
a *Grace Notes* course

Life of Christ 200

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Lesson 208

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II. Exposition.

A. The completion of the discourse on volition, Matthew 7:7-11.

1. The quest and its promised result, vv. 7-8, “(7) Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and it will be opened to you; (8) For

everyone who asks will receive and who seeks will find, and to whoever knocks it will be opened.”

a. Whereas Christ has just finished a brief saying on negative volition, this now turns to the subject of positive volition. The principle: God is always faithful to positive volition.

b. Each of these three actions must be directed toward God; God must be the subject matter. However, intermediate means may be employed to introduce others to God, mostly people.

c. The future indicative of the verbs AITEO, ZETEO, and KROUO shows beyond a shadow of a doubt that God is faithful to those who express an interest in Him.

d. Perhaps the best Scriptural illustration of this principle comes from Acts 8:25-40.

(1) Verses 25-28, “(25) So when they had solemnly testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they stared back to Jerusalem, and were preaching the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans. (26) But an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, ‘Get up and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza.’ (This is a desert road.) (27) So he got up and went; and there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Kandake, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure; and he had come to Jerusalem to worship; (28) and he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah.”

(a) Philip had been preaching to great effect in Samaria; when the apostles heard of his success, they sent Peter and John down from Jerusalem to further the ministry.

(b) On their way back to Jerusalem, while they were preaching through the villages of southern Samaria, an angel of the Lord spoke directly to Philip, and led him to the desert road that descends from Jerusalem to the sea at Gaza.

(c) Luke includes the fact that it was a desert road to tell us that it was not traveled much at all.

(d) While he was descending this road to Gaza, Philip happens across an Ethiopian eunuch.

(e) This man was everything that a Jew would despise; he was racially and even different in appearance - he was a black man; he was sexually

incapable, something the Jews held in high regard; he was a treasury official from the royal palace.

(f) He had been castrated so that he could be trusted in the chambers of the Kandake. Kandake was the title of the queen, not her first name.

(g) This man had been to Jerusalem to worship God according to the Jewish faith. The Ethiopians had a long association with Israel, going back to the time of Solomon, when the queen of Sheba (a kingdom including Ethiopia) visited Jerusalem.

(h) 1 Kings 10 records the visit of that famous queen; she had visited Jerusalem to validate the claims of Solomon's wisdom. After meeting Solomon, this queen said (v.9) "Blessed be the Lord you God who delighted in you to set you on the throne of Israel; because the Lord loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness." She returned to her own land with the report. Apparently it persisted for a thousand years.

(i) And just at that moment, in no coincidence at all, this court official is reading the scroll of Isaiah.

(j) Now consider what he encountered in Jerusalem; prejudice and disappointment. Remember, the Pharisees are there; Saul of Tarsus is there. The Jews hated foreigners with a passion; they were racists of the worst degree.

(k) It was about a day's ride from Jerusalem to Gaza; this man had taken a lengthy leave of absence from his important work in order to worship in Jerusalem; imagine his grave disappointment on this, the day of his return. He is crushed, but he is trusting Scripture and not people!

(2) Verses 29-35, "(29) Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go up and join this chariot.' (30) Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' (31) And he said, 'Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. (32) Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this: 'He was led as a sheep to slaughter; and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so He does not open His mouth. (33) In humiliation His judgment was taken away; who will relate His generation? For

His life is removed from the earth.' (34) The eunuch answered Philip and said, 'Please tell me, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself or of someone else? (35) Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him.'

(a) The Ethiopian had gone to Jerusalem to worship, and that he found no help there in his spiritual quest is now obvious. He is trying to do it on his own, and he cannot. It is certain that no one in Jerusalem had time for him.

(b) And what Jew in Jerusalem could this man of the suffering Messiah of Isaiah 53? And yet the man of the Scripture had only just been there, and had only just died a few years ago.

(c) If ever there was a softball pitch in the history of the gospel, this had to be it. Who is the man? Jesus Christ.

