

Why People Don't Respond To The Lord's Invitation

Lesson Text: **Matthew 11:28-30**

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Christianity has been called "The religion of the Great Invitation."
1. During His earthly ministry, Jesus extended a gracious invitation to all: "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**
 - a. The Jews rejected it . . . and Him. **John 1:11** - "He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him."
 - b. Those who did not reject Him received a great blessing. "But as many as received
 - c. Many reject Christ and his invitation today . . . especially at the close of the
 2. The Great Commission is our charge to extend the gospel invitation to all mankind.
 - a. **Mark 16:15-16** - "And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will
 - b. **Romans 10:13-17** - "For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: How beautiful But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report? So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."
 - c. Why is preaching necessary?
 1. **Titus 1:3** - "But has in due time manifested His word through preaching . . ."
 2. **1 Corinthians 1:21** - ". . . It pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe."
- B. The invitation is to obey the commandments of Christ which are indeed the commandments of God.
1. **John 12:50** - ". . . Whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak."
 2. **John 14:15** - "If you love Me, keep My commandments."
 3. **Hebrews 5:9** - "And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him."
 4. The remission of sins . . . peace of mind . . . hope . . . happiness . . . joy, etc., are all promises to the obedient . . . those who accept the Lord's invitation.
 5. It is sad, but true, that many will not obey the call that comes from God. **2 Thessalonians 2:14** - ". . . He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 6. Week after week . . . Sunday after Sunday . . . Wednesday after Wednesday people sit
 - a. There are many reasons.

REASON #1 - SOME DON'T KNOW WHAT AN INVITATION IS

- A. It may be a whole new thought for them.
1. Because of their religious background.

2. Perhaps this is their first time to attend a service where an invitation is given.
- B. An invitation is:
1. A matter of expediency.
 2. A time of opportunity.
 3. A time to do what you know to be right.
 4. A time to repent.
 - a. For the one who has never obeyed the gospel. **Luke 13:3** - "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish." Repeated the same words in vs. 5.
 - b. To the erring brother or sister, John writes in **1 John 1:9** - "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 5. A time to ask for prayers.
 6. A time to obey the gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - a. **2 Thessalonians 2:14** - ". . . He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - b. **Romans 1:16** - "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."
- C. The invitation is God's call through God's Word for you to become God's Child.

REASON #2 - SOME DON'T THINK THEY KNOW ENOUGH

- A. How much did you know? That is a very good question.
1. You must know that you have a need.
 2. You must know that you are lost.
 - a. **Romans 3:10** - "As it is written: There is none righteous, no, not one." Paul is quoting a statement from three made in three Old Testament passages.
 1. **Psalm 14:1-3** - "The fool has said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none who does good.
The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if They have all turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is
 2. **Psalm 53: 1-3** - "The fool has said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, and have done abominable iniquity; there is none who does good.
God looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek God.
Every one of them has turned aside; they have together become corrupt there is none who does good, no, not one.
 - a. The only difference I can see in the two passages is that in Psalm 14: 2
 - b. For it to have been repeated, there must have been great emphasis intended.
 3. **Ecclesiastes 7:20** - "For there is not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin."
- B. There are numerous Biblical examples in the Book of Acts wherein people responded in obedience after hearing only one gospel sermon.
1. About 3,000 on the Day of Pentecost. Acts 2:25-42
 2. Some of the Samaritans. Acts 8:4-12
 3. The Ethiopian Eunuch. Acts 8:26-39
 4. Saul of Tarsus (Paul). Acts 9:1-9; 22:6-16; 26:12-19
 5. Cornelius. Acts 10:25-48
 6. Lydia. Acts 16:13-15
 7. Philippian Jailor. Acts 16:34

8. Some of the Corinthians. Acts 18:4-11
- C. If you have never obeyed the gospel, thus continuing to walk disorderly with reference to God's revealed will, then you need to respond. What better time for making things right?
- D. If you know have not been faithful to God, then you need to respond and make it right between you and your Heavenly Father.
 1. It may have happened in a variety of ways:
 - a. It may have been a failure in the area of attendance.
 - b. It may have been in the area of Christian living.
 - c. It may have been in the area of omission—failure to do what God has commanded.
 - d. It may have been in the area of commission—doing what God has prohibited.
 2. **James 4:17** - "Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin."

