



***The violent take it by force;
The call to spiritual intensity
Matthew 11:2-15***

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.'

¹¹Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹²From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. ¹³For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John came; ¹⁴and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵Let anyone with ears listen!
Matthew 11:2-15

Community Group Questions:

1. Have you considered that the call to Christ is a radical call?
2. What steps can help you live more radically for Christ?

From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. Matthew 11:12

*The Greek word for violence (biazo) can be read as either a **passive or reflexive** voice. Although both interpretations are possible, the second seems preferable in the context. Jesus taught that we enter by the narrow gate and our citizenship in the kingdom requires denying self. Pastor John MacArthur*

Jesus use of the phrase spiritual violence is there to stimulate those in whom the kingdom light has flickered and to arouse it in those of you who do not have it. Pastor Tim Keller

The call to take God's kingdom seriously:
And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out. It's better to enter the Kingdom of God with only one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell.
Mark 9:47

Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."
Luke 9:60

Peter said to (Jesus), "We have left all we had to follow you!"²⁹ "Truly I tell you," Jesus said to them, "no one who has left home or wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God³⁰ will fail to receive many times as much in this age, and in the age to come eternal life." Luke 18:28-30

What are the marks of this holy violence?

1. It's marked by a proactive seeking of the truth.

Holy violence- You are pursuing.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."
Matthew 13:44

2. It's marked by the will to face rejection.

Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. Luke 9:23

Anyone who will receive the kingdom of heaven is going to look like John the Baptist in their intensity. You're going to have to be willing to have people think you're a little out there. Tim Keller

Jesus replied, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."
Luke 9:62

3. It's marked by a gracious humility.

There is a story about G. K. Chesterton that around 1908 the London Times asked him, along with other notable authors, to write an article answering the question, "What is wrong with the world?" Chesterton's response was to send them a brief letter that said, "Dear Sir, Regarding your article 'What is wrong with the world?' I am. Yours truly, G. K. Chesterton."

If I asked you, "Are you going to heaven when you die?" And you say, "I hope; I'm trying" You're missing the call to radical humility. You still thinking it's a prize to be won. You don't need radical humility to get *into* the kingdom but you need it in order to *advance* in the kingdom.

Pastor A.W.Tozer: *The way you know a person is a real Christian and not just a nominal Christian is the more they get to know God, the more desperately they want to know God. The more they experience his love, the more desperately thirsty they are for his love.*