKJV)

Following Jesus Brings Division; Not Peace, But A Sword!

"Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword."

"For I have come to 'set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law'; and 'a man's enemies will be those of his own household.'"

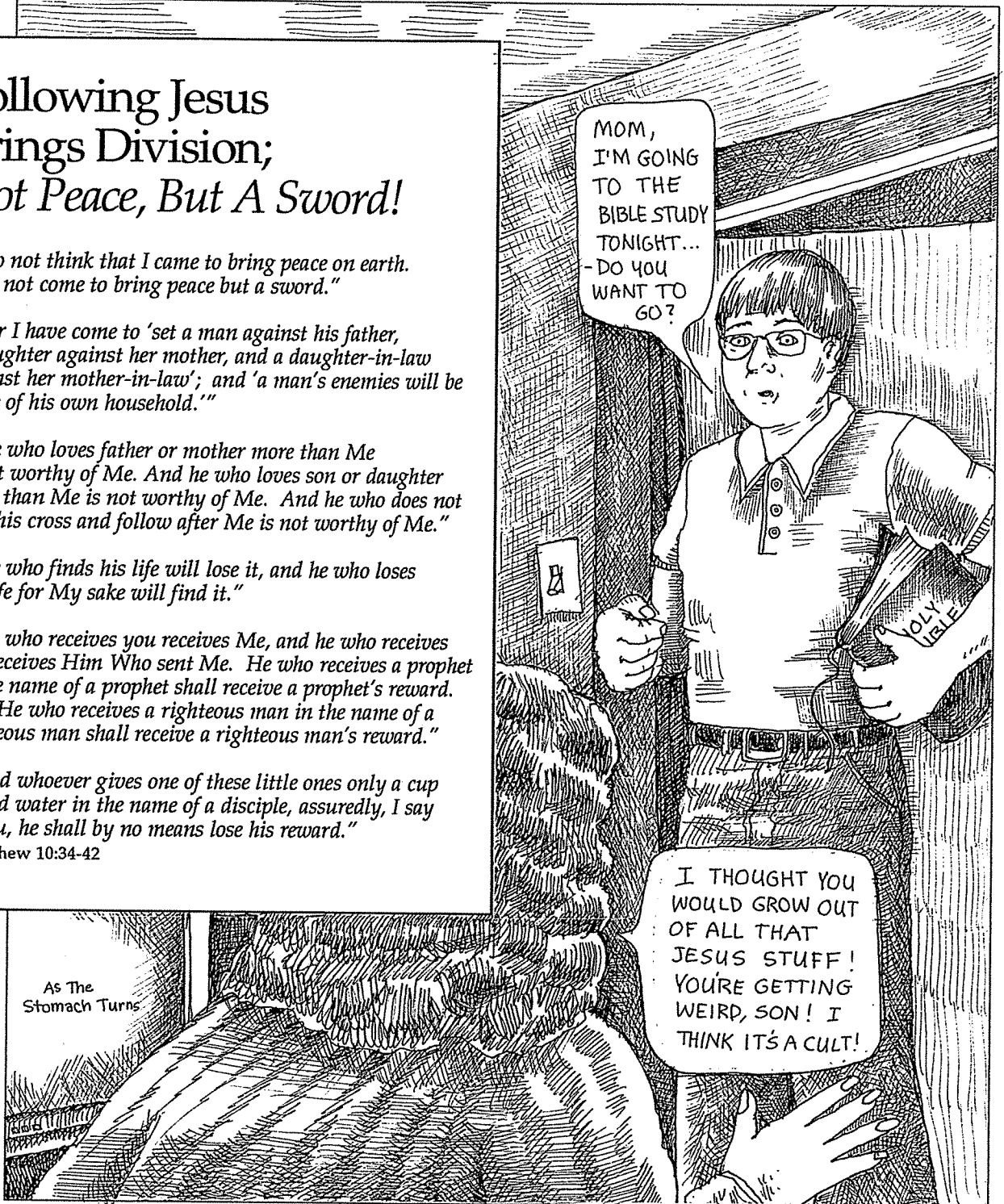
"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me."

"He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it."

"He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him Who sent Me. He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And He who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward."

"And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward."

- Matthew 10:34-42



Real Christianity will cost friends, family and comforts! Jesus warns us in Luke 6:26; *"Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets."* False prophets, false Christianity and false brethren abound! Remember that for now, Jesus has brought a sword & division, not peace & unity. (He is our Peace as believers.)



1 Thessalonians 5:3 says, concerning the day of the Lord, *"For when they say, 'Peace and safety!' then sudden destruction comes upon them,..."* The Antichrist will bring false peace, rejecting the true Gospel and true Lord.

**Following Jesus Brings Division;
Not Peace, But A Sword!
Matthew 10:34-42**

Vocabulary in Context with Today's Lesson

1. find- gain, obtain, to acquire, get for oneself
2. lose- eternal death (this eternal death is called "the second death" in Revelation 20:14)
3. take his cross- one who carried his cross was condemned to die. To a disciple of Jesus Christ, this term means to die to one's own will and to allow God's will to become one's will.
4. worthy- deserving

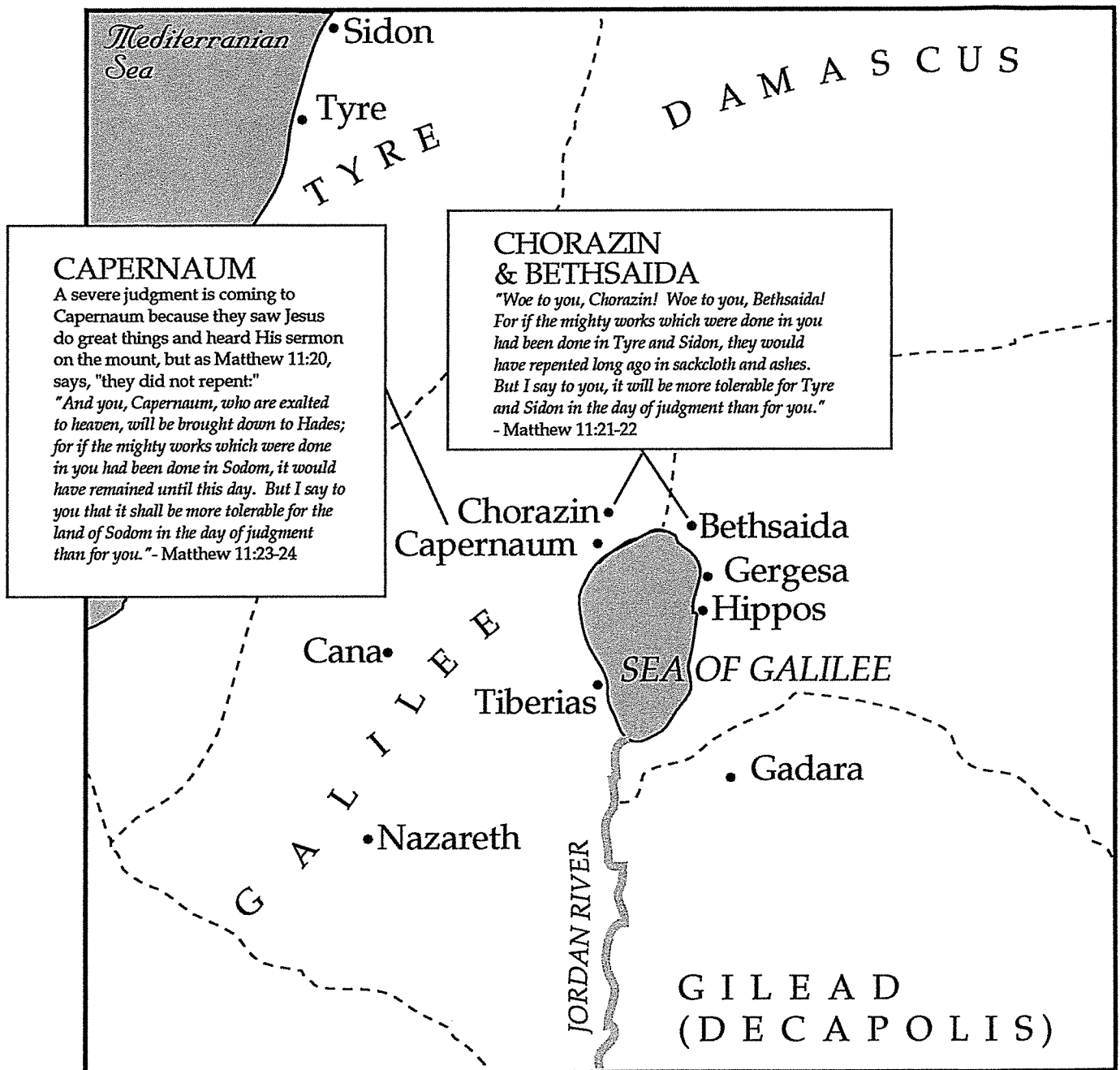
Discussion Questions

1. a. Read Matthew 10:34-37. Who brings the division?
b. Who are these people who are set against each other?
c. Why? (John 15:18-19)
d. Who should always, without exception, come first in our lives?
2. Read Matthew 10:38. How do you take your cross and follow Jesus?
3. a. Read Matthew 10:39. What happens when we put our lives first?
b. What happens when we deny ourselves, and put Christ first?
4. Read Matthew 10:40-42. What is Jesus telling us to do?