REASON #3 - SOME DON'T KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN

- A. There is always fear of the unknown.
 1. People are afraid they will say or do something wrong or embarrassing.
 2. Nothing embarrassing will happen to you.
 3. Nothing ugly or unkind will be said.
 4. You will be sincerely guided each step of the way.
- B. What will happen? What is the process? What are the procedures in moving from where I am now sitting to where I need to be in order to obey God? Those are excellent questions, and I am glad to answer them for you.
 1. We will be singing to encourage you.
 2. We will be standing in order to make it more convenient for you to move to the aisle
 - a. Perhaps you will want a friend or a relative to walk with you, to accompany you to
 - b. I will be looking for you, and upon seeing you coming, I will walk toward you and
 3. Upon being seated, I may hand you a card on which I would like for you to write your
 4. Once the invitation song has ended and the congregation has been seated. I will come
 - a. If you have come to be baptized into Christ . . .
 1. I will ask you to stand up with me. I will hold your right hand and ask you this
 2. You may answer "yes," or "I do." That is the same confession that The
 3. You will then be guided to an attractive private dressing room where you will need them.
 - a. Baptismal garments in a variety of sizes including: small . . . medium . . .
 - b. Towels are there for you to use.
 - c. Once you are dressed and ready, it is but a few steps to and into the baptistry where I will be waiting to assist you. I will give you some brief
 - d. Once the baptism is completed, the draperies will close so you can exit the
 - e. An electric hair dryer is available for your use after as you redress after your baptism.
 - f. Once you have completed dressing, you, along with those who have assisted you, will return to the auditorium to sit wherever you may choose.
 - g. After the service has ended, many will want to personally welcome you into Christ and His church.
 1. While we will be rejoicing with you, we will not be the only ones.
 2. The angels in heaven will be rejoicing. Listen to the words of Jesus in **Luke 15:7** - I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who

need no repentance.

- b. If you have come to repent and to rededicate your life back to God:
 1. Make that desire known to me when we speak privately on the front pew.
 2. Feel free to tell me anything you wish for me to say to the congregation.
 3. I will express the desire of your heart to the congregation.
 4. After which, one of the elders will lead you and the congregation in prayer on your behalf. The congregation will be praying for you as well.
 - a. He will ask God to forgive you and restore you to faithfulness.
 - b. He will ask God to strengthen you.
 - c. He will ask God to help you remain faithful for the rest of your life so Heaven can be your home.
5. After the prayer has ended, you may remain seated on the front pew until the service is over, or, you may return to where you were seated before responding to the Lord's invitation.
6. We, along with the angels will rejoice at your decision.
- C. You will be happy in knowing that you responded to the Lord's invitation and did what you know God wanted you do.
 1. He will keep His every promise to you. . . for now... and for evermore.
 2. As His children and servants, we will help you every step of the way.

REASON #4 - SOME DON'T BECAUSE OF PRIDE

- A. They are concerned with what others will think.
 1. They are worried about their own "self-image."
 2. This would show weakness, or that "I have been wrong."
 3. "Why, I am a leader in the church."
 4. "Who, me, respond in public?"
- B. Rather than being concerned with what "others' will think, we need to be more concerned with what God will think.
- C. Pride is responsible for many sins.
 1. Beginning with Adam and Eve. Genesis 3.
 2. **Obadiah vs. 3** - "The pride of your heart has deceived you, . . . you who say in your heart, Who will bring me down to the ground?"
 3. God hates pride.
 - a. **Proverbs 8:13** - "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth I hate."
 - b. **Isaiah 28:1** - "Woe to the crown of pride . . ."
- D. Friends,, it takes a "big" man to say, "I have been wrong."
 1. We must be meek and humble in spirit. Matthew 5:1-12
 2. Don't all pride to lead you to hell.

