

A LESSON FROM THE PLAYGROUND

MATTHEW 11: 16-19

Introduction:

Dr. Alexander Whyte has a moving introduction to this little parable. He makes a case study out of these children.

IT is the market-place of Capernaum and it is the cool of the day. The workmen and the workwomen of the town are sitting in the shade after the work of the day is over, and the children, having been released from school, are boisterously engaged in their evening games. 'Come,' cries a leading boy, 'Come and let us have a marriage. This here will be the bride's house, and I will be the bridegroom, and we will all get our lamps lighted, and we will go to the bride's house to bring her home to my house.' 'No,' shouts another. 'No. We had a marriage yesterday, when you were the bridegroom. Let us have a funeral to-day. And I will be the dead man, and you and you and you will take me up and carry me out of the gate, and all the rest will come out after us lamenting and mourning and weeping.' But the bridegroom would not have a funeral, and the dead man would not have a marriage, till a quarrel arose, and till their fathers and mothers had to separate their children and take them home. And till One who had sat in the market-place and had seen it all, arose and went out into the hill-country and was all that night alone and in prayer. And as He looked on Capernaum He wept and said, "And thou, Capernaum, whereunto shall I liken thee, but to thine own children playing in the market-place, and calling to their fellows, and saying—We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced: we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented."

The lesson drawn from the playground is the negative power of self will. O the damage that self-willed people can inflict on any group.

They can take the fun out of any party.

They can destroy any marriage.

They can rob any church of unity.

They can disrupt any effective ministry.

They prevailed until they accomplished the expulsion and death of Jesus.