



Go for God!

“Christian Beware, Be Careful, and Be Wise!”

Matthew Chapter 7:15-29

> Lifeline #1 – (v15-20) CHRISTIAN BEWARE!

- In the Old Testament God warned His people about false prophets in Deuteronomy 13:1-5 - *If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods' — which you have not known — 'and let us serve them, 'you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, **for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.***

***You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him.** But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, to entice you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall put away the evil from your midst.*

- God warned the people through Jeremiah - *"An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land: **The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule on their own authority; and My people love it so!** But what will you do at the end of it? (Jeremiah 5:30-31)*

- In the New Testament Jesus warns us in Matthew 24:4-6, 11-12, 24-25 - *"**Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many . . . Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many . . . For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand.***

- To be forewarned is to be forearmed!

Paul warned the church in Ephesus and us in Acts 20:17-38 - *From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews; how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, **repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.**"*

(Insight: What is repentance? A turning away from sin, disobedience, or rebellion and a turning back to God (Matt 9:13; Luke 5:32). In a more general sense, repentance means a change of mind (Gen 6:6-7) or a feeling of remorse or regret for past conduct (Matt 27:3).

True repentance is a "godly sorrow" for sin, an act of turning around and going in the opposite direction. This type of repentance leads to a fundamental change in a person's relationship to God and lifestyle.

In Jesus' preaching of the kingdom of God is seen the truth that repentance and faith are two sides of the same coin: **by repentance, one turns away from sin; by faith, one turns toward God in accepting the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Such a twofold turning, or conversion, is necessary for entrance into the kingdom (Matt 18:3). "Unless you repent," said Jesus, "you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3,5). This is the negative, or judgmental, side of Jesus' message. The positive, or merciful, side is seen in these words: "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10.)
(from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

Paul continues, "And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

"And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.

*Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. **For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.** Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.*

*"So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance **among all those who are sanctified.**"*

(Insight: What is sanctification? The process of God's grace by which the believer is separated from sin and becomes dedicated to God's righteousness. Accomplished by the Word of God (John 17:7) and the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:3-4), sanctification results in holiness, or purification from the guilt and power of sin.

Sanctification as separation from the world and setting apart for God's service is a concept found throughout the Bible. Numerous commands in the Bible imply that believers also have a responsibility in the process of sanctification.

We are commanded to "be holy" (Lev 11:44; 1 Peter 1:15-16); to "be perfect" (Matt 5:48); and to "present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness" (Rom 6:19). Writing to the church of the Thessalonians, the apostle Paul made a strong plea for purity: "This is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God" (1 Thess 4:3-5).

These commands imply effort on our part. We must believe in Jesus, since we are "***sanctified by faith in Him***" (Acts 26:18). Through the Holy Spirit we must also "***put to death the evil deeds of the body***" (Rom 8:13).

Paul itemized the many "***works of the flesh***" from which we must separate ourselves (Gal 5:19-21; 1 Cor 6:9-18). Finally, we must walk in the Spirit in order to display the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-24).) (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

Paul continues in Acts 20, “I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'”

And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.

- Pastor and teacher Jon Courson writes, “If a shepherd only warns the flock, but never feeds them, they will die of malnutrition. If the shepherd only feeds the flock and never warns them, he’s simply fattening them up for the kill.”

- Paul warns Christians about counterfeit deceptions in 2 Corinthians 11:1-4 - *Oh, that you would bear with me in a little folly — and indeed you do bear with me. For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted — you may well put up with it!*

(1) Those that preach another “Another Jesus” – i.e. Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses; Christian Science, Unity School of Christianity

(2) Those that receive a “different spirit” – For example “laughing revival” - “Toronto blessing” – “Apparitions of Mary”

(3) “Different gospel” – i.e. “possibility thinking” – “positive confession” – “the gospel of greed” – “an immoral gospel.”

- Paul tells us to name the deceivers in Romans 16:17-18 - *Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.*

- There’s going to be great deception in the last days, which is NOW, according to 1 Timothy 4:1-3 - *Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.*

- Peter warns Christians of false prophets and teachers in 2 Peter 2:1-3 - *But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.*

And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

- Paul again warns us in Galatians 1:6-10 - *I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.*

But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

- Also, in 2 Timothy 4:1-5 - I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

***For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.** (Insight: *Fable, gk. Muthos*, a story, an untruth designed to deceive and mislead.)*

But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

- Christians must put the teacher and the teaching to a three-fold test:

(1) Did Jesus teach it or practice it in the Gospels?

(2) Was it practiced in the Book of Acts?

(3) Are we given instructions in the Epistles (Romans to Revelation)?

If there is agreement in all three then we have “SOUND BIBLICAL DOCTRINE.” If the teaching does not meet the three-fold test reject it and leave to a church that does teach sound doctrine.

> Lifeline #2 – (v16-23) CHRISTIAN BE CAREFUL!

- One intuitive believer wrote the following, “Thus speaks Christ our Lord to us, ‘You call me master and obey Me not, you call Me light and see Me not, you call Me the way and walk Me not, you call Me life and live Me not, you call Me wise and follow Me not, you call Me fair and love Me not, you call Me rich and ask Me not, you call me eternal and seek Me not, if I condemn thee, blame Me not.’”

- What is the “will of the Father?” - John 7:16-18 - Jesus answered them and said, “My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority.”

Romans 12:1-2 - I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 - For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 - Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1 Peter 4:19 - Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.

- **False prophets practice lawlessness, but true believers will follow the admonition of 2 Timothy 2:19** - *Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity."*

> **Lifeline #3 – (v24-29) CHRISTIAN BE WISE!**

Jesus teaches us to build our house upon the rock through the **HEARING** and **DOING** of the Word of God! Over **forty times** the **“WORD OF GOD”** was preached or taught in the Book of Acts!

- ***Why the Word?***

(1) **The Word is Jesus!** - John 1:1-2 - *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.*

(2) **The Word is full of “grace & truth!”** - John 1:14 - *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, **full of grace and truth.** (We are saved by grace according to His TRUTH, which brings obedience to the Word of God!)*

(3) **We are “born again” through the Word of God!** - 1 Peter 1:23 - *having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,*

(4) **The Word of God builds our faith!** - Romans 10:17 - *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Faith is not what you believe, but on what He says in the Bible!)*

(5) **The Word of God is our “offensive weapon” against our enemy the devil!** - Ephesians 6:17 - *And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; (Jesus fought against the devil in the wilderness with the Word of God saying “it is written” three times against the temptations of the devil.)*

(6) **The Word of God is “alive & powerful” and changes our lives!** - Hebrews 4:12-13 - *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

(7) **We must keep the Word of God to escape the “Great Tribulation!”** – Revelation 3:7-13 - *And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, "He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens":*

"I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie — indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.

Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. (Born again, Bible believing Christians will be raptured before “the hour of trial” which is the 7-year tribulation; a time of judgment upon planet earth (Read the judgments in Revelation chapters 6 – 19).)

Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

(8) Observe the name of Jesus when He returns to judge the earth! - Revelation 19:13-16 it says, "He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.

Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."

- And all God's people said "AMEN!"