

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 είσιν παιδίοις 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, Ήλήσαμεν
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

ἐκλαύσατε

wept
G2799