REASON #5 - SOME DON'T WANT TO RESPOND

- A. They are content, so they say, with their present condition . . . position . . . and attitude.
 1. They love the pleasures and fruits of sins for a season.
 2. They continue to attend the worship service and Bible study, not out of conviction,
- B. Perhaps the elements of being stubborn and self-willed are present with many.
 1. They will not obey.
 2. **Luke 6:46** - "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?"
 3. **Matthew 7:21-23** - "Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons, and done many mighty works in Your name?' and I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'"

name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?

And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

- C. Rebuke doesn't seem to bother them. **1 Timothy 4:1-4** - "I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:

Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;

And they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables."

- D. Fellow listeners to the Word . . . sin is destructive.

REASON #6 - SOME ARE PROCRASTINATING

- A. The really do plan to respond . . . someday.
1. They are not sure when.
 2. It may be after they have sinned their lives away.
 3. They plan to use the best years of their life for themselves and give God whatever is leftover from their years of disobedience of and rebellion to His will.
- B. Friend, no one is promised tomorrow.
1. Life is, at best, short and uncertain.
 - a. **Job 14:1** - "Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble."
 - b. **James 4:14** - "Whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away."
 2. There is one sure lie that the evil one (the devil) uses upon millions each day—"You
- C. God takes the opposite position . . . the position that He is to be obeyed today.
1. **2 Corinthians 6:2** - ". . . Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." This passage gives God's timetable for man's salvation.
 - a. The accepted day with God is TODAY.
 - b. The accepted time with God is NOW.
 3. **Ecclesiastes 12:1** - "Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come, and the years draw near when you say, "I have no pleasure in

REASON #7 - SOME DON'T THINK GOD CAN . . . OR WILL . . . FORGIVE THEM

- A. Some think they have committed the unpardonable sin . . . but they haven't.
- B. Some fail to see that when Christ died for all . . . that included them.
1. **Romans 5:6** - "For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."
 4. **Matthew 26:28** - "For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
 5. **1 John 2:2** - "And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world."
 6. **John 1:29** - "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"
- C. Satan doesn't want you to be saved . . . and God doesn't want you to be lost.
1. **Luke 13:3** - "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."
 2. **Acts 17:30-31** - "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now

commands all men everywhere to repent,

Because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”

3. **2 Peter 3:9** - “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”
- D. The Bible pictures all kinds of people being forgiven.
1. David for committing adultery and having Uriah killed.
 2. Murderers of Jesus Christ.
 3. Persecutors (like Saul) who persecuted Christians even unto death.
- E. **1 John 1:9** - “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

REASON #8 - SOME DON'T THINK THEY ARE OLD ENOUGH

- A. The Bible does not give a specific age of accountability.
1. When a baby is born, and for some years to come, it is not saved . . . it is safe.
 2. A some point in life we begin to sin. **Romans 3:23** - “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”
 3. That age apparently varies with individuals. Explain.
 4. James describes the process of becoming a sinner. **James 1:13-15** - “Let no one But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is Full-grown, brings forth death.”
- B. Some parents won't let their children obey the gospel.
1. They arbitrarily tell them they are too young.
 2. The. tell them to wait.
 3. Many times they fail to see what is going on in the child's mind. They are out of touch.
 4. Many come to regret . . . and regret very deeply . . . that they discouraged their child,
 5. While young the child's heart is tender and responsive. Handle the matter carefully
 6. Permit me to explain how I handle it when a parent approaches me in these matters.
 - a. I encourage the parent to keep an open mind and realize that the child may be
 - b. I ask to speak privately with the child at which time I carefully ask several questions?
 1. Do you want to become a Christian?
 2. What is a Christian?
 3. Do you know what sin is?
 3. Can you give me some examples of sin?
 4. Have you committed sin?
 5. Do you know why Christ died?
 - g. Do you know what Jesus wants you to do to become a Christian?
 7. What is the purpose of baptism?
 - c. How I proceed next is determined by the answers to the questions.
 1. If not ready: I compliment them . . . praise them . . . then suggest that we talk about it so more.
 2. If ready: I tell the parents they answered the questions correctly.
- C. Brethren, this is a serious matter.
- a. I do not believe in over pressuring a child that is not ready to obey the gospel.