Today's Memory Verse

"And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it."
Matthew 10:38-39 (NKJV)

Apply Within for Kids- Matthew Chapter 11



Sodom and Gomorrah were cities near the Dead Sea (not shown here), south of the region of Galilee. They were destroyed because of their evil (Genesis 18:16-33 - Genesis 19:1-29). These cities did not have the advantage of seeing Jesus' works and hearing His teaching. If they had, Jesus said in Matthew 11:23, that they would have remained until this day. They would have repented.

Tyre was destroyed by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C. Before that, God had pronounced judgment upon Tyre because they rejoiced at the destruction of Jerusalem. They were wealthy and prideful, but they would have repented, unlike Chorazin and Bethsaida, who saw Jesus' mighty works. (Read Ezekiel 26, 27 & 28.)



JESUS - The Coming One; Do You Know Him?

Now it came to pass, when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to teach and to preach in their (*the disciple's*) cities. And when John (*the Baptist*) had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples and said to Him, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: "The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me." - Matthew 11:1-6

Earlier, Jesus sent His disciples out two-by-two to preach that the Kingdom of God is at hand to the lost sheep of Israel. Then Jesus preached in the disciple's hometowns. Why? Matthew 13:57 says, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house." Jesus was not accepted in Nazareth, His hometown, and the disciples were not accepted as God's messengers of the Gospel in their hometowns either!

Be prepared! The people closest to you may not accept the Gospel from you!

John the Baptist had baptized Jesus and he'd seen the Holy Spirit descend upon Jesus and heard the voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:17). But, after sitting in prison and waiting for Jesus to conquer the Roman Government and bring the Kingdom of God to earth, John grew a little disheartened and discouraged. John knew the Old Testament, so Jesus reminded him to stay in the Word of God by answering him with a verse. Jesus quoted from Isaiah 35:5-6, to remind John of what was already written concerning Jesus, the Coming One; the Messiah.

Jesus-
The Coming One;
Do You Know Him?
Matthew 11:1-6

Vocabulary in Context with Today's Lesson

1. blessed- possessing the favor of God
2. cleansed- cleansed or made clean from leprosy
3. Coming One- referring to the Messiah
4. disciples- a pupil or learner; imitator of their teacher. Jesus' twelve disciples were not ordinary disciples, but those who remained with Him and followed Him.
5. Gospel preached- proclaim the Good News; to evangelize with the message of salvation
6. leper- a person who has leprosy (an infectious disease characterized by sores, scabs, and white shining spots beneath the skin)
7. offended- to reject

Discussion Questions

1. a. In Matthew 11:1, why do you think Jesus went to their (disciples') cities to teach and preach? (Matt. 13:57)

b. After reading Matt. 13:57, can you relate to this in your own circle of friends and family?
2. a. Read Matthew 11:1-6. Read front page of handout. How did Jesus answer John's question? (Compare Isaiah 35:5-6 to Matt. 11:5.)

b. How can we apply Jesus' example in our lives when comforting someone who is discouraged?

Today's Memory Verse

" All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." II Timothy 3:16-17

John The Baptist; Messiah's Messenger Preparing The Way.

As they (John the Baptist's disciples) departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written: 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.' (Malachi 3:1) Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah (See Luke 1:17) who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

But to what shall I liken this generation?

It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their companions, and saying:

'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we mourned to you, and you did not lament.'

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' But wisdom is justified by her children."

-Matthew 11:7-19

It seemed that no matter who God sent with the message of the kingdom, the lost sheep of Israel picked them apart. They accused both John and Jesus of having a demon!

John the Baptist was a powerful preacher. Though he was the last Old Testament prophet, Jesus said that among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist. But thanks to Jesus coming and giving His life for us, the least in the kingdom will be greater than John the Baptist! *Even you and me; the least!* We are born of God (not just of women) when we're born again! We have the Holy Spirit and the complete Word of God.



John receives the message from Jesus, and ponders the Word of God while in prison

John the Baptist; Messiah's Messenger

Preparing the Way

Matthew 11:7-19

Vocabulary in Context with Today's Lesson

1. lament- to beat one's breast or cut oneself with loud expressions of grief
2. liken- compare
3. mourned- grieved
4. prophesied- to foretell things to come
5. prophets- a proclaimer of a divine message
6. reed- flexible stalk or stem of a plant which is easily bent or shaken by the wind
7. soft clothing- clothing made of soft materials, fine textures
8. soft garments- same as "soft clothing"
9. suffers violence- sought with eagerness, haste
10. take it by force- denotes an open act of violence in contrast to cunning and secret stealing
11. violent- to hurry into without proper thought or repentance
12. wine bibber- wine drinker

Discussion Questions

1. In Matthew 11:7-10, who is Jesus talking about? (Matt. 11:11)
2. a. What kind of person were the people looking for? (Matt. 11:7-8)
b. What kind of person was John the Baptist? (Matt. 3:4-7)
c. In Matt. 11:8, John was not wearing soft garments or living in a king's house. Where was he? (Matt. 11:1-3)
d. Do you think that the people were impressed by John? Why or why not? (James 2:1-4)
3. a. In Matthew 11:11, among those born of women there had not risen one greater than John the Baptist. How then, we who are least in the kingdom of Heaven be greater than John the Baptist? Who are we born of in addition to women? (John 3:3-7)
b. How can you be born of God and have your sins forgiven? (John 3:16; Rev. 3:20)
c. If you are a Christian, do you have any reason to boast that you are greater than John the Baptist? Why or why not? (Eph. 2:8-10)
4. Read Matthew 11:12-19. Were the people happy with John the Baptist? Were they happy with Jesus? What's going on here? (Num. 14:11; Is. 53:1-3)

Today's Memory Verse

"Then the Lord said to Moses: 'How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them?'" Numbers 14:11 (NKJV)

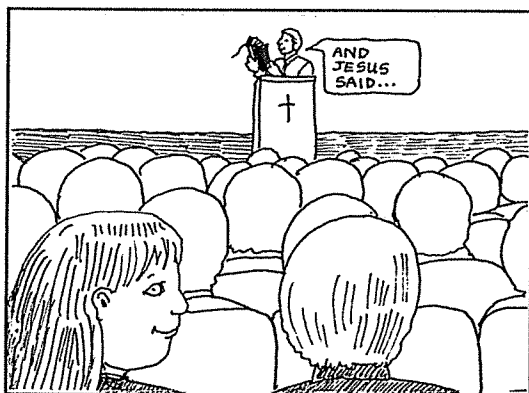
The Nation of Israel Rejected Jesus and His Message.

Have You Seen His Mighty Works?
Have You Heard His Call To Repent?
Have You Rejected Him?

