

Playing Church

Matthew 11:15

Well, I'm here once again today to remind you that it is a good life, living for the Lord. I'm also here to thank you for joining me, and in just a few moments we'll be looking into the book of Matthew chapter 11.

First, let me invite you to go to our website and view it, www.LRWM.org. Go there to leave your prayer requests that we may share with you those needs that you have. We would also ask that you write us today and share those requests with us if you don't have a computer or you don't have access to the Internet. Write to me: Lewis Woodard, 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, FL 34731.

Now, in the book of Matthew chapter 11, we'll not read everything today, because of time, but in verse 15 of Matthew chapter 11, it says, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear*. Now, the Lord goes on to speak down through verse 20. It talks about that the Son of Man came; people didn't receive Him; they wouldn't listen to Him; they accused Him of things; they accused John of certain things, the point being here that these people simply could not receive what God had for them. They would not listen. They could not be satisfied.

Now, I'd like for you to turn with me in your Bibles to Exodus chapter 32. This, of course, is written as a record about the Israelites and when Moses went up on the mount. We can draw a likeness here about our day and our time as we read these verses.

In verse 15 of Exodus 32, it says, *And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony [were] in his hand: the tables [were] written on both their sides; on*

the one side and on the other [were] they written. ¹⁶*And the tables [were] the work of God, and the writing [was] the writing of God, graven upon the tables.*

As we read on, we find that these people were waiting on Moses to come down off the mount, but they got anxious. The Bible tells us that they were a stiff-necked people. They wouldn't listen. They were hardheaded. They didn't listen to God. They didn't listen to Moses this time, so therefore, they had Aaron make them a molten calf, a golden calf. It says that Aaron fashioned this so that the people could worship this image.

In verse 6 of Exodus 32, it says, *And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.*

Now the thing I would like for you to notice today is that they rose up to play, and in likening this to our day and time that we live in, we are in the Church Age. God does what He does through His local churches. There are so many people today who are playing church. Most are just playing church, and we need to understand that the main business of the church today is to preach the Gospel and get people saved.

Paul said in 1st Corinthians 9:16, *[W]oe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!* Well, what is the Gospel? In 1st Corinthians chapter 15, verse 3, the Bible says, *For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures....* and verse 4, *And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the*

scriptures.... Nothing should be added or taken away from what Paul has said here. The Gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Don't let anyone kid you. Don't let anyone fool you that the Gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Don't let anybody take away from that. Don't listen to them if they bring anything else to you and try to get you to believe anything else other than the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the Gospel.

In Isaiah 58:1, the Bible says, *Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.*

In 2nd Timothy 4:2, it says, *Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*

We as the people of God, we as the children of God, we as individuals who belong to a local church, we are to preach the Gospel. In other words, we are to proclaim Jesus Christ crucified, buried, and resurrected so that individuals may come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Notice with me if you would, the church that does not magnify the Word of God is playing church.

In 2nd Timothy chapter 3 and verse 14, it says, *But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned [them];* ¹⁵*And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.* ¹⁶*All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and*

[is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: ¹⁷*That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

The church today needs to magnify the Word of God. We should not look to the perversions that are on the market today to simply make money. We are to look to God's Word as He has given it to us, nothing taken away, nothing added but the pure Word of God.

In 2nd Peter chapter 1 and verse 19, the Bible says, We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.... Verses 20 and 21, *Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.* ²¹*For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake [as they were] moved by the Holy Ghost.*

If you are reading a perversion today, a so-called Bible that leaves out Jesus Christ, that leaves out the substitutionary sacrifice that He made on the cross at Calvary, that takes away from His deity as the Son of God, if you are reading a perversion like that today, you need to throw it in the garbage. You need to understand that anything that takes away from the deity of Jesus Christ in any way, that takes away from the Gospel, the good news that Jesus came to save, if you are reading something like that, throw it in the garbage. God does not want you to use a perversion that takes away from the Word of God.

The Bible teaches us that to be carnally minded or to be minded in the sense that we are thinking simply as a human being, not thinking spiritually, is wrong. We'll see in Romans

chapter 8 and verse 6, the Bible says, *For to be carnally minded [is] death; but to be spiritually minded [is] life and peace.*

Revelation chapter 3, verses 14 through 17, the Bible goes on to say, *And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; ¹⁵I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. ¹⁶So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. ¹⁷Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:*

One preacher has put it thusly: He says, "There are many called and a few are frozen" [compare Matthew 22:14], and that's, I'm afraid, what's going on in many of the churches around the world today. We need revival in our land. Our land is in trouble. Our country is in trouble.

Now, don't get me wrong. God is still on the throne. God is still in control, but we as God's people are not holding up our end of the bargain. We are to keep this world as God wants the world to be kept. We are the salt of the earth. The Bible says, when the salt has lost its savor, it's no good, that things will creep in, and that's what's happening in our world today. Things have crept into our country. We are no longer God's country, because we are not standing up for the things of God.

How do I know this? Look around you. You'll see that there's chaos. You'll see that prayer has been taken out of schools. You'll see that the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our country has been taken out. No longer can people say, "Under God." No longer can we look to the

Lord and say, "We are a country that serves You." We can't do that when we look around and we see thousands, hundreds of thousands of innocent babies being offered today as a sacrifice to the devil in the name of abortion. That is murder.

People are playing church today, and I'm telling you right now, people had better get things right with God. Our people, the Christian people, need to turn from their wicked ways and start serving God today so that we can see a change in our land, that God can heal our land.

Well, there's many more things that I could say about playing church today. I'm simply going to say that there's building worshipers today, people who worship big buildings. There are people today that do not magnify prayer. They're just playing church.

Jesus prayed at his baptism. Jesus prayed in the wilderness. He often prayed all night. He prayed when feeding the multitude, when he raised Lazarus.... *Lazarus, come forth* [John 11:43]. He prayed in the garden and He prayed on the cross. He said, *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do* [Luke 23:34].

Jesus was dying for you and me. He died for this world. God loved the world so much that He sent His Son to die for us on the cross of Calvary. He suffered as no man has ever suffered before or will suffer again. He died that you and I might know Him as Savior and that His local church could go forth and share the good news that He saves.

Don't play church today. Isaiah 58:1 says, *Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.* God loves you today and He wants you to be saved.

Heavenly Father, I pray for the person listening today who needs You as Savior. May that person receive You just now. "Lord Jesus, come into my heart. I receive You as my Savior. Thank you for saving me. Thank you for going to the cross and dying for me. I receive you just now."

And Lord, I pray for that saved person today. May that person today whose heart You have gripped, may that person cry aloud and spare not and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the good news that He saves, today wherever they are. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

God bless you today. Tune in next week to "It's a Good Life." Look at the website, www.LRWM.org. May the Lord bless you is my prayer.