- b. I do not believe in discouraging a child from obeying the gospel if he or she is able to answer my questions.
- c. If I am going to err, I had rather it be on the side of the child being too young than
- d. Should you need my help in this area, please do not hesitate to let me know.

REASON #9 - SOME ARE AFRAID TO RESPOND

- A. Some really don't know why they are afraid to respond.
 - a. "I just am." It is a kind of unknown fear.
 - b. Some are afraid to stand up in front of people.
 - c. Perhaps these need to render obedience in a more private setting.
- B. Some are afraid for know reasons.
 - a. Some may afraid of what they parents might say or do.
 - b. Some may be afraid of what their husband or wife might say or do.
 - c. Some may be afraid of what their friends or fellow workers might say or do.
 - d. Some may be afraid of what their friends from where they use to attend church might
- C. Others are afraid they cannot hold out . . . that they cannot live a faithful Christian life.
 - 1. You cannot live it without God's help.
 - 2. He has promised to help you.
 - a. **Matthew 28:20** - ". . . I am with you always, even to the end of the age."
 - c. **Hebrews 13:5** - ". . . He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you"
 - 3. The elders will help you. **Hebrews 13:17** - ". . . for they watch out for your souls."
 - 4. Your fellow Christians will help you.

REASON #10 - SOME JUST DON'T BELIEVE WHAT GOD HAS SAID

- A. Consider these passages:
 - 1. **Matthew 24:36** - "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of
 - 2. **1 Thessalonians 5:2-4** - "For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the
For when they say, Peace and safety! then sudden destruction comes upon
But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a
 - 3. **2 Peter 3:10** - "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the
heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat;
both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up."
- B. While many are trying to figure God out, others feel they can out figure God and that the end will not come before they are obedient.
 - 1. And yet, no man knows when the end of the world will be.
 - 2. All the more reason to be obedient NOW!

REASON #11 - SOME CANNOT RESPOND

- A. They have reached the "point of no return."
 - 1. They have hardened their hearts. **Hebrews 3:13** - "But exhort one another daily,
 - 2. They have said "NO" so often that they cannot say "YES" now.
- B. Some cannot cease from sinning.
 - 1. **2 Peter 2:14** - "Having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, beguiling
 - 2. Not "will not," but "CANNOT."
- C. Some have believed a strong delusion and will not think otherwise.

2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 - "And with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.
And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,

that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

1. They do not love the truth.
 2. They will continue to walk in their own way.
- D. Satan takes the Word from their heart.
1. **Luke 8:12** - “Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.”
 2. **1 Peter 5:8** - “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”
 3. We must never forget our adversary—he is real.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Should you not respond to the Lord’s invitation right now?
1. It is true that there may be some in this audience who do not need to respond.
 2. But on the other hand, there are those who need to respond to our Lord’s invitation.
 - a. You need to respond today because you have rejected all the other invitations the
 - b. You have not so much a promise of one more invitation after this one.
- B. It is important that you be honest with yourself. If you won’t be honest with yourself, then how can you be honest with God?
1. **Lamentations 3:40** - “Let us search out and examine our ways, and turn back to the LORD.”
 2. **Revelation 22:17** - “And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.”
- C. Every person present at this service in need of responding, is going to respond to the Lord’s invitation in one of two ways.
1. Either by saying “YES.”
 2. Or, by saying “NO”
- D. **Hebrews 3:13** - “. . . Exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”
- E. The Plan of Salvation.

