

Valley Bible Church – Parables of Jesus

Parable Lesson 22: Your life lasts forever. Prepare for it!

THE TWO SONS

Matthew 21:28-32

Introduction:

Jesus has ministered for over three years and events are accelerating as we come to Matthew chapter 21:

Verses 7-10--He rides into Jerusalem as royalty and is proclaimed king.

Verse 13-17--He clears the moneychangers out of the Temple for the second time, again heals many, and leaves the city.

Verse 18--He returns to the Temple the following day.

Jesus is then confronted by a worried group of Chief Priests and Elders:

Matt. 21:23--"And when He had come into the temple, the chief priest and the elders of the people came to Him as He was teaching, and said, "By what authority are You doing these things, and who gave You this authority?"

By what authority does he do what? Attack Temple personnel, heal, teach, allow people to honor Him.

Jesus answers their question with a question:

Verse 25--"The baptism of John was from what {source,} from heaven or from men?"

He now has them on the horns of a dilemma:

Continuing verse 25--And they {began} reasoning among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Then why did you not believe him? But if we say, 'From men,' we fear the multitude; for they all hold John to be a prophet." And answering Jesus, they said, "We do not know."

He also said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

You won't answer my question, I won't answer yours but let's talk about it. Then he told them a very simple but interesting and powerful story: ***The story of a king who had two sons.***

THE STORY Read Matthew 21:28-32

Valley Bible Church – Parables of Jesus

THE FATHER ASKS

The Father expected obedience from his sons

The sons were obligated to obey their father and a request is a polite but binding command. They were obliged because of their culture, upbringing, and family love. They were obliged because of their religious beliefs and adherence the Law. And they were obliged because they would share in the fruit both now and as an inheritance.

Our Father expects obedience from His children

I Sam. 15:22 reads, "*And Samuel said, 'Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, {And} to heed than the fat of rams.'*"

God desires our obedience even more than our worship.

In Exodus 11 and 12 we are introduced to the "Passover."

When God caused the death angel to spare the first born in the houses of the Israelites' it was an example of God's faithfulness and mercy. But, it was also an example of His desire for obedience from His people. *If they did not do as He instructed, their' first born sons died.*

THE SONS ANSWER

"I will go, sir" (v 29)

He may have meant to go, and forgotten. Kids often forget.

He may have never intended to go. Kids often do this also.

It's so easy to say "I'll do it, I'll pray for you, I'll go."

"I will not go" (v 30)

He is rebellious and disrespectful but, at least, he doesn't pretend. He says no but afterwards regrets, repents (does a 180) and went after all.

His quick answer is an impulsive action, the repentance is a thoughtful response. Action indicated true repentance.

Jesus then asked the key question: Matthew 21:31-- "*Which of the two did the will of his father?*"

The lesson is clear: Profession without practice or promise without performance just doesn't get the job done.

PROOF OF TRUE COMMITMENT IS DOING

Valley Bible Church – Parables of Jesus

THE FATHER'S WILL.

Matthew 21:45-46 state, *"And when the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them. And when they sought to seize Him, they feared the multitudes, because they held Him to be a prophet.*

THE LESSON

In Luke 19 Jesus told a parable of a master who was going on a trip, (v 13) *"And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business {with this} until I come {back.}' "*

God has called us, his bondservants to "do business" until He returns:

Harvest the crop (Matthew 9)

Build a building (Matthew 7)

Sow the seed (Matthew 13)

Fish for men (Matthew 4:19)

Make disciples (Matthew 28)

Etc., etc., etc.

WE CAN SAY, "I WILL GO" OR "I WILL DO"

A Portrait of those Pharisees

They were a contradiction of word and work and Jesus asks in Luke 6:46, *"And why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"*

Or James tells us in James 2:18, *"But someone may {well} say, 'You have faith, and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.'"*

True faith is evidenced through obedience. George Butterick describes the problem well when he says, *"A man no sooner makes up his mind to follow Jesus than he is besieged by the temptation to flatter Him instead."*

These Pharisees should have been examples of the best in profession and action but they said, like the nation of Israel before them, *"All that the Lord has spoken we will do,"* but in reality failed to obey God in Spirit and in truth. We are often the same.

A Portrait of we Christians

We tend to trash the Pharisees since they are so visual in Scripture but most "church members" tend to be the same. Most Christians intend to go, or do, or pray. They just don't

Valley Bible Church – Parables of Jesus

always get a round to it. My mom would have responded to that excuse by quoting the famous old saw, "The road to hell is paved with good intentions."