Then He (*Jesus*) began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent:

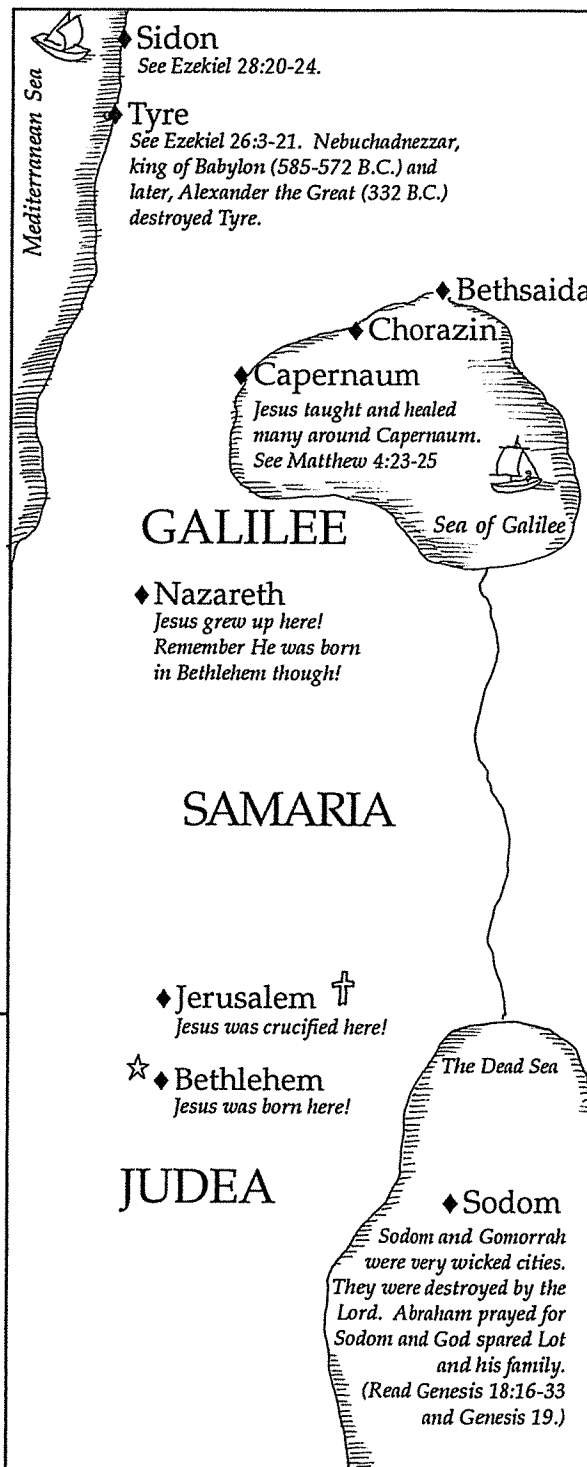
"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you."

"And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you." -Matthew 11:20-24



APPLY WITHIN!

Is this a picture of you? Have you been in church hearing about Jesus' Mighty works? Have you seen things that Jesus has done around you, and for you, yet you have not repented? If you reject Him after seeing, hearing and knowing about Jesus, you will be far more accountable in the judgment than your neighbor who has never heard about Jesus or set foot in a church! Remember to build your house upon the Rock (Jesus); not just hearing His Word, but by doing it! Then you will stand firm when the wind and rain comes! Repent and ask Jesus to be your Savior!



**The Nation of Israel Rejected Jesus
And His Message
Matthew 11:20-24**

Vocabulary in Context with Today's Lesson

1. rebuke- to accuse of and blame for a fault so as to make feel ashamed
2. repent- to turn from sin and to turn to God. This would be a 180-degree turn, an "about face."
3. sackcloth and ashes- means to dress in a coarse cloth of goat hair and to cast ashes or dust on the head which was a rite of oriental mourning
4. woe- denouncing misery and having pity for

Discussion Questions

1. a. Read Matthew 11:20-22. Why was Jesus so upset with Chorazin and Bethsaida?

b. Why did Jesus consider Chorazin and Bethsaida worse than Tyre and Sidon? (John 15:22-24; John 20:29)

2. a. Read Matthew 11:23-24. Why was Jesus so upset with Capernaum? (I John 2:15-17)

b. What happens to those who are prideful? (Prov. 16:18)

Today's Memory Verse

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent."
Revelation 3:19 (NKJV)

We Must Enter The Kingdom As A Child.

Are You Weary? Yoke Yourself With Him,
Learn From Him, And Find Rest.

At that time Jesus answered and said,
"I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth,
that You have hidden these things from the wise
and prudent and have revealed them to babes.
Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your
sight." - Matthew 11:25-26

• Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive
the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."
- Mark 10:15

• "For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise
according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble,
are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world
to put to shame the wise, ..." - 1 Corinthians 1:26-27

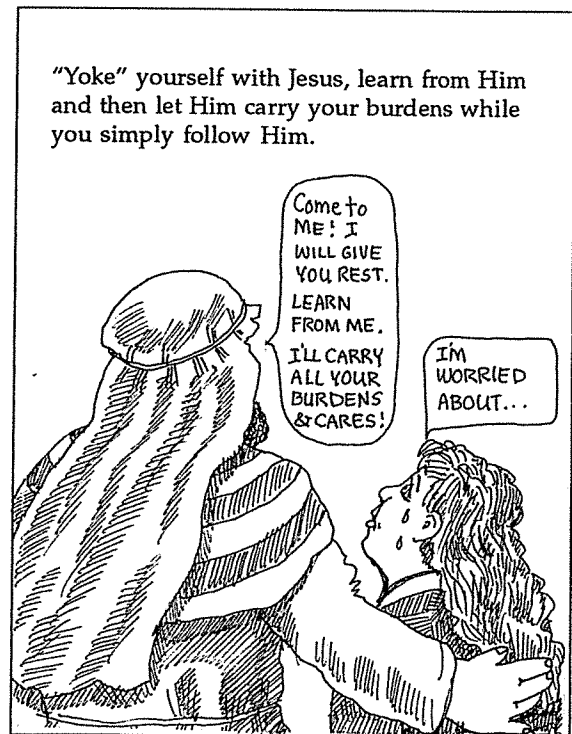
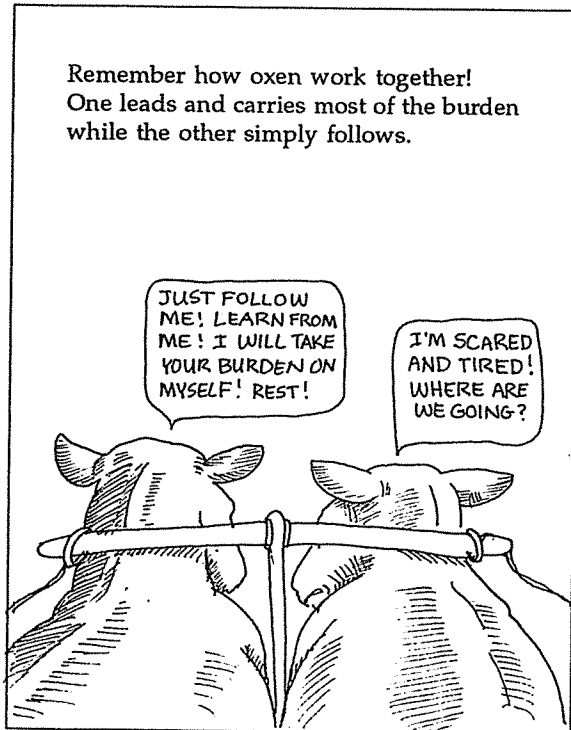
"All things have been delivered to Me by My
Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father.
Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son,
and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."
- Matthew 11:27

• There is only one way to God! The world says there are many
ways to God! Not true! Jesus said, "I Am the Way, the truth, and
the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." - John 14:6

"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and
learn from Me, for I Am gentle and lowly in heart,
and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is
easy and My burden is light." - Matthew 11:28-30

• Come to Jesus when you're overwhelmed with worries,
fears, grief, or depression. Come to Jesus when you're heavy
laden with sins that weigh you down.
Just like two oxen working together; one leads, carrying the
heaviest load while the other simply follows. We must "yoke-
up" with Jesus and allow Him to lead us and carry our burdens.
Your burden should be light if you've given Him your cares.
His burden is light no matter what He carries for you because
He is God. Jesus will give you rest. Come to Him!

"Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God,
that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him,
for He cares for you." - 1 Peter 5:6-7



**We Must Enter
The Kingdom As A Child
Matthew 11:25-30**

Vocabulary in Context with Today's Lesson

1. babes- metaphorically a babe, simple, innocent
2. burden- to overload heavily
3. gentle- meek, mild
4. heavy laden- to overload, heavily burden
5. lowly- low, not high; humble, modest
6. prudent- intelligent
7. wills- wish, desire
8. wise- skilled in learning, intelligent
9. yoke- bind two things together

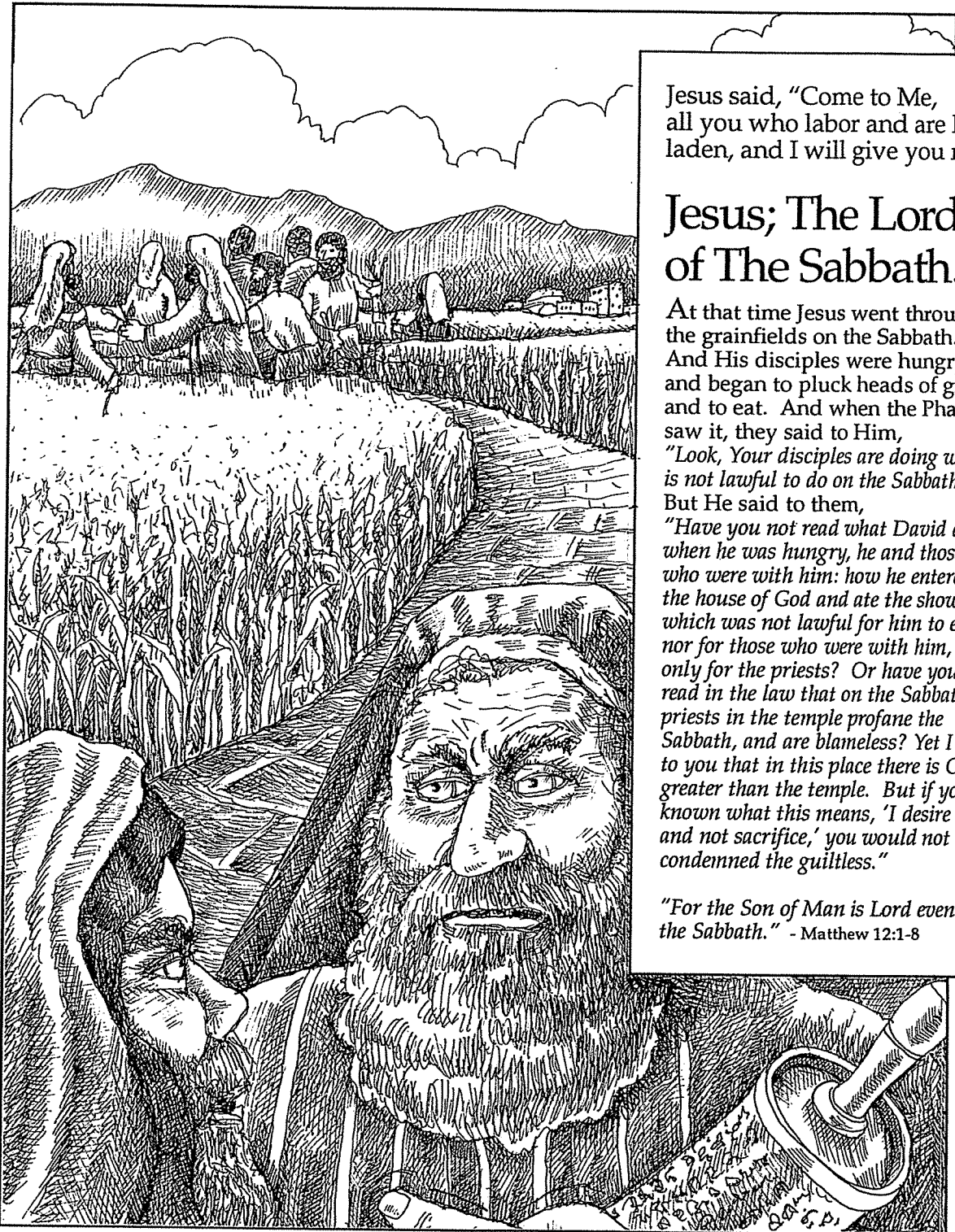
Discussion Question

1. a. Read Matthew 11:25-26. What things are hidden from the wise and prudent?
(Matt. 16:15-17)
 - b. Who reveals it?
 - c. Who are the babes? (Matt. 18:1-5)
 - d. What does God call the wisdom of the world? (I Cor. 3:18-20)
 - e. What does God do to the proud? (I Peter 5:5-6)
2. a. Read Matthew 11:27. How is God the Father revealed to us?
 - b. How is God the Son (Jesus) revealed to us? (Matt. 16:15-17)
3. a. Read Matthew 11:28-30. When your heart is burdened by sin or sorrow, what should you do?
 - b. Why do you think God's yoke is light?
 - c. What might burden us? (Isaiah 1:4-5)
 - d. What is the world's yoke like? Why?

Do you have a burden you would like to give to Him right now? Pray and give it to Him.

Today's Memory Verse

"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28 (NKJV)



Jesus said, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Jesus; The Lord of The Sabbath.

At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to Him, "Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!" But He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? Yet I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple. But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless."

"For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." - Matthew 12:1-8



God desires mercy and not sacrifice. We can turn our relationship with God into "religion" by not remembering that we are helpless sinners who were doomed to judgment apart from His mercy and His sacrifice. So we should be merciful!

The Pharisees had heart trouble! Notice that the Pharisees didn't care that Jesus and His disciples were hungry. They only hoped to catch them breaking the Sabbath so they could give the death penalty. (See Exodus 31:15.)

Ephesians 2:14-18 says, "For He Himself is our peace, Who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of Commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new Man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the Cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father."

Jesus is our Sabbath. He gives rest to all who come to Him. *Have you come to Him?*

Jesus; Lord of The Sabbath

Matthew 12:1-8

Vocabulary in Context with Today's Lesson

1. grain- ear of corn
2. lawful- permitted
3. mercy- compassion
4. profane- desecrate
5. Sabbath- The Jewish Sabbath, the seventh day of the week (Saturday), was observed by not doing any kind of work or activity (See Ex. 20:8-11, 30:16-17; Deut. ~~5~~12-15; ~~Matt. 12:7; Mk 12:7~~; *Mark 2:27*)
6. sacrifice- the act of offering; animal or other "sacrifices" as offered under the Law
7. showbread- the twelve loaves representing the twelve tribe of Israel that were set every Sabbath day before the Lord

Discussion Questions

1. Read Matthew 12:1-2. Now, according to Isaiah 58:9-10, how do you think God would have wanted the Pharisees to respond to Jesus and His disciples? (Matt. 7:12)
2. What do you think Jesus was saying in Matthew 12:3-4? (*Mark 2:27*)
3. What does Jesus mean by what He said in Matthew 12:5?
4. Read Matthew 12:6. Who is the "One Greater than the temple?"
5. a. Read Matthew 12:7-8. What does sacrifice not do? (Heb. 10:4)
b. What will love do? (I Peter 4:8; Prov. 10:12)
c. Which does God desire more? (*Mark 12:33; Matt. 12:7*)
d. What was the one act that ended all sacrifices? (Heb. 10:10)

Today's Memory Verse

"And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." Mark 12:33 (NKJV)

(Continued)

Jesus; The Lord of The Sabbath.

Now when He had departed from there, He went into their synagogue. And behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" --that they might accuse Him.

Then He said to them, "What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." Then He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and it was restored as whole as the other. Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him.

But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew from there. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all. Yet He warned them not to make Him known, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "Behold! My Servant Whom I have chosen, My Beloved in Whom My soul is well pleased! I will put My Spirit upon Him, and He will declare justice to the Gentiles. He will not quarrel nor cry out, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench, till He sends forth justice to victory; and in His name Gentiles will trust." - Matthew 12:9-21

He frustrates the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot carry out their plans. He catches the wise in their own craftiness, and the counsel of the cunning comes quickly upon them. - Job 5:12-13

Remember Matthew 11:25? The Father chose to reveal the things He taught to babes rather than to the "wise."



Notice that the crafty Pharisees were hoping to accuse Him. They wanted to destroy Him. Read John 8:37-47; Jesus told them that they were of their father the devil, who was a murderer from the beginning. Revelation 12:10 says the devil is our accuser.

Again, Jesus demonstrates the correct heart. Wouldn't you have mercy toward your distressed animal on the Sabbath? Shouldn't you show even more mercy toward a distressed person on the Sabbath? Though God knows about each sparrow that falls to the ground, people are of much more value. (See Matthew 10:31.)

The Old Testament prophecy says that the Gentiles will trust in His Name. (See Malachi 1:11.) Do you trust Him?

