



"Then to what shall I compare the people of this generation? What are they like? They are like children who sit in the marketplace and call to one another, 'We played the flute for you, but you did not dance. We sang a dirge, but you did not weep.' For John the Baptist came neither eating food nor drinking wine, and you said, 'He is possessed by a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking and you said, 'Look, he is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' But wisdom is vindicated by all her children."

Introductory Prayer: Eternal God, prayer is your gift to me. I believe that you give me complete and unlimited access to your power and mercy. I want to value this gift of prayer above all things. As I begin this meditation, I renew my faith, my hope and my love for you.

Petition: Lord, give me discernment and constancy in my efforts to follow you.

1. Endless Excuses: Some very good and religious people in Jesus' day complained about John the Baptist, precursor of the Messiah, because of his austere lifestyle. "He must be crazy," they said. They also complained about Jesus' apparently excessive liberality with sinners and nonbelievers. The habit of constantly sifting reality through our own preconceptions can lead us to reject the things of God. This is the opposite of faith. It is even the opposite of the healthy exercise of reason and has become a limiting rationalism. Rather than seeking to place God neatly in our own self-created and prearranged world, we need to let ourselves be shaped by God's criteria.

2. Fickleness: Spiritual fickleness inevitable leads us to reject God. The inability to follow through on a particular spiritual path necessarily leaves us midcourse, far from the goal. It does not matter whether we follow the austerity of the disciple John or the apparently liberality of the disciples of Jesus. What matters is that we follow through to completion whatever particular path God has given us. As long as we move, God can guide our steps. If we don't move, there is nothing to guide. Waiting around for some mythical "perfect conditions" is in reality capriciousness and unwillingness to commit.

3. Wisdom: Wisdom is a gift of the Holy Spirit by which we are able to see and comprehend the divine and human realities from God's perspective. Wisdom leads to equilibrium and balance in our judgments and assessments. We prepare for this gift by our effort to make good decisions and live by them. The supernatural gifts build upon the human virtues.

Conversation with Christ: Lord Jesus, I am indebted to you for your teaching and for your example. Help me to learn from your life and your example and keep me from ever dismissing them as irrelevant. Help me to be constant in my resolutions so that I will continue to grow closer to you and serve you better.

Resolution: I will avoid making excuses today.