Even when the Pharisees were living righteously they were bragging about it and sometimes when we're doing all the right things we fall victim to that same pride that God so hates.

We may be very careful not to say, "I'll do, or I'll go" and then not do it. But by our choices of lifestyle, being involved in church, or growth group, or with the body in other ways we are saying, "I will go, Sir" to God. This commitment calls us to constant obedience lest we too be hypocrites.

OR WE CAN SAY, "I WILL NOT GO" OR "I WILL NOT DO."

A Portrait of Rebellious Sinners

They are admittedly self-centered, rebellious allowing God to have no claim on their lives. But, there is no hypocrisy here, no profession, and no promises.

It is easier for these to come to God

Matt. 21:31b Jesus said to them, "*Truly I say to you that the tax-gatherers and harlots will get into the kingdom of God before you.*"

They know who they are. They have no pride to overcome, no wealth to resist, no pretences to protect, and they know their need.

I was counseling a young woman and she startled me with her statement, "I don't believe in a God we need to ask for help." "What kind of a God are you looking for then?" I asked. Her answer was "One who minds His own business." She didn't have any need that she couldn't meet herself. How tragic.

APPLYING THE LESSON

REMEMBER THE LESSON: Profession without practice or promise without performance just doesn't get the job done.

PROOF OF TRUE COMMITMENT IS DOING

THE FATHER'S WILL

MICAH 6:6-8 PARAPHRASED:

"How shall I come before Jehovah, and bow myself before the high God" they asked the old prophet.

Valley Bible Church – Parables of Jesus

"With burnt offerings?"

"No," he answered, "you cannot ceremonialize your way into God's favor."

"With a thousand rams?"

"No," you cannot bribe the eternal."

"With ten thousand measures of oil?"

"No, you cannot oil yourself into the Divine presence."

"Then I will give my first born for my transgression, the very fruit of my body for the sin of my soul."

"NO!" thundered the old prophet, "You cannot seduce God even with shed blood! He has shown you what is good and what Jehovah requires of you, but TO DO JUSTLY, and TO LOVE KINDNESS, and TO WALK IN HUMBLE OBEDIENCE WITH YOUR GOD!"

WE PLEASE THE FATHER BY DOING HIS WILL

College admission's boards may ask:

"What is your Grade Point Average?"

Jesus asks each student, "Who did the will of the Father?"

A seminary student may be asked:

"Have you mastered the Christian Doctrine?"

Jesus asks each seminary student, "Which one of you did the will of the Father?"

A parent might be asked:

"What was the secret of raising such a good family?"

Jesus asks the parent, "Did you do the will of the Father?"

A minister of a large church is often asked:

"What is the secret of your growth?"

Jesus asks every pastor, "Did you grow in doing the will of the Father?"

A business man is quizzed:

"What plan did you follow to attain success?"

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Jesus asks businessmen, "Which one succeeded in doing the will of the Father?"

People may ask you:

"What are you doing to ensure your happiness and fulfillment?"

Jesus asks each one of us, "Which one of you did the will of the Father?"

Do you hear God calling you to:

Pray?--*Do the will of the Father.*

Study the Word?--*Do the will of the Father.*

Make disciples?--*Do the will of the Father.*

Love your enemies?--*Do the will of the Father.*

WHAT IS THE WILL OF THE FATHER?

People seem to struggle with this so much. Perhaps knowing the will of God for each and every area of your life is difficult. But, we do know that Jesus told us to first seek God's Kingdom and His righteousness and all the stuff that we need will be provided for us.

We also have six specific things the Scriptures distinctly state are the will of God for each one of us:

Be Saved

1 Timothy 2:3 and 4--"*This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who **desires** all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*"

Be Spirit Filled

Ephesians 5:17-19--"*So then do not be foolish, but understand what **the will of the Lord** is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;*"

How are we filled with the Spirit?

Look at Colossians 3:16--"*Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms {and} hymns {and} spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.*"

Letting the Word dwell in you richly brings the same result as to be being kept filled with the Holy Spirit.

Valley Bible Church – Parables of Jesus

Be Sanctified

I Thessalonians 4:3--"For **this is the will of God**, your sanctification; {that is,} that you abstain from sexual immorality;

Be Submissive

I Peter 2:13-18--"Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. **For such is the will of God** that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. {Act} as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but {use it} as bond slaves of God. Honor all men; love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king. Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.

Be Suffering

I Peter 3:17--"For it is better, **if God should will it** so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.

Be Speaking

Matthew 28:19 and 20--"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

And the final question we will answer for our father, The High King of Heaven is:

"WHICH ONE OF YOU DID THE WILL OF THE FATHER?"