(Continued)
Jesus; Lord of The Sabbath
Matthew 12:9-21

Vocabulary in Context with Today's Lesson

1. flax- a strip of linen used for the wick of a candle or lamp (In Matt. 12:20, meaning that Christ will not extinguish the faint and almost dying light, quoted from Isaiah 42:3. The Messiah will speak peace and comfort to the oppressed and not add to their sorrows.)
2. Gentiles- spoken of all who were not Israelites (Jews)
3. lawful- permitted
4. Pharisees- (separated ones)- a religious and political party of the Jews in Palestine in New Testament times. The Pharisees were known for insisting that the Law of God be observed as the scribes interpreted it.
5. Sabbath- the Jewish Sabbath, the seventh day of the week (Saturday), was observed by not doing any kind of work or activity (See Ex. 20:8-11, 30:16-17; Deut. 5:12-15; Mark 2:27)
6. synagogue- a local place where Jews could gather for the reading and explanation of the Jewish sacred Scriptures and for prayer

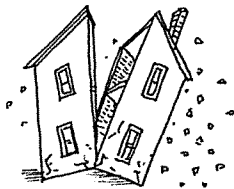
Discussion Questions

1. Read Matthew 12:9. Why do you think it says that Jesus "went to their synagogues"? (Numb. 14:11; Isaiah 53:3)
2. a. Read Matthew 12:10. What were the Pharisees trying to do?
b. What does the Bible say about people like this? (Job 5:12-13)
2. what don't the Pharisees understand? (Matt 12:7)
3. b. Read Matthew 12:11-14. Why don't the Pharisees understand? (Matt. 11:25; I Corinth. 1:27)
c. What is it that Jesus desires? (Matt. 12:7/ Mark 12:33)
4. a. Read Matthew 12:15-21. Who was Isaiah prophesying about?
b. Matthew 12:21 says, "And in His name Gentiles will trust." What does that mean to you? (John 3:16)

Today's Memory Verse

"But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty."
I Corinthians 1:27 (NKJV)

A House Divided Against Itself Will Not Stand



Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed and said, "Could this be the Son of David?"

Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, "This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons."

But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house."

He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad." - Matthew 12:22-30

The Pharisees attributed the works that Jesus did to Satan, or the leader of the demons, Beelzebub. Satan would defeat himself if he cast himself out! A house divided against itself will not stand. Jesus said, "He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad."



If you're not with Him, you're not undecided! You're against Him!

There are no fence-sitters in Heaven! There is light and there is darkness! There is no gray area!

Are you born again? Ask Him to forgive your sins and to come into your heart today. Join us in God's kingdom, the kingdom of Light!

Jesus answered and said to him (Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews), "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." - John 3:3

Darkness

He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

- Colossians 1:13-14



Light

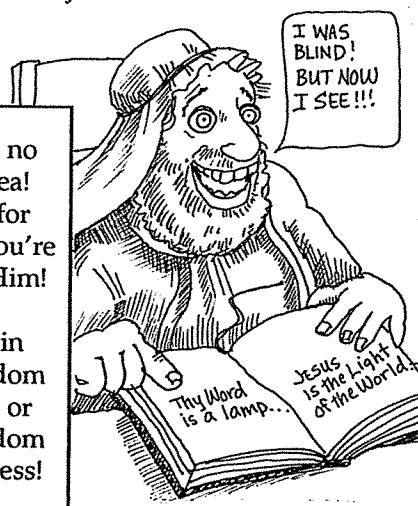
This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is Light and in Him is no darkness at all.

- 1 John 1:5

There is no gray area! You're for Him or you're against Him!

You're in the kingdom of Light or the kingdom of Darkness!

Are you in God's Kingdom?



A House Divided Against Itself Will Not Stand

Matthew 12:22-30

Vocabulary in Context with Today's Lesson

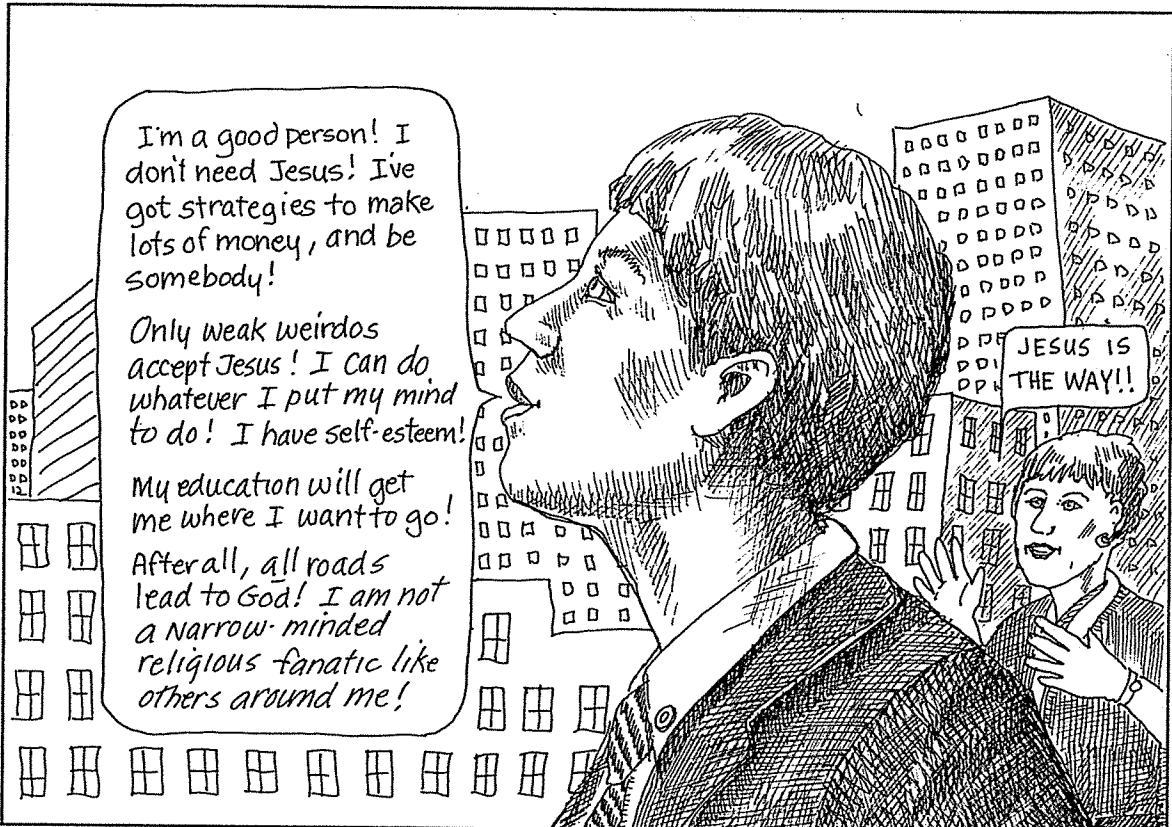
1. brought to desolation- to be made desolate (uninhabited, deserted), be laid waste
2. mute- unable to speak or make noise
3. Pharisees- (separated ones) - a religious and political party of the Jews in Palestine in New Testament times. The Pharisees were known for insisting that the Law of God be observed as the scribes interpreted it.
4. Son of David- referring to the Messiah (Jesus) which was promised to come through the line of King David

Discussion Questions

1. a. Read Matthew 12:22. Why do you think they brought this man to Jesus?
b. How did they know to bring this man to Jesus?
c. Jesus healed this man physically. Is it always His will to heal us physically? (II Cor. 12:7-9)
2. Read Matthew 12:23. Who did the multitudes think Jesus was?
3. a. Read Matthew 12:24. What did the Pharisees accuse Jesus of?
b. Why would they say this? (Matt. 12:14)
4. a. Read Matthew 12:25-26. What was Jesus' responding to?
b. Can you paraphrase what Jesus' response was?
5. Read Matthew 12:27. Who will be their judges? (Acts 19:13-16)
6. a. Who did the Pharisees say that Jesus casts out demons by? (Matt. 12:24; Luke 11:18)
b. Read Matthew 12:28 and Luke 11:20. Who does Jesus say that He casts out demons by?
7. a. Read Matthew 12:29 and Luke 11:21-22. What happens to the strong man when he trusts in his own strength?
b. Who is the one stronger than the strong man that these verses are talking about?
c. But, Who is stronger yet, than the strong man and the one who bound him? (I John 4:4)
8. Read Matthew 12:30. There are only two kingdoms (see front page). Which one do you belong to?

Today's Memory Verse

"He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad."
Matthew 12:30 (NKJV)



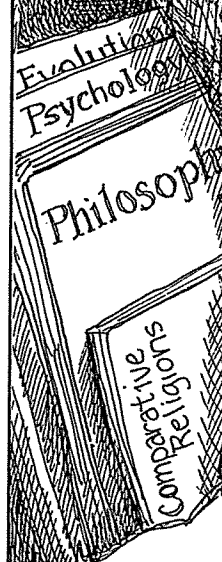
Rejection Of Jesus: The Unpardonable Sin.

"Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men."

"Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come." - Matthew 12:31-32

The Holy Spirit guides and leads us to Jesus. If we deny the work of the Holy Spirit, we have rejected Jesus. The Holy Spirit is God and He points us to Jesus, He glorifies Jesus, and He draws us to Jesus. We either accept or reject Jesus when the Holy Spirit tugs on our heart. If you're born again, you have not committed the unpardonable sin. If you're not born again say, "yes" to Jesus now! If you're not for Jesus, you're against Him. There are no fence-sitters!

"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you." - John 16:13-15



Rejection of Jesus: The Unpardonable Sin Matthew 12:31-32

Vocabulary in Context with Today's Lesson

1. blasphemy- to hurt the reputation of or smite with reports or words, speak evil of, slander, to speak with disrespectful irreverence concerning God Himself or what stands in some particular relation to Him
2. forgiven- Psalms 103:12
3. Son of Man- referring to Jesus, fully God, but in human form
4. Spirit/Holy Spirit- the third Person of the Trinity
5. Trinity- one God in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit

Discussion Questions

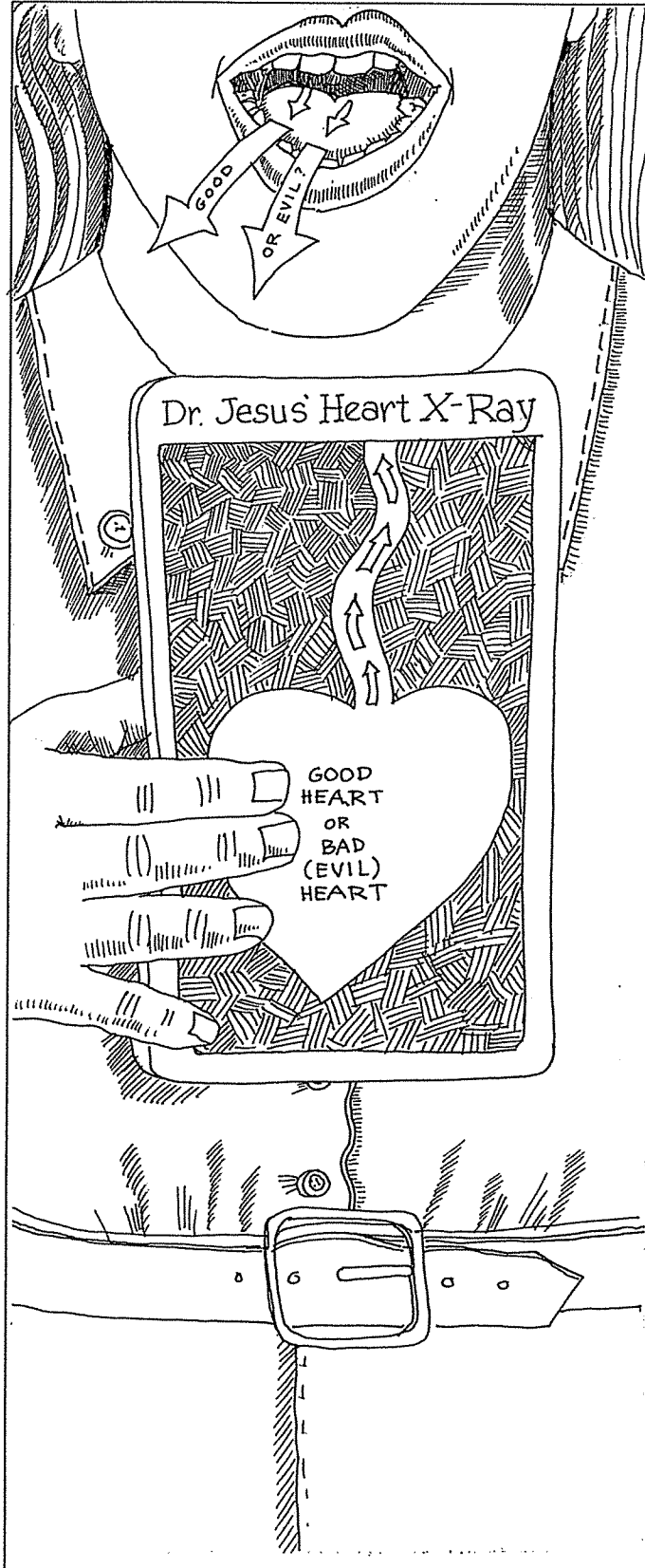
1. Read Matthew 12:31-32 and Luke 12:10. Who is the Holy Spirit? (see vocabulary)
2. a. Read John 16:5-15. Who does the Holy Spirit point to? (John 15:26; John 16:14)

b. If we reject what the Holy Spirit is telling us, Who are we rejecting?
3. Who were the religious leaders of Israel rejecting? (Acts 7:51-53)
4. What is the only Way to God and to heaven? (John 14:6)
5. a. If you are a Christian, are you able to blasphemy the Holy Spirit?

b. Why?
6. Say in your own words what it means to blasphemy the Holy Spirit.

Today's Memory Verse

"But when the Helper comes whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me." John 15:26 (NKJV)



Bad Trees
Bear Bad Fruit,
And Evil Hearts
Speak Evil Things.

They Rejected Jesus,
Their Messiah.

"Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit."

"Brood of vipers (snakes)! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment."

"For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."
- Matthew 12:33-37

Idle words mean worthless, blasphemous and ugly things. We need to be kind and merciful. Our words will reflect our hearts. Jesus said, *"Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you."*
- Matthew 7:1-2

If you ask Jesus into your heart, you will be justified by His work, His sacrifice, His blood, and His grace and mercy given when He died for your sins on the Cross.

If you reject Jesus, you will be condemned by your own words, your own works, and then judged according to the Law rather than by grace and mercy.

Bad Trees Bear Bad Fruit, And Evil Hearts Speak Evil Things

Matthew 12:33-37

Vocabulary in Context with Today's Lesson

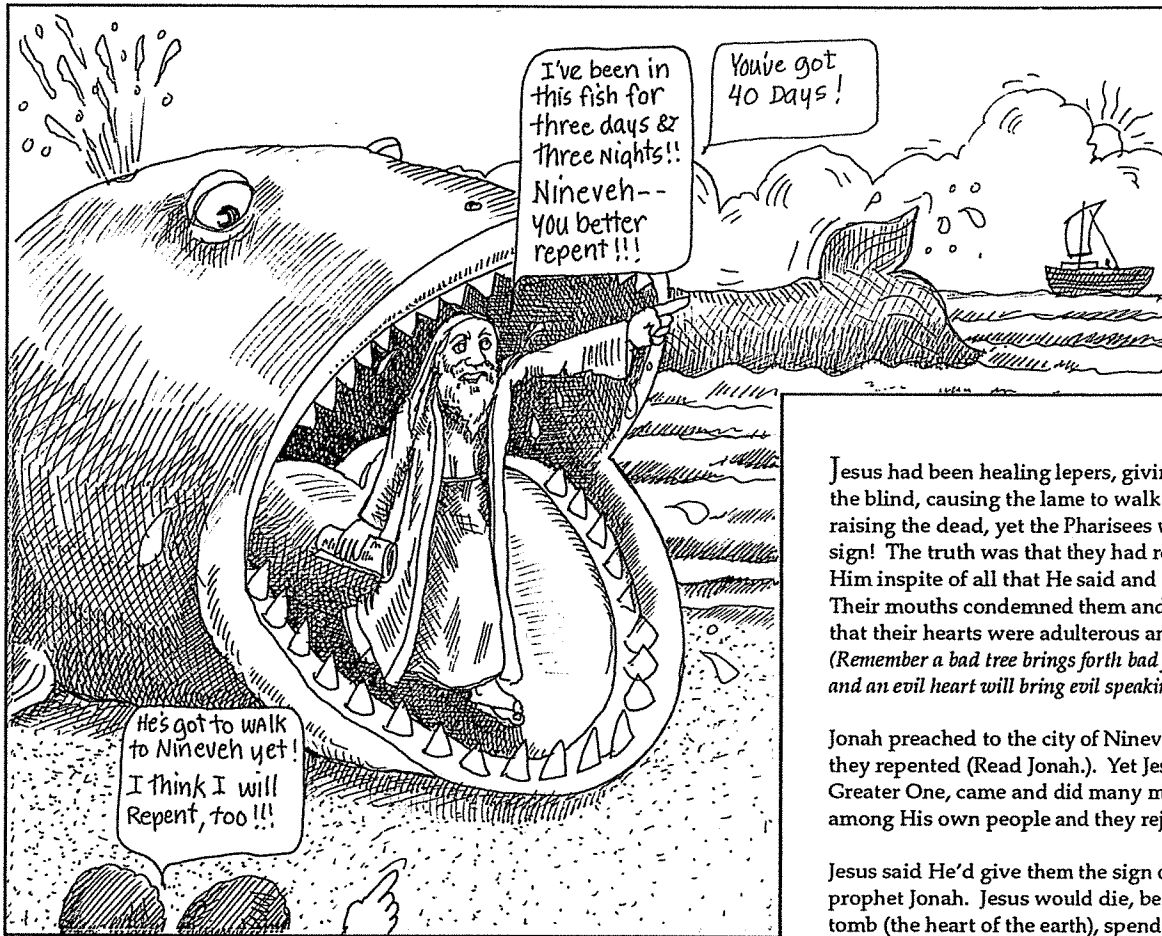
1. brood of vipers- generation of snakes; used metaphorically of wicked men
2. condemned- to give judgment against a person, recognize the evidence against him, pass a sentence
3. idle word- insincere language of a person who speaks one thing and means another; ineffective, worthless word
4. judgment- the act of judging in reference to the final judgment, the day of judgment
5. justified- to recognize, to set forth as righteous, to declare righteous, to justify as a judicial act