(3) The following verses record the baptism of the eunuch and Philip's passage on to Azotus and the cities of the Mediterranean seacoast.

(4) Ask, and it shall be given; seek, and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you.

2. The metaphor of human giving; man compared to God, vv. 9-10. "(9) Or what man is there among you who when his son asks him for bread, will give to him a stone? (10) Or also, if he will ask for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he?"

a. Again Christ illustrates from the ludicrous. This illustration is fitting to describe the nature of God's response to positive volition.

b. "Hey dad, I'm hungry. Can have some bread?" "Here son, eat this stone instead."

c. "O.K., then, how about some fish?" "Here is a snake instead (tastes like chicken)."

d. It is ludicrous. Now God is our Father, and He is perfect and good.

3. The conclusion, v.11. "Therefore if you while evil know to give good gifts to your children, how much more your Father Who is in heaven will give good things to those who ask Him."

a. We are evil. That is, we are human and weak and have sin natures.

b. From our establishment consciences, totally apart from spirituality, we know to give good gifts to our children.

c. But God is perfect and infinitely better than any of us. And all the human race qualify as the children of God in the figurative sense.

d. He is the creator of our souls, and more our Father than any human parent could lay claim. Human parents only produce the earthly shell; God makes the soul.

e. And if we ask Him for wisdom, he supplies. James 1:5, "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him."

B. The statement of the golden rule, and final conclusion of the discourse on judging, v.12 (Luke 6:31), "Therefore however you want men to treat you, so also you treat them; For this is the Law and the Prophets."

1. The insertion of the golden rule right here is quite significant, as it brings to a close the discourse on judgment.

2. The expression of virtue love summarizes all that was said in the Law and the Prophets.

3. The Scribes and Pharisees present at this sermon searched the Scriptures all the time, but with illicit motives.

4. On another occasion, the Pharisees would attempt to trick Jesus: Matthew 22:34-40: "(34) But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together. (35) One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, (36) 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?' (37) And he said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' (38) This is the great and foremost commandment. (39) The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' (40) On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.'"

a. This Pharisee wants Jesus to commit to just one of the ten commandments; Jesus performs a flanking maneuver on him and chooses one from outside the ten.

b. Christ instead chooses another commandment from Deuteronomy that serves as a guide for all function in the Christian life.

5. Love God; love others. That is it - because virtue love is the opposite of judgment.

6. 1 John 4:7-21 review.

7. The law with regard to sinful frames of reference.

a. This golden rule that Christ has issued us remains as the greatest common sense rule for human behavior that anyone has ever given us.

b. But here is what it does not say: however another person wants to be treated, that is how you must treat them.

c. Rather, this golden rule demands consistency between how you desire to be treated and how you treat others. It is a rule that when honestly applied, eliminates all hypocrisy.

d. This golden rule does not apply with regard to sinful and even criminal behavior; you are not required to cater to anyone's sin nature.

e. But idiosyncrasies may or may not come from complexes of sin in the soul. So that, if you would have others tolerate your idiosyncrasies, that is, lay them aside so that they are not an issue to them in any way, you must then have the same attitude in yourself.

(1) Colossians 3:12-13, "(12) And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and believed, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; (13) bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you."

(2) The second exhortation is from verses twelve and thirteen.

(a) Verse twelve contains a command to put on godly character, which of course comes through faith perception of the truth.

(b) Verse thirteen mentions some ways in which that godly character might be applied.

(c) Specifically, Godly character should be applied in these ways:

· ANECHOMENOI means to put up with someone. The idea is that you put up with the non-

sinful idiosyncrasies of others; their quirks and oddities. It means literally 'to have again.' I think it may have had something to do with in-laws.

· CHARIZOMENOI concentrates on the sinful side of things. It means to give something free of charge and without expectation of return. Here it is a metaphor for forgiveness

f. Furthermore, Christians must be aware that those without doctrine are weak in their souls; extra sensitivity is therefore required (Laws of Christian Behavior).

