

HOW OFTEN WE ACT THE SAME WAY TODAY! [LUKE 7:31-35]

Many people in Jesus' day rejected both His teaching and the teaching of John the Baptist. Nothing seemed to suit them. These were the people Jesus likened to children who are difficult to please, not happy about anything. When John lived simply and preached a message of repentance, they considered Him to be too severe and demanding. Yet when Jesus ate with sinners and showed them mercy they dismissed Him as being too easy on people. How fickle the human heart can be!

The people of Jesus' generation had their own preconceived ideas of what the Messiah was to be like, and Jesus did not fit their expectations. Locked into their own view of things, those who had the opportunity to know Jesus actually did not want to recognize Him or welcome God's action through Him. They held onto their own judgments and their own standpoint, just as obstinate children do. And as a result, they missed out on receiving His touch.

How often we act the same way today! Perhaps we have already decided just how much God can ask of us and have closed our minds to anything more. Maybe we have allowed a good relationship to be ruined because we will not give up a strongly held opinion of little importance. Perhaps we are not giving our spouse a chance to prove she or he has changed because we will not accept an apology. Maybe we have judged a friend/minister harshly because of one statement they made or on something they did or did not do. How many opportunities have we missed to make a new friend because we did not like the way someone dressed?

When we close ourselves off to people or dismiss them on the basis of our preconceptions, mistaken judgments, and

prejudices, not only do we make them suffer, we suffer as well. Though Jesus recognized the hardness of heart of those who were opposed to Him, He knew that God's wisdom would ultimately prove its validity in the lives of those who embraced it (Luke 7:35). Let us ask the Holy Spirit to soften our hearts and free us from any prejudices and misconceptions that bind us. Let us seek the Lord daily for His wisdom, and we will know and experience His life in us.