

THE WORDS OF JESUS CHRIST

LESSON #13

CHRONICLES OF
REDEMPTION



The Words of Jesus Christ

Excerpts from the Gospels

INTRODUCTION

Just as the miraculous *works* of Jesus Christ identified Him as the prophesied Redeemer, so too do His *words*. During His incredibly brief three-year ministry, the Son of God amazed the crowds by speaking directly to the vital issues of life.



Matthew 7:28-29

“...The multitudes were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority and not as their scribes.”

Jesus delivered a strong message. He did not vacillate or hedge. Whether speaking to a destitute leper or an official of the highest rank, His words were always consistent with the truth. He often used simple stories from everyday life to teach eternal realities and address the spiritual needs of His audience. His sharp insight into human nature and bold challenge to complacency differed from the teaching of their scribes. His words cut to the heart, stirred their sleeping conscience, and challenged their will to make hard decisions. This new and refreshing teaching drew the multitudes and stimulated them to consider their lives in light of sin, righteousness, and judgment to come.

1 The Way of Life

Whether teaching multitudes on a mountainside, or in quiet discourse with His disciples, the Son of God called men and women to life—not mere mortal life, but _____ life with God. The following excerpts from the teaching of Christ highlight this grand theme. To those seeking God and His kingdom, Jesus shows the way, exposing the error which would bar them from heaven, and challenging them to consider their _____.



Read Matthew 7:13-14



The broad and the narrow way

“Enter by the narrow gate!”

At the close of His Sermon on the Mount, the Son of God explained the way to life in this way: He viewed all humanity as traveling down one of two roads or ways, like two great rivers flowing in distinctly separate courses. Two gates, one wide and one narrow, mark the entrance to these ways which represent diametrically opposed life-directions. There is no third or middle way—only the _____ way leading to destruction and the _____ way leading to life.

The wide gate marks the entrance to *the broad way*. It is characterized by those who seek to reach God in their own way. It is a spacious way, tolerant and appealing, rejecting no one, and embracing all human efforts to please God. The gate is wide to accommodate the _____ who enter there. But the Son of God warns His hearers to beware of the broad way for _____ lies at the end of the road. Modern-day pluralism, which theorizes that truth is a composite of many differing ways, is not new at all! It is as old as the way of Cain, who, forsaking the narrow way of sacrifice, did what was right in his own eyes and ultimately perished in his rebellion.

The narrow gate marks the entrance to the narrow or *constricted way*—the way leading to eternal life in God. The narrow way is characterized by those who approach God in _____, according to the way He has instructed. It is a _____ way, tight and restrictive, but it ends in safety and _____. God provided only one ark for the preservation of Noah’s family; He opened only one path through the sea for Israel to escape the pursuing Egyptians; He prescribed only one way of sacrifice to atone for His people’s sin; there is only one Redeemer Who will rescue man from sin. The way of God has always been narrow, clearly defined, and specific by design. For this reason, it is a path that few find.

“Enter by the narrow gate!”

The Son of God, Who saw the destiny of all men, mercifully delivered both an invitation and a command: Aim for life. Go to the right entrance. Enter the gate that leads to life. It is a narrow gate, but wide enough for all who choose to enter.



Read Matthew 7:21-23



The true and false believer

“Not everyone who says... but he who does...”

These words came as a warning to those who would enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus told the multitudes that many religious people who profess to follow Him, calling Him, “Lord,” will be rejected on the day of judgment.

Why will they be turned away? They will be turned away for their lawlessness, for sinfully ignoring or rejecting the will of God (cf. 1 John 3:4). The false believer is self-deceived. He claims faith in Christ with his _____, but denies Him with his _____ (cf. Isa. 29:13; Titus 1:16). In contrast, the person who does the will of God will not be rejected at the judgment, but will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Although no one can earn their way to heaven through religious works, behavior in keeping with the will of God is clear _____ of true faith (cf. James 2:26).



Read Matthew 7:24-29



The wise and foolish builder

Build your house upon the rock!

In this analogy, Christ compared all mankind to two builders. Each builder had a house, representing the individual’s life. Each builder faced a storm, representing death and future judgment. The similarities end here, for when the storm had passed, one house was left standing, and one had collapsed.

The only difference between the two houses was the _____ on which they were built. Jesus related the differing foundations of rock and sand to the two ways people respond to His words. The wise man, whose house was built upon a stable rock, speaks of the person who hears and actively obeys the words of Christ; the foolish man, whose house was built upon shifting sand, pictures the person who hears the words of Christ only to passively ignore them.