C. The parable of the gates, related to salvation, vv. 13-14, “ (13) Enter through the narrow gate; “The gate is wide and the way is spacious which leads unto destruction and many are they who enter through it. (14) “The gate is narrow and the way has become constricted that leads unto life and few are they who find it.””

1. The aorist imperative EISELTHATE gives a command that is to happen immediately; since it refers to salvation, the aspect of that verb is punctiliar. Believe in one moment of time.

2. The narrow gate is one that would allow one man at a time; it is the sally port of the ancient world.

3. Two synonyms describe the way to destruction:

a. PLATEIA - a broad thing or place; a big wide flat area.

b. EURUCHOROS - roomy or spacious, even comfy; a real-estate agent's word. (erratum for translation)

4. The way to destruction is broad; many have traveled that path; and because of peer pressure and cosmic propaganda of every kind, it is by far easiest one to take.

5. On the other hand the gate to salvation is narrow and constricted.

a. Narrow is STENE, pretty much just like our own idea of it.

b. TETHLIMMENE is the perfect passive participle of THLIBO. This verb describes narrow from the frame of reference of a crowded room or especially a crowded passageway.

(1) Since it is perfect passive, it describes a narrowing from outside influence. Someone is pushing in the walls of the room, making it more cramped. Someone on the outside has constricted the entrance, so that it is more difficult to enter.

(2) So this word concentrates on the narrowing and constricting activities of Satan, whereby the Gospel is defamed.

c. It is Satan's desire to keep all unbelievers from a relationship with God.

(1) The individual branch of the cosmic system builds up a false wall of sin between the unbeliever and God.

(2) The propaganda branch continues to disseminate falsehood so that the unbeliever cannot see the right way out of sin.

6. Although the way unto salvation is narrow and constricted, and few find it, remember what Christ has just said:

a. Those who seek will find it.

b. Did Frost have this in mind when he wrote:

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair;
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:

Two roads diverged in a wood, And I
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.
Robert Frost (1875-1963)

D. Distinctions among prophets, vv. 15-20 (Luke 6:43-45).

1. The false prophet compared to a wolf, v. 15, “Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in the clothing of sheep, but inside are ravaging wolves.”

a. The thing about a false prophet is this: you are a sheep, and he is a wolf. As a wolf he wants to kill you and eat you for dinner, perhaps with a little mint jelly.

b. But in order to kill you, the false prophet must make like a sheep in order to put you at ease.

c. The false prophet usually makes his approach through a personality ploy; that is, he puts on the personality that he thinks will put you at ease. It can be any personality, really.

(1) But a personality is only the way a person outwardly expresses themselves, and that does not necessarily match the content of the heart.

(2) In another context, Solomon said the same thing. Proverbs 5:1-6, “(1) My son, give attention to my wisdom, incline your ear to my understanding; (2) that you may observe discretion and your lips may reserve knowledge. (3) For the lips of an adulteress drip honey and smoother than oil is her speech; (4) But in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. (5) Her feet go down to death, Her steps take hold of Sheol. (6) Who does not ponder the path of life; her ways are unstable, she does not know it.”

d. In addition, the false prophet will say anything that you think you might like to hear. He will deceive by talking in sympathy toward your plight (see the doctrine of the Clique).

e. A false prophet can be anyone in any position in life, including, but not exclusive to pastors. You may have a co-worker that is a cosmic propagandist; a relative; a friend.

f. What makes someone a false prophet is the dissemination of falsehood. They do not have to have some spiritual office.

g. LUKOI HARPAGES is the Greek for ‘ravaging wolves.’ The latter word describes the ruthless hunger of a predatory animal. Inside there is no mercy and no feeling - and a will to devour (Lost World passage).

h. But Christ goes on to describe the distinction between false prophet and true.

