



The Peril of Indifference

“We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented” (Matthew 11:17).

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“A different world cannot be created by indifferent people”

“But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, 17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. 18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. 19 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. 20 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: 21 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. 22 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. 23 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. 24 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee” (Matthew 11:16-24; see also Luke 7:31-35).

Indifference / apathy is worse than a terminal cancer. It kills without warning and makes the ‘infected’ reject remedies (e.g. medication, treatment, etc.) that could cure them. We learn the following from Jesus’ teaching on this:

- 1) “But whereunto shall I liken this generation?” (vs 16). This still applies to our generation!
- 2) “... It is like unto children...” (Matthew 11:16) This implies immaturity in development and thinking. They think, speak and act like unenlightened children that lack understanding of the real issues and dangers associated with their actions. **“When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things”** (I Corinthians 13:11; Hebrews 6:1)
- 3) “It is like unto children sitting in the markets...” (Matthew 11:16). They are at wrong places at wrong times. Children (and undeveloped adults), ought to be in school or employment training like apprenticeship to develop themselves for future usefulness. These not only fail to use their opportunities but ended up sitting in market places,

meant for serious business. Note that they were sitting, and not engaged in any serious business, but playing. People of indifference and apathy are good at being spectators rather than participants in life.

- 4) “... 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” (Matthew 11:16-17). Indifference and apathy turns a place of serious business into a child’s playground or amusement park. The serious things of life and faith are devalued to them. **“I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing”** (Hosea 8:12). Their lightness and immaturity constitutes a distraction to serious business people in the market **“He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad”** (Matthew 12:30). **“I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth”** (Revelation 3:15-16).
- 5) “... But wisdom is justified of all her children” (Luke 7:33-35). Focusing on externals, they failed to discern the deep spiritual elements in the Ministries of John and Jesus. They lack wisdom, discernment, spiritual perception and understanding; and as a result easily rush to wrong interpretations and conclusions. **“Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the LORD’S servant?”** (Isaiah 42:19). It is these that re-enforces their apathy and indifference. **“And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word”** (I Kings 18:21).
- 6) Jesus pronounced woes on Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum whose indifference made them to ignore the mighty works Jesus did in their communities. Similar woes await all who are indifferent today. Run for your lives now!