

Luke 7:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

Analysis

The application begins: 'For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil' (Greek 'daimonion echei'). John's ascetic lifestyle—fasting, wilderness dwelling—was criticized as demonic or mentally unbalanced. The phrase 'hath a devil' suggests possession or madness. People found fault with his severity, suggesting something wrong rather than admirable. Reformed theology recognizes that holy living often provokes hostility from carnal minds. Romans 8:7 states 'the carnal mind is enmity against God.' John's lifestyle rebuked self-indulgence, creating discomfort that manifested as criticism.

Historical Context

John lived in Judean wilderness, wore camel hair, ate locusts and wild honey (Matthew 3:4). His austere lifestyle marked prophetic calling. Yet instead of respect, he faced accusations of demonic influence. This pattern continues—godly people accused of extremism, mental illness, or worse. Early church martyrs faced charges of cannibalism (misunderstanding communion), sexual immorality (greeting with 'holy kiss'), political sedition (confessing Christ as Lord). Faithful witness often provokes false accusations.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. Why does holy living often provoke criticism or accusations of extremism?
2. How should Christians respond when godly convictions are mischaracterized as mental illness or fanaticism?
3. What is the difference between biblical separation from world and unhealthy isolationism?

Interlinear Text

ὅμοιοί	εἰσιν	παιδίους	τοῖς	ἐν	ἀγορᾷ	καθημένοις
like	They are	unto children	G3588	in	the marketplace	sitting
G3664	G1526	G3813		G1722	G58	G2521

καὶ	προσφωνοῦσιν	ἀλλήλοις	καὶ	λέγουσιν,	Ἡυλήσαμεν
and	calling	one to another	and	saying	We have piped
G2532	G4377	G240	G2532	G3004	G832

ὑμῖν,	καὶ	οὐκ	ὠρχήσασθε	ἐθρηνήσαμεν	ὑμῖν,	καὶ	οὐκ
to you	and	not	danced	we have mourned	to you	and	not
G5213	G2532	G3756	G3738	G2354	G5213	G2532	G3756

ἐκλάυσατε

wept
G2799