2. The metaphor of the trees and fruit, vv.16-19 (Luke 6:43-44), “(16) You will clearly know them from their fruit. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes or figs from thistles, are they? (17) So also every good tree bears much fruit, but the rotten tree bears evil fruit. (18) The good tree is not able to bear evil fruit; neither is the rotten tree able to bear good fruit. (19) Every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and cast into the fire.”

a. The verb EPIGINOSKO is a compound that gives greater clarity to the action of knowing.

b. At its foundation level, it means, ‘to really know.’ So here is how you can clearly or really know a false prophet.

c. You know them from their fruit. That is, what have they produced within the realm of spirituality? What have they produced for you and for others? What have they produced in their own lives? Are they living the abundant life that is advertised in the word of God?

d. The true prophet bears good fruit; he brings himself and others closer to God.

(1) And it is not that you destroy anyone’s privacy by checking for bad fruit and investigating sin with every kind of evil suspicion. That is not a healthy situation.

(2) It is the good fruit that is easily manifest; spiritual growth! The true prophet causes spiritual growth in his congregation; the false prophet cannot!

(3) You don’t have to go looking for bad things in the life of the prophet; you just have to consider whether there is vital spiritual growth under his ministry. That will certainly tell you all that you need to know!

- e. And then verse eighteen concentrates on ability; that is, false prophets have no ability to bear fruit; true prophets are not able to produce evil fruit.
- f. This principle is given further light by Luke in his final verse. We will wait until then to discuss it.
- g. Every tree not bearing good fruit is cut down and cast into the fire; so it is with false prophets.
- (1) The timing of the verbs in the sentence is as follows:
- (a) The present participle *POIOUN* shows an action in an ongoing state. This is the picture of a tree that is not presently bearing good fruit.
- (b) The two verbs, *EKKOPTETAI* and *BALLETAI*, are present passive indicatives, and their present tenses indicate that their actions take place at the same time as the not bearing.
- (c) So the impression is that God steps in while the false prophet is still at his post. But this is a wrong impression.
- (2) We can rule out the possibility of the judgment seat of Christ. It is the analogy of the fruit tree as it applies to the false prophet; but the analogy is not to stretch too far.
- (3) We have the removal and burning of the false prophet, but by whom?
- (4) The false prophet is removed by us. That is, we are to remove him from our lives. We cut down the tree and burn it.
- (5) So this is the analogy. The cutting down of the tree is when you stop listening to him; the burning of the limbs is when you dismantle the complex of counterfeits and lies that he has placed in your soul.
- (6) And churches have this responsibility among themselves, to cut down the false prophets from among themselves.
- (7) That there are so many false prophets existing in the world, and that they are tolerated by churches and denominations everywhere is a very bad sign. It demonstrates an absence of truth.
- (8) 1 John 4 comments on this same doctrine:
- (a) Verse 1: "Virtue-Loved Ones, do not trust every spirit but test the spirits to see whether they

are from God. Because many false prophets have gone out into the world." A spirit is one who communicates the Word. Introduces the test revealed in v.2. Many false prophets and Christian cults during the church age dispensation.

(b) Verse 2: "This is how we know the spirit which is from God: Every Spirit which confesses Jesus Christ as having come in the flesh is from God." Hypostatic union is the key test for determining the most basic level of orthodoxy. The hypostatic union is the two natures of Christ, both God and man, inseparably united, without transfer or loss of attributes, without loss or transfer of separate identity, the union being both personal and eternal.

(c) Verse 3: "...and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. And this is the spirit of the enemy of Christ, which you have heard is coming and now is already in the world."

The test is not universal. Those who admit the hypostatic union can still be in apostasy, but it is rare. Also, knowing the true doctrine of the hypostatic union does not guarantee spiritual maturity.

(d) Verse 4: "You yourselves are from God, children, and so have overcome them. For greater is the one in you than the one in the world." Being from God means staying within the orthodox doctrines of the faith. If you do that, you will overcome falsehood, and false teachers. The one in us is God the Holy Spirit, who guides us into all truth through His recall ministry.