The foolish man's house _____ secure before the storm. But it fell because its unseen foundation was corrupt, its weakness exposed too late. Likewise, many whom Jesus addressed had an outward veneer of respectability. They were religious, worshiped at the temple, and offered tithes. Nonetheless, a storm was coming! Many would not be able to stand the scrutiny of the divine judgment. This is another merciful warning from the Son of God to all who disregard Him. On that day when everything hidden will be exposed (cf. Eccl. 3:17; 12:14), many will fall, and great will be their fall.



Read Luke 18:9-14



The Pharisee and the tax collector

Jesus used this parable of the Pharisee and tax-collector to teach the futility of trusting in one's own religious works to gain acceptance with God.

- ***"I thank Thee that I am not like other people" (18:11).***

Praying at the temple, the elite religious leader pridefully esteemed himself _____ other men, despising them as thieves and adulterers, the refuse of humanity. He was quick to point out to God his good deeds: He fasted twice a week, and gave offerings beyond what the Law required. Jesus taught that beneath this religious pretense was a corrupt heart and a love of prominence and visibility. The Pharisee saw no need to _____ himself before God. At a later time, Jesus gave this scathing description:

NOTES:



“...Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and uncleanness. Even so you too appear righteous to men, you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.”

• **“Be merciful to me, the sinner!” (18:13).**

Also praying in the temple was a tax-collector, a man despised by his fellow Jews for having sold out to the Roman government by collecting taxes on their behalf. Unlike the Pharisee, the prayer of the tax-collector was not a recitation of religious accomplishment. Rather, he stood at a distance, bowed his head, beat his chest repeatedly, and pled for mercy—expressing with his whole body genuine recognition of his _____. It’s obvious from these expressions of _____ that the tax-collector knew the Creator-God as a sovereign Judge, holy and pure. Moreover, he knew God as a Savior, One pleased to grant mercy and forgive sin.

• **“...This man went down to his house justified rather than the other” (18:14).**

The tax-collector left the temple _____, or acquitted, because God answered his prayer of faith and granted mercy. The Pharisee, who blindly trusted in himself and his good deeds, left the temple still in sin. Comparing himself to other men, he reasoned he was doing well. But when measured against God’s standard, the self-righteous Pharisee fell far _____ (cf. Matt. 5:48; Rom. 3:20, 23).

JUSTIFICATION:



the act of God by which He fully acquits the sinner, freeing him from the penalty of his own sin, and simultaneously attributing His righteousness to him. It is a gift of God’s grace which cannot be earned by any human work, and is received through faith alone (cf. Rom. 3:20; 5:1; Gal. 3:11).

Justification and pardon for sin is the desperate need of every sinner. With no righteousness of his own, he can do nothing but come to God in humble _____ and plead for mercy.



Read Luke 12:16-21



The rich fool

In the parable of the rich fool, Jesus taught that one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions (cf. Luke 12:15). The rich man had stored up so much wealth that he planned an early retirement with nothing ahead but years of enjoyment and ease. Consumed with what he owned, he sadly failed to consider the issues vital to his own _____.

1 *He failed to consider _____*: In this short narrative, the personal pronoun is used thirteen times! "I will do...I will build...I will say..." Clearly, the man left no room in his thoughts for the One Who made him and gave him his wealth (cf. Deut. 8:18).

2 *He failed to consider the _____ of wealth*: Riches are temporary (cf. Psa. 39:6; Prov. 27:24), uncertain (cf. 1 Tim. 6:17), fleeting (cf. Prov. 23:5), and cannot satisfy (cf. Eccl. 5:10). Every treasure amassed in this life will one day be left behind.

3 *He failed to consider his own _____*: In light of eternity, the human life span is so very brief. The Bible compares one's earthly life to a vapor that appears and vanishes away (cf. James 4:14), a mere breath (cf. Psa. 39:5), a passing shadow (cf. Psa. 144:4), grass which sprouts in the morning then fades and withers away (Psa. 90:5-6). It is swifter than a weaver's shuttle (cf. Job 7:6), or an eagle that swoops on its prey (cf. Job 9:26).

4 *He failed to consider the world to _____*: So absorbed was the rich man with his wealth and success that he was blinded to eternal realities. He failed to prepare for the day in which he would stand before his Creator Who will judge every man according to his deeds (cf. Rev. 20:12).

