

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: Matthew 11:12****Matthew 11:12 - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/3/14 1:09**

Matt 11:11-15 "Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. 12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now **the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.** 13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. 14 And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come. 15 He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

This is one of those passages I don't really get. Any ideas as to what this means?

**Re: Matthew 11:12 - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/3/15 9:16**

I must admit I am somewhat surprised that no one has taken a crack at this yet.

From the days of John the Baptist...until now. Not exactly a huge window of time.

I have always had the perception that this verse related to fervent prayer and spiritual warfare. That laying hold of the kingdom of God requires a sort of violence on our part, in other words we must fight for it. I find the context rather odd though, for it comes in the middle of a statement regarding John the Baptist. Perhaps it was John's message that brought on this violence. The kingdom of God is at hand.

The kingdom of God *suffers* violence. There can be no doubt that our adversary has no qualms about using violence. he stands in violent opposition to anyone laying hold of that heavenly kingdom.

The violent *take it* by force. Is this an indication that we must be proactive in this process of laying hold of the kingdom. Are we to take the fight to him rather than allowing him to be on the offensive?

He who has ears to hear, let him hear. Has anyone 'heard'?

Last question, does this verse relate to the intensive intercessory prayer that has preceded every revival?

I believe in the final analysis that this is indeed a call to a 'violent' prayer life. We need to be stirred up to begin entering into a place of vigorous prayer for the lost of this generation.

In Christ,

Doug

**Re: - posted by death2self (), on: 2007/3/15 10:13**

Here's what Adam Clarke said:

"The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence The tax-gatherers and heathens, whom the scribes and Pharisees think have no right to the kingdom of the Messiah, filled with holy zeal and earnestness, seize at once on the proffered mercy of the Gospel, and so take the kingdom as by force from those learned doctors who claimed for themselves the chiefest places in that kingdom. Christ himself said, The tax-gatherers and harlots go before you into the kingdom of God. See the parallel place, Luke vii. 28-30. **He that will take, get possession of the kingdom of righteousness, peace, and spiritual joy, must be in earnest: all hell will oppose him in every step he takes; and if a man be not absolutely determined to give up his sins and evil companions, and have his soul saved at all hazards, and at every expense, he will surely perish everlastingly. This requires a violent earnestness.**"

I totally agree with this and have my experiences in prayer consistent with this. So if I'm facing huge financial problems I let's say (as an example) then I must have a violent earnestness because the devil will immediately come and say something akin to "why don't you go out and take care of this yourself."

As we earnestly pray, we must simply stand by faith against the forces of evil and that is certainly violent at times. It's oftentimes a very painful place waiting on the Lord.

**Re: - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/3/15 16:47**

Thanks for the reply, This makes a lot of sense and has the ring of truth.

Blessings in Him,

Doug

**Re: Matthew 11:12 - posted by vico, on: 2007/3/15 16:58**

The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. Luke 16:16

Paul Washer talks about this verse closer to the end of this excellent sermon: <http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/visit.php?lid=13734>

Even if you're not interested in pursuing this topic any farther, i would encourage you to listen to this sermon. Definitely a "life changer".

**Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2007/3/15 19:07**

The implication of the traditional interpretation of these words is that the 'violent' are being commended by Christ. I see no other passages of scripture which encourage 'violent prayer'. What would that mean? Making a nuisance of myself at heaven's gate?

The problem of this violence, of course, is that it is apparently not directed at Satan's kingdom but at Heaven's??

The narrow window of time referred to here might possibly be referring to activity that Christ did not approve.

**Re: - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2007/3/15 20:09**

Some helpful pointers in understanding Matt. 11:12:

Thomas Watson's "Holy Violence"; Matthew Henry's commentary on the respective verse; and observing the parallel found in Luke 16:16.

Brother Paul