(e) Verse 5: "They are from the world, and because of this they speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens." The world is the cosmic system. If you are involved in the cosmic system, you will become a propagandist for it, and all others who are involved in the cosmic system will listen.

(f) Verse 6: "We ourselves are from God. Whoever knows God hears us. Whoever is not from God does not hear us. From this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of deception." John is a communicator of the truth, and those who know God will listen under his authority and others like him. Those in the cosmic system will not. The very nature of the matter is that positive people find communicators of the truth; negative people

find communicators of the cosmic counterfeits and lies.

3. The correlation of the metaphor to reality, Luke 6:45, “(45) The good man brings forth what is good from the good treasure of his heart, and the evil man brings forth evil from evil; For his mouth speaks from the overflow of his heart.”

a. Now Luke provides us with an excellent conclusion: and it sounds more than a little familiar.

b. Hasn't Christ just said, in this very sermon, “For where your treasure is, there also will be your heart”?

c. He meant a simple thing, really. What you desire will become the seat of your thinking.

d. Now the principle is extended. The treasure of the heart manifests itself in the thoughts, motives, words, and actions of every man.

e. So that the good man has a good treasure in his heart, and the evil man has evil there.

f. Here Christ properly concentrates on the spoken expression of the heart; that is, what the false prophet has to say. For it is what the prophet says that is the worst of all. His words do the damage.

g. Illustration #1, the words of Satan in the garden (see attached sheet, from Origin of Life).

h. Illustration #2, Wormtongue.

4. The conclusion, v.20, “So in conclusion, you will clearly know them from their fruit.”

a. This is a simple reiteration of the principle.

b. The combination of ARA GE indicates the conclusion. It is the opposite of GE ARA, which is contracted to GAR in most cases. GAR tells you that the writer is going to comment further; ARA GE says that this is the final part.

E. Distinctions for the Kingdom from the tribulational frame of reference, vv.21-27 (Luke 6:46-49).

1. The present attitude, Luke 6:46, “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord’ and do not do what I say?”

a. Christ observes a present trend, and then asks a question. There were certainly those in the crowd who fell under this category.

b. They were hypocrites who outwardly called Christ KURIE, KURIE, and still refused to do what He commanded.

c. This was the sermon on the mount; certainly there were those present who gave their ‘Amens’ to the sermon. Who nodded outwardly with approval as each new revelation for the kingdom was given.

d. There are two future tenses here, and they describe two actions that go on at the same time. The first is KALEITE, calling. The second is POIEITE, doing.

e. The calling and the doing are opposites; the one is not consistent with the other.

f. And Christ asks this question rhetorically; He desires the crowd to honestly consider the motives for their words and deeds.

g. Now this is a most excellent way to conclude this sermon - with a focus on the inner priorities against the outward show.

h. ‘Doing’ here does not mean that Christ’s kingdom is a system of legalism. There is a ‘doing’ that occurs in the soul before any ‘doing’ occurs outwardly.

i. Notice how Christ sets it up: that you can outwardly say one thing, but not do it. So the doing more likely concentrates on something inward.

j. And every good deed begins in the heart anyway. There is no truly good deed where the mental attitude is absent.

k. Furthermore, Christ ties this to entrance into His kingdom, which comes in the next verse.

2. The future judgment, v.21a, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord’ will enter into the kingdom of heaven,”

a. There is a present tense and a future tense here.

(1) The present tense is a participle, LEGON - The concentration is on the present action of ‘saying’ by a certain class of people.

(2) The future tense is EISELEUSETAI, from EISERCHOMAI.

b. So just because you call Christ 'Lord' does not mean that you will enter into His kingdom.

c. Now we must place this in its proper dispensational setting before we can make any further progress.

(1) For the very first time in His ministry, Christ is explaining the nature of His kingdom and offering it to His people. This is the purpose of the sermon on the mount.

(2) But of course His kingdom has not yet come, and apparently from this statement it is exclusive by nature. Not everyone will enter the Kingdom of Christ.