God called this man a _____ precisely because *he did not consider* anything other than that which he could see, hold, and possess. Jesus challenged His listeners to be rich toward God—"For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?" (Mark 8:36).



Read Matthew 19:16-26



The rich young ruler

- ***“What good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?”***

Jesus answers the young man’s sincere question on how to lay hold of eternal life, by testing his heart.

- ***“...If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments” (19:17).***

It is important to understand what Jesus intended to show this young man. He was not teaching that a person can earn eternal life by keeping the Law, for with the exception of the sinless Son of God, no individual could ever keep God’s perfect standard for righteousness (cf. Rom. 3:20). Clearly, Jesus turned the man to the Law to help him _____ and address his _____.

Had the young man comprehended the gravity of his sin, he would have—like the tax-collector—beat his chest and pled for mercy. Instead, he pridefully responded, “All these things I have kept, what am I still lacking?” (19:20). He had missed the whole point! Even if the man had lived an outwardly moral life, what of his _____? Had he been free of evil thoughts? Selfish motives? Were there no hidden idols in his heart? Had he been sinless from birth? No, he deceived himself into thinking he had kept the Law, when in reality he had not. Jesus continued exposing the man’s heart...

- ***“If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions...and come, follow Me” (19:21).***

The words of Christ penetrated to the depths of the young man’s heart and exposed the _____ hidden there: *“He went away grieved; for he was one who owned much property”* (19:22). The issue here was not the man’s possessions, or his need to give to the poor, but his unwillingness to _____ Christ and _____ to His authority. Jesus was saying, “Are you willing to follow Me even at the expense of all these things you love?” Sadly, he was not. He would not release his idol, even at the expense of losing eternal life. In this case, the idol was wealth. But it could have been any object of devotion usurping the place of Jesus Christ in his heart. Idols of the heart bar the way to life, and they are many: personal reputation, careers, love of ease and good living, fear of family pressure. All stem from the same root—an unwillingness to completely entrust one’s life to God.

of God and Lazarus cursed, but God saw things differently.



1 Samuel 16:7

“God sees not as a man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

We can see from the following verses that the hearts of the two men were as different as their circumstances.



Read Luke 16:22



Two deaths

- ***“Now it came about that the poor man died... and the rich man also died...” (16:22).***

Death, the universal consequence of _____, was the common end for both men (cf. Rom. 5:12). But the rich man died in his sin because he ignored God during his lifetime, while Lazarus died forgiven because he had come to God in faith. It was the condition of the heart at the time of death, which determined the destiny of each man.



Read Luke 16:23-31



Two destinies

Immediately after death, the souls of the two men departed to two destinations: Lazarus to *Abraham’s Bosom*, the rich man to *Hades*. Death is the doorway to _____. Once a

soul has passed its threshold, there is no turning back. The notion of a soul-purging time after death, such as in the teachings of reincarnation or purgatory, conflicts with the clear voice of Scripture which states, *“It is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment”* (Heb. 9:27).

1 **Abraham’s bosom** is simply another name for _____, the dwelling place of God, and the destination of the forgiven. Lazarus was carried by angels to Abraham’s bosom and comforted. Heaven is a place of rest, peace, and eternal blessing in the presence of God (cf. Psa. 23:4; Isa. 57:1-2; John 14:2-3; 2 Cor. 5:7).

2 **Hades** is a Greek term in the New Testament used to designate the dwelling place of the wicked prior to final judgment. Hades, like Hell, is the destination of the unbelieving who die in their sin, eternally separate from God and good, and—as the rich man discovered too late—it is a place of _____, agony, flame, and unending regret (cf. Matt. 25:41-46; 2 Thess. 1:9).

3 **The great chasm** *“...None may cross over from there to us”* (16:26). The unbridgeable gulf between Hades and Heaven graphically speaks of the _____ of the eternal state. Scripture reveals no intermediate ground. Tragically, the rich man’s call for mercy came too late, for mercy is only available on _____ side of death.

• ***“They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them”* (16:29).**

When the rich man begged that Lazarus be sent to warn his five living brothers of their impending torment, Abraham reminded him that they already had all the truth they needed in Moses and the prophets, a reference to Old Testament Scripture. They just needed to _____ it! The Word of God is sufficient to deliver every soul, if its truth is not neglected.

These sobering words of Jesus Christ echo the words of the great prophet who also called men and women to consider their souls...



