

Spiritual Suicide

Text: Mark 16:15-16 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Matthew 11:16-19 But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, And saying, **We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.** For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.

Hebrews 4:2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

Introduction: But whereunto shall I liken this generation?

I. Four Facts about Jesus' Generation

1) *Jesus' Generation were a highly religious generation:*

- they met to worship three times a year at the main temple in Jerusalem: **Passover** (Nisan 14th- March/April); **Pentecost** (Sivan 6th- May/June); **Tabernacle** (Tishri 1st- September/October)
- *synagogues*- The New Testament records more than **10 occasions** on which the ministry of Jesus took place in the synagogue. The Gospels record that "Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues." The synagogue provided a ready platform for the teaching of Jesus and later the apostle Paul. Jesus, his disciples, and Paul (as well as most early Jewish followers of Jesus) went to the synagogue to worship. The synagogue was not simply a place to share God's Word, but also an important part of the Jewish people's relationship to God. It might surprise modern Christians to discover that many church practices are based on synagogue customs that Jesus followed. (ref.: *thattheworldmayknow.com*)

The remains of as many as 50 different synagogues were identified in Galilee, one of the most concentrated sites of synagogues in the world at that time. (*WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION whc.unesco.org*)

2) *Jesus' Generation were highly trained in OT Law & Commandments – met daily or weekly for teaching A country guided by religious and spiritual leaders*

- Levites – an entire tribe of Israel (1/12 of pop.?) dedicated for service to God
- Pharisees – about 6,000 (est.)
- Essenes – about 4,000 (est.)
- Sadducees – small but highly influential
- Synagogue priests – each synagogue had more than one priest/leader

3) *Jesus' Generation had **the two greatest preachers of all time** to instruct them*

John the Baptist: Matthew 11:8-11 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist:

Jesus Christ: John 1:19-27 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the

way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

4) *Jesus' Generation* - sadly, many who heard the gospel rejected the gospel!

Matthew 11:20-24 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, 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 unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.

II. Rejection of the gospel is Spiritual Suicide!

***Physical Suicide is a terrible and tragic event for the victim and the families who grieve for them!**

America Suicide Statistic (ref.: 2022 American Foundation for Suicide Prevention)

- 49,476 Americans died by suicide
- 11th leading cause of death in the US
- 1.6 million attempted suicide victims

Global Suicide Statistic (ref.: 2021 International Association for Suicide Prevention)

- 703.000 people died by suicide
- 1.3% of deaths were the result of suicide
- over twice as high among men than women

***Spiritual Suicide is far worse than Physical Suicide!**

Matthew 11:17...We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. **SPIRITUAL SUICIDE IS FAILURE TO HEAR & OBEY THE GOSPEL!**

Matthew 10:14-15 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

Mark 6:11-12 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city. **And they went out, and preached that men should repent.**

III. Why is Spiritual Suicide FAR WORSE than Physical Suicide?

Matthew 10:28 ...fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Mark 8:36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and **lose his own soul?**

IV. What is the Root Cause of Spiritual Suicide – FAILURE TO ACCEPT / APPLY THE GOSPEL

Farming and Gardening Facts:

- regardless of the grower's skills,
- regardless of the technics used, whether ancient or modern,
- regardless of the type of fertilizer or amount used,
- regardless of amount of water provided,
- regardless of the care and cleanness of the crop,

The most importation ingredient for success is the soil — soil type - top soil depth - depth of the hard pan for root development - preparation of the soil (*even the best soil must be properly prepared*)

... without A RECEPTIVE HEART (GOOD SOIL), SPIRITUAL LIFE WILL NOT SUCCEED!

Gospel Success Fact:

The gospel must be received by faith and allowed to grow in the heart or it will not bear fruit unto eternal life!

Hebrews 4:2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

Matthew 13:3-9 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

Acts 17:10-12 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night (*FROM THESSALONICA*) unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few... THE GOSPEL HAD BETTER ACCEPTANCE IN BEREIA THAN THESSALONICA

V. Today's Generation: AS IN THE DAYS OF NOAH - A GENERATION RIPE FOR ANTICHRIST

- a generation saturated with the gospel but hardened against receiving and obeying the gospel
- a generation of embolden sinners with little or no fear of God
- a generation who mocks God by creating laws against marriage & laws condoning perverted lifestyles
- a generation that teaches its children lies about evolution that contradicts the truth of God as our Creator

Romans 1:22-28 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

*****Closing: How is this message applicable for today? Lessons Learned for our generation**

1. *There is nothing wrong with the gospel or the messengers who delivers the gospel*
--if rejected, the problem is found in the one who rejects it
2. *There is no other means for fallen man to gain eternal life – The gospel is the only remedy for salvation*
3. *Each generation has the SAME GOSPEL... God does not alter or soften the gospel for any generation*
4. *There are eternal consequences for rejecting the Gospel of Christ*
5. *The Church is not responsible for the “acceptance” or the “results” of proclaiming the gospel -- we are responsible to GO and PREACH the gospel – THE GREAT COMMISSION –*

Mark 16:15-16 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

II Timothy 4:2 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; **Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season;** reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.