

THAT'S NOT WHAT I EXPECTED!

Matthew 11:20-24

Ah... Heaven! Utopia... perfect in every way! **All** will be made new! When the Apostle Paul wrote about heaven, he said... "No one's ever seen or heard anything like this... never so much as imagined anything quite like it ..." (1 Cor. 2:9 The Message)

But that's not all the Bible has to say. That's not all God wants us to know. Yes, God has a place of Utopia called "Heaven" prepared for those who love Him and are obedient to His will. BUT, He is also a God of judgment. And, so He has prepared a place for those who reject Him and are disobedient. It is the total opposite of Utopia... it's a place of eternal torment. "... be thrown into hell, where the worms that eat them do not die, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark 9:47-48)

This past week we read Matthew 11-15, and right off the bat we run into a controversial passage about... Hell, 11:20-24. You can't talk long with people before this question raises its head. "How can a loving God send people who have never heard of Jesus Christ to an eternity of torment?"

Some things in the Bible are just plain difficult to understand. Matthew 11:20-24 is one of those *for me*. Let me set the scene. "Then Jesus began to **denounce** the towns in which most of his miracles had been performed, **because they did not repent.**"
v.20

It's *His words that follow I find really difficult to understand. His **LOVE COLLIDES** with His **JUSTICE** as He tells Korazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, it will be **more bearable** for Tyre and Sidon and even Sodom on the day of judgment than for you.*

Tyre and Sidon and Sodom were OPENLY WICKED. ... and so were Sodom and Gomorrah. Korazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum in Jesus' day on the other hand, *were not openly wicked... they were simply INDIFFERENT.*

Let me share 3 things this passage tells us about God... and 3 things this passage says to us!

Three important truths about God...

#1) God knows _____.
He even has "contingent knowledge." It means... God even knows all the "what if's."

#2) God does not _____ His grace to anyone.
Of all the Bible teachings, this one is, perhaps the most difficult to understand and accept.

#3) At the final judgment, God will _____ unbelievers as He sees fit.

Three lessons for us to take away today:

I. God Expects a R_____ of R_____ to R_____.

II. We need to heed the _____.

III. Thirdly, we need to _____ others.
The good news is... **it is not too late!**

The reason Jesus spoke those harsh words to the people of Galilee was so they would realize the danger they were in... and would repent and turn to Him.

What I Will Do With This Message: _____

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