Isaiah 55:6-7

*“Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near.
Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts;
And let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him...
He will abundantly pardon.”*

3 The Way of Salvation

The following five powerful *“I Am”* statements from John’s gospel identify Jesus Christ as the appointed way of _____ for mankind...



“I am the Bread of Life”

The day before Jesus spoke these words, *“a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His signs which He performed on those who were diseased”* (John 6:2). He then performed another miracle and fed _____ men, as well as women and children, with five barley loaves and two small fish.

On the next day, the same multitude followed Him again. Jesus perceived that the huge crowds were drawn to Him for shallow reasons—food and drink. He called them to put off their spiritual blindness and open their eyes to Who He was and why He had come.



John 6:27

“You seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you.”



Read John 6:30-35

The crowd desired literal bread from heaven like the manna which had been provided for Israel in the wilderness. But Jesus turned their attention to _____ life. Manna was

God's gift to Israel to sustain their physical life. Now Jesus, *the Bread of Life*, would eternally sustain all who came to Him... **John 6:40**



"For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him, may have eternal life; and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

NOTES:



Read John 8:12



"I am the Light of the World"

The prophet Isaiah referred to Messiah as "a light to the nations," and One Who would "open blind eyes" and free those "who dwell in darkness" (42:6-7). In calling Himself the Light of the World, Jesus clearly affirms that He is the prophesied

_____ and invites all who need guidance in the morally and spiritually darkened world to follow Him.

As Israel received guidance through the trackless wilderness by following the cloud and pillar of fire, so it is now that whoever would "have the light of life" must follow Jesus Christ.



Read John 10:7-9



"I am the Door"

Jesus uses an analogy of the first-century sheepfold to communicate more about the way of salvation. The sheep were kept in enclosed pens of rock with _____ door through which the sheep would enter for safety at night and go out to pasture by day. The shepherd would sleep in the doorway of the pen to protect the sheep from intruders who would harm his flock. Here Jesus claims to be the "*Door of the sheep.*" He is the Gate, the Entrance to eternal life, and calls all who seek salvation—safety from sin's condemnation—to enter through Him.



Read John 14:6



“I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life”

Here Jesus Christ claims to be the *Way* to God, the *Truth* of God, and the *Life* of God. “No one comes to the Father, but through Me.” With this one statement, Jesus ended the steady stream of all other inclusive ways pointing to God. The Old Testament shadows which illustrated this truth—from Abel’s one acceptable sacrifice to the blood of the atoning sin offering poured onto the mercy seat—all pointed to Jesus Christ, the longpromised _____, as the only appointed way to approach the Father.



Read John 11:1-26



“I am the Resurrection and the Life”

In the midst of an emotional encounter centering around the death of His friend Lazarus of Bethany, Jesus makes this powerful claim. There is no clearer statement of the power of Jesus Christ over _____, the great enemy of man.

- **“Do you believe...?”**

Martha had a vague theoretical understanding that a resurrection would indeed take place “on the last day.” But Jesus’ soul-searching question boldly called her to personal faith in _____, Who *was* the Resurrection and the Life. Martha responded with a confession of faith.



Read John 11:27-44

CONCLUSION

An old Bible scholar from the last century remarked that “the words of Jesus show that the soul is of more importance than the stomach; eternity than time; the spiritual, than the material; purity, than pleasure; truth, than expediency; and morality, than money.” The words of Jesus cut to the heart of life itself. His call to enter at the narrow gate, His

command to the rich ruler to sell all and follow, and His words to Martha, “Do you believe?” were spoken to call men and women to consider and respond to Him in faith.



Questions

1. What is the difference between the broad and narrow way Christ spoke of in His Sermon on the Mount?

2. Why is it important to “enter by the narrow gate?”

3. Why will many who profess to know Jesus be turned away from the Kingdom of Heaven?

4. What is Christ teaching with the analogy of the two builders? Explain the difference between the foundation of rock and sand.

5. What does it mean to be justified by God?

6. Why was the tax collector justified while the Pharisee was not?

7. How does wealth become a snare which blocks the way to eternal life?

8. How can a person be rich toward God?

9. What prevented the rich young ruler from obtaining eternal life?



Questions

10. Who *can* be saved? (Matt. 19:25 & 26)

11. What determines the destiny of each person?

12. Why did the rich man's call for mercy come too late?

13. What did Jesus mean by calling Himself the "*Bread of Life*," the "*Light of the World*," and "*the Door*?"

14. Why are not *all* ways pointing to God sufficient?

15. What was the significance of Martha's confession of faith?
