



Matthew 11:25–27

25 At that time Jesus said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. 26 Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do. 27 “All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son

and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Reflection

Jesus is taking stock of his ministry in Galilee. Yesterday was a word of judgment. You can only imagine how the son of God felt. He'd stepped down out of heaven, become a man, a missionary to a world that has turned their backs on their creator. He's preaching and healing, performing all sorts of miracles, proving that he is the Messiah, come to save the world. What more could have he done and yet the three very towns who heard him preach the most often, who witnessed most of his miracles have rejected him. For Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum it is life as

usual. Despite the Sermon on the Mount, despite the healings, despite the miracles – nothing. Jesus came to earth to die for these people, opposition against him is heating up, his time is short, he has no time to waste and yet he wasted it on them, if anyone should have believed its these three towns – but no, and so yesterday Jesus pronounced judgement on them. He probably had tears in his eyes when he did so, look how he'd poured himself out amongst them, did everything he could to save them. Woe to them. On Judgment Day it will be better for the most wicked cities in the Old Testament than for these three cities who rejected the son of God in person. They didn't try and kill him, far worse than that, they just ignored him and in so doing they committed the greatest of all sins, the sin of unbelief.

Into this painful moment for Jesus God graciously sends his disciples back from the mission field. In Luke's gospel, this passage is linked to yesterday's with the words 'In that same hour.' In that same hour that Jesus pronounces judgment on these towns his disciples come back with news of their mission to the many other towns in the region. They return filled with good news and joy, and even just their presence refreshes the heart of Jesus. The 'wise and learned' of these three big towns may have rejected him, but his disciples and many others in the region have come to faith, and so Jesus is filled with joy by them and by their news. In response he prays to his Father:

“I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven

and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. 26 Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

By the 'wise and learned' Jesus means those who are self-confident and proud and so caught up in the pleasures and pursuits of this world that they either ignore him or dismiss him completely. They're blind to their sin and full of themselves, so busy chasing their plans and their dreams, so certain that the world revolves around them and not him. To their kind the gospel is hidden. They're too proud to see it, too proud to need it. God's good design is for the gospel to be received by the meek, the humble, those who see clearly enough their own shortcomings, their own need-

iness before God. Jesus describes them as little children in our passage. Not because they are children – although some are – but because they realise their utter dependency on God for everything. In humility, not naivety, they turn to him and are saved.

Next Jesus utters one of the most profound verses in Matthew's gospel. Arguably the most famous verse in the bible is John 3:16:

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

This verse, Matthew 11:27 is Matthew's equivalent to John 3:16. It's extraordinary,

have a listen again:

27 “All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Look at the responsibility on Jesus' shoulders. All things have been committed to me by my Father. He is responsible for all things, he's been commissioned by his Father to oversee, to be the custodian of, to be responsible for all things; the good operation of the world, the defeat of Satan, sin and death, the salvation of all who would turn to him in repentance and faith. All things entrusted to him. All authority in heaven and on earth given to him.

Next, the intimacy between Father and Son, their perfect relationship – one mind, one purpose, in an exclusive relationship of perfect mutual awareness:

‘no-one knows the Son except the Father, and no-one knows the Father except the Son.’

Finally, the best part,

‘no one knows the Father except the Son *and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.*’

No-one can ever know the Father except through the Son. Jesus reveals God. No-one can ever know God except through Jesus. ‘I am the way the truth and the

life, no-one comes to the Father except through me.' John 14:6. 'Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.' Acts 4:12. Jesus reveals God. Through Jesus we come to know God, through Jesus we are reconciled to God, only through Jesus can we enter into perfect, eternal relationship with God.

Think

This has been hidden from the wise and learned people of our world and revealed to little children like you and me. This doesn't for a moment mean that some of the wisest and most learned people to ever walk the earth haven't been Christians, quite the contrary actually – no oth-

er world view is more consistent or makes more sense than ours – but this does mean that everyone who has entered into relationship with God has approached him in child-like dependence and faith.

Take a moment of introspection now and consider if this is still how you approach God? As a dependent child, who loves her father, who can't spend enough time with him, can't ask him enough questions, wants to grow up and be like him in every way, loves him more than life itself. Do you trust him to provide for your every need? Or have you grown up, and grown distant?

You might also meditate deeply over how it is that Jesus reveals God. What does this mean for the way you view Jesus? All things have been committed to him and

most precious amongst these is salvation. Jesus reveals God. How does this truth impact your life? Does this truth shape your life? Are there corners of your life that this truth doesn't reach? What does this truth mean to you right now? Today?

Pray

Please pray in response to some of these thoughts and questions and most importantly thank our Father that he has been pleased to reveal himself to little children like us.