Discussion Questions

1.
 - a. Read Matthew 12:33. What two kinds of trees are there?
 - b. How can we be of the good trees? (John 15:4-5)
 - c. If we are doing what John 15:4-5 says, what kind of fruit will we have? (Gal. 5:22-23)
 - d. What happens to the bad trees? (John 15:6)
 - e. What kind of fruit do the bad trees bear? (Gal. 5:19-21)
2.
 - a. Read Matthew 12:34-35. Who is Jesus speaking to? (Matt. 12:23-25)
 - b. According to the Pharisees' words, what do you think might be in their hearts? (Matt.12:14)
3.
 - a. Read Matthew 12:36. If you aren't a Christian, how will you be judged?
 - b. If you are a Christian, how will you be judged? (Rom. 8:1; I Cor. 3:9-15)
4.
 - a. Read Matthew 12:37. What words will justify you? (Rom. 10:8-10)
 - b. What words will condemn you? (Luke 10:16)

Today's Memory Verse

"I am the vine and you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." John 15:5 (NKJV)



Jesus Will Give Them The Sign Of Jonah; His Resurrection.

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a Greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a Greater than Solomon is here."

- Matthew 12:38-42

Jesus had been healing lepers, giving sight to the blind, causing the lame to walk and raising the dead, yet the Pharisees wanted a sign! The truth was that they had rejected Him inspite of all that He said and did. Their mouths condemned them and revealed that their hearts were adulterous and wicked. (Remember a bad tree brings forth bad fruit, and an evil heart will bring evil speaking.)

Jonah preached to the city of Nineveh and they repented (Read Jonah.). Yet Jesus, a Greater One, came and did many miracles among His own people and they rejected Him.

Jesus said He'd give them the sign of the prophet Jonah. Jesus would die, be put in a tomb (the heart of the earth), spend three days and three nights there, and then rise from the dead. Resurrection was the sign He'd give them. Jesus prophesied His death and resurrection. In the story of Lazarus and the rich man we learn;

"If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead." - Luke 16:31

The queen of the South will rise in the resurrection of the dead and condemn this generation because she, not hearing Jesus' teachings or seeing His miracles, believed the Word of God through Solomon.

The people of Nineveh will rise in the resurrection of the dead and condemn this generation because they, not having heard Jesus' teachings or having seen His miracles, believed God's Word through Jonah the prophet, and they repented.

The scribes, Pharisees, and the nation of Israel, being spiritually adulterous, rejected their Messiah inspite of the many miracles He did among them. They still rejected Him even after He died and rose again, giving them the sign of the prophet Jonah.

Jesus Will Give Them the Sign Of Jonah; His Resurrection

Matthew 12:38-42

Vocabulary in Context with Today's Lesson

1. adulterous- used figuratively to indicate one who is unfaithful toward God as an adulterer is unfaithful to his/her spouse. In the New Testament, the word is generally used of those who neglect God and their duty toward Him and yield themselves to their own lusts and passions.
2. Pharisees- (separated ones) - a religious and political party of the Jews in Palestine in New Testament times. The Pharisees were known for insisting that the Law of God be observed as the scribes interpreted it.
3. queen of the South- refers to the queen of Sheba (I Kings 10:1-13)
4. repented- a turning away from sin, disobedience, or rebellion and turning back to God with a feeling of remorse or regret for past conduct
5. scribes- one who would explain the Law in schools and synagogues
6. Son of Man- referring to Jesus, fully God, in human form

Discussion Questions

1. Read Matthew 12:38. Up to this point, what had Jesus been doing among the people? (Matt. 8:2-3; Matt. 8:5-8, 13; Matt. 8:14-15; Matt. 8:16-17; etc.)
2. a. Read Matthew 12:39-40. What was this generation of scribes and Pharisees looking for?
b. What is the sign of Jonah that Jesus is talking about? (Matt. 27:62- 28:6)
3. a. Read Matthew 12:41. Did Nineveh see the miracles that Jesus performed?
b. Did Nineveh repent? How? (Jonah 3:4-6)
c. Why would Nineveh find fault to condemn this generation of scribes and Pharisees?
d. Who is the One greater than Jonah standing there and yet they do not believe?
4. a. Who is the queen of the south? (see vocab.)
b. What was she seeking for and found? (I Kings 10:1,6-9; Matt. 7:7-8)
c. Why would she find fault with this generation of scribes and Pharisees?
d. Who is the One greater than Solomon standing there, and yet they did not believe?

Today's Memory Verse

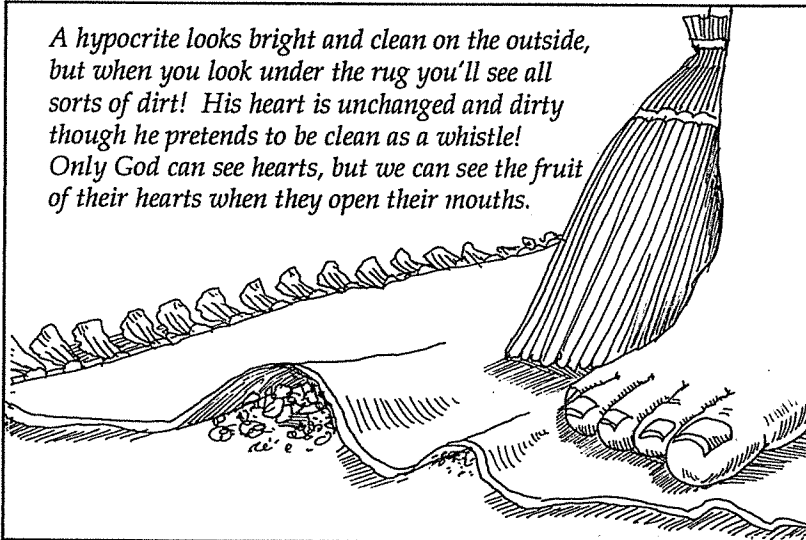
"Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near." Isaiah 55:6 (NKJV)

Jesus Must Clean Your House, Or It Will Be Mess!

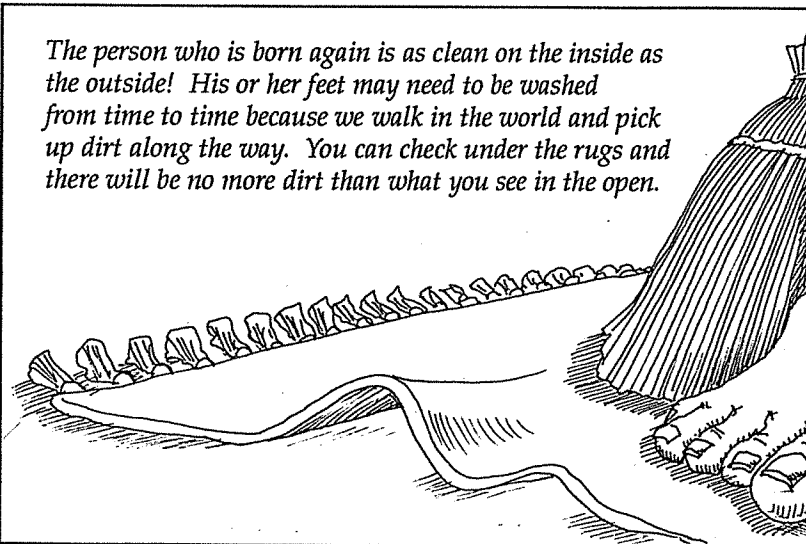
You Need A Changed Heart!

"When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation." - Matthew 12:43-45

A hypocrite looks bright and clean on the outside, but when you look under the rug you'll see all sorts of dirt! His heart is unchanged and dirty though he pretends to be clean as a whistle! Only God can see hearts, but we can see the fruit of their hearts when they open their mouths.



The person who is born again is as clean on the inside as the outside! His or her feet may need to be washed from time to time because we walk in the world and pick up dirt along the way. You can check under the rugs and there will be no more dirt than what you see in the open.



The wicked generation that rejects Jesus will be like this man. Our best efforts to clean up our houses (hearts) are filthy and worthless.

Paul said, "...For what I will (want) to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will (want) not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will (want) is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will (want) to do, I do not do; but the evil I will (want) not to do, that I practice." - Romans 7:15-19

The world has invented many "self-help" programs designed to teach us how to clean our own houses (hearts), but in the end, they will leave us in worse shape than when we started. We soon go back to our old ways because our hearts were not changed. We are His workmanship, not our own. We cannot change our own hearts, but we can ask Him to change us.

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." - Ephesians 2:10

Jesus sets us free from works and programs. He gives us a new heart when we're born again, then He gives us His power to walk in Him. We can either be free in Him, or we can continue in the world's self-improvement programs! If we do, we will soon grow discouraged, bitter, and self-righteous, just like the generation to whom Jesus was speaking! They rejected Jesus and His works! If we think we can change ourselves by our own works, we have rejected Him too. Whom Jesus sets free is free indeed! Let go of the world's ways and ask Jesus for a new heart! Are you born again?

(Demons only have access to the hearts of those who are not born again, or who have rejected Jesus.)

**Jesus Must Clean Your House,
Or It Will Be a Mess!
You Need a Changed Heart!
Matthew 12:43-45**

Vocabulary in Context with Today's Lesson

1. demon oppression- an affliction of a person who is oppressed or persecuted by demons (example: Job)
2. demon possession- an affliction of a person who is possessed or controlled by demons (examples: Matt. 8:28-34 and Matt. 9:32-34)
3. house- (Matt. 12:44) referring to the man's body that was formerly possessed by a demon
4. reformation- man's attempt to make better by removing faults and defects
5. regeneration- being "born again" by the power of God (John 3:3)
6. unclean spirit- demon

Discussion Questions

1. a. Read Matthew 12:43-45. Briefly summarize what is taking place.
b. Do you think that this man is a Christian? Why or Why not? (II Cor. 6:14-18)
2. a. When this man tried to "reform" himself (clean his house) did it work? What happened?
b. In what ways does man try to "reform" himself with his own efforts?
c. What does God say about our own efforts? (Isaiah 64:6)
d. What is the only thing we need?
e. Before we are Christians, what is the state of the heart? (Jer. 17:9-10; Matt. 12:34)
f. Who can change or regenerate our hearts? (Psalm 51:10)
g. What happens to us when we become a Christian? (II Cor. 5:17)

Today's Memory Verse

"Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." James 4:7-8a (NKJV)

Who Is The Mother And Brother Of Jesus?

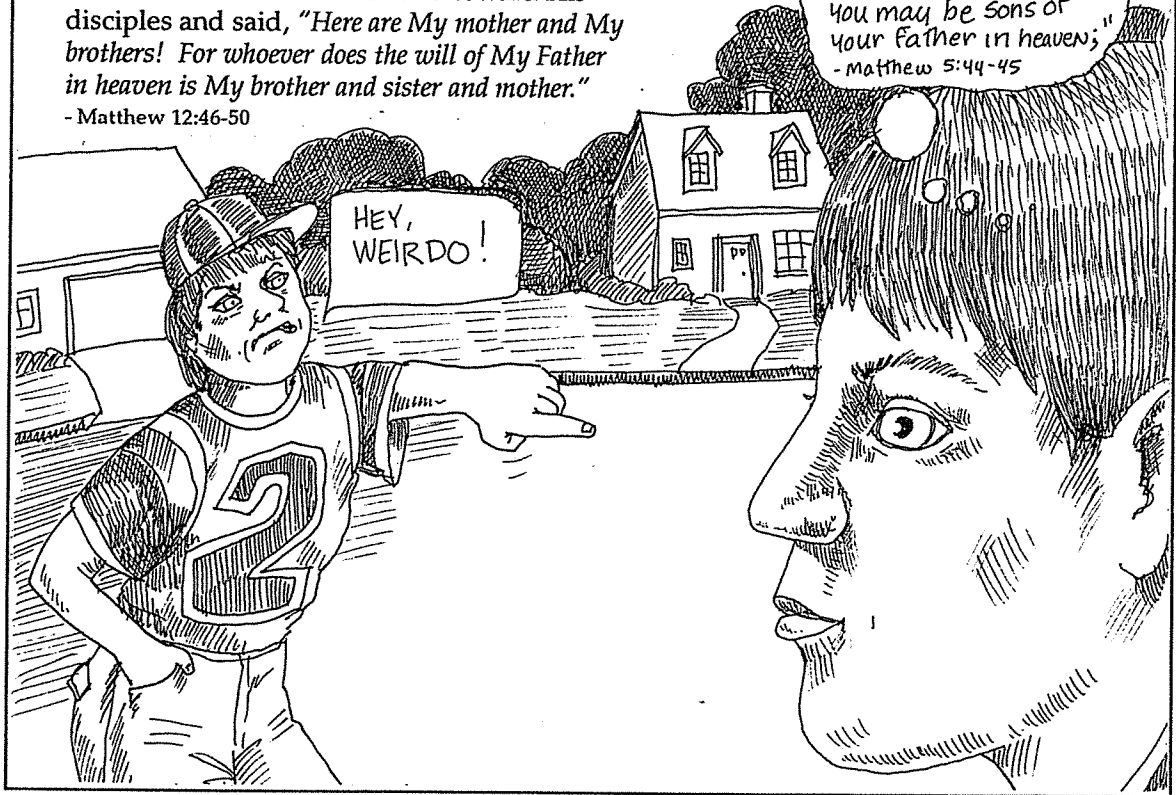
It could be you! Do you do His Will?

While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother (Mary) and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him. Then one said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You."

But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is my mother and who are My brothers?" And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."

- Matthew 12:46-50

Lord-- What's Your Will in my situation?
"But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven;"
- Matthew 5:44-45



If you want to be in Jesus' family, you need to be born again. If you do His will, you'll be like the wise man who built his house upon the Rock. (See Matthew 7:24-25.) Many people are willing to hear the Word of God, but not many want to do the will of the Father. We need to pray, "Thy will be done." (See Matthew 6:10.)

Most of us want to be Christians and still pray, "my will be done."

Mary, Jesus' mother was a blessed woman, and Jesus had real-life brothers, born to Mary and Joseph. But those who do the will of the Father are His family. Mary and Jesus' brothers needed to do the will of the Father, too!

Who is the Mother and Brother Of Jesus?

Matthew 12:46-50

Vocabulary in Context with Today's Lesson

1. disciples- a pupil or a learner; imitator of their teacher. Jesus' twelve disciples were not ordinary disciples, but those who remained with Him and followed Him.
2. multitude- a crowd of people
3. will- that which pleases and creates joy

Discussion Questions

1. a. Read Matthew 12:46. Who is Jesus' Father? (Matt. 3:13-17; Isaiah 7:14)

b. Who is Jesus' mother? (Matt. 1:20-23)

c. Who is Jesus' stepfather? (Matt. 1:24-25)

d. Who is Jesus' half-brothers? (Matt. 13:53-56)
2. a. Read Matthew 12:47-50. How can we be a part of Jesus' family?

b. What is the "will" of Jesus' Father? (John 6:38-40)

c. Fill in the blank: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who _____ the will of My Father in heaven."
Matthew 7:21 (NKJV)

Today's Memory Verse

"And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever." I John 2:17 (NKJV)