(3) There is therefore a panorama that extends before this moment. By necessity of Old Testament prophecy (Since OT prophecy is a revelation of something in the Divine Decree, it is not contingent on any other event. And as the time is not usually set, there is no date required, as well):

- (a) There must be an atonement;
- (b) There must be a resurrection;
- (c) There must be an ascension;
- (d) There must be a tribulation;
- (e) There must be a second advent;
- (f) There must be a millennium.

(4) And the millennium is the kingdom of Christ.

(a) So it is possible that many present at the sermon could enter into Christ's millennial kingdom.

(b) It could be as few as eight years from this very moment in Christ's life.

(5) Therefore, calling Christ 'Lord' has nothing to do with entering the kingdom, although some who make the statement will on account of their inner attitude. It is the inner attitude which must match up with the outward statement.

3. The standard for the judgment, v.21b, "but [only] the one who does the will of My Father Who is in heaven."

a. Now Christ sets the standard: that is, what constitutes 'doing' so that one enters the kingdom.

b. It is 'doing' the will of God. And Christ has just revealed God's will for the kingdom in this very sermon.

(1) But there is the will of God regarding salvation, and the will of God regarding the Christian life after salvation.

(2) And just which is this one? It is an important question that is only answered by the last phrase of the segment.

c. This only indicates that spiritual maturity is the requirement for survival of the tribulation and entrance into the kingdom

d. The conditions of the tribulation are such that many immature believers will die. God will preserve only those who depend completely on Him.

(1) Matthew 24:9-13, "(9) Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. (10) At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. (11) Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. (12) Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. (13) But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved."

(2) There is an impossibility that the 'saving' in Matthew 24:13 has to with loss of salvation; eternal security is a dispensational constant.

(3) Furthermore, the use of SOZO is not limited to salvation alone. It can also represent a saving from physical danger or even the dangers of the cosmic system.

(4) Therefore, only those in spiritual maturity will last until the end of the tribulation; the others will die in the persecutions leading up to the second advent.

e. Conclusion: it is only those who remain alive at the second advent that enter into the millennial state. But unbelievers fit this filter just as effectively.

4. The excuses of the damned at this judgment, v.22, "Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many miracles in your name?'"

- a. The day is the Day of the Lord; it is according to Old Testament reckoning everything covered by eschatology from the beginning of the tribulation to the end of the millennium.
- b. The plea comes from those who have failed during the tribulation, and they will base their plea on their works that they have done in Christ's name.
- c. And the works are spectacular indeed; in fact, they are manifestations of supernatural things that seem to come from God the Holy Spirit.
- d. And it is impossible to see those works as accomplished from other means. Matthew 12:22-29 refutes this. "(22) Then a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute was brought to Jesus, and He healed him, so that the mute man spoke and saw. (23) All the crowds were amazed, and were saying, 'This man cannot be the Son of David, can he?' (24) But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, 'This man casts out demons only by Beelzebub the ruler of the demons.' (25) And knowing their thoughts Jesus said to them, 'Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and any city or house divided against itself will not stand.' (26) If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? (27) If I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? For this reason they will be your judges. (28) But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. (29) Or how can anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder the house.'"
- e. The result is that they have accomplished all of those things by the power of the Spirit, because God is indeed faithful.
- f. So doing great things for God in the way of Christian service is not the same as fulfilling the plan of God for the tribulation believers.
- g. In fact, the general nature of the plan of God has the standard for spiritual maturity as a dispensational constant.
- h. Since it is quite possible to perform under Christian service with impure motives this becomes an important lesson.
- i. In conclusion, God the Holy Spirit is faithful in His various ministries related to Christian service; but anyone at any level of maturity may tap into His power; some of those ministries, like common grace, work completely apart from fellowship; therefore it is possible to be a Christian service superstar and spectacularly immature at the same time.
5. The response of Jesus Christ, v.23, "And then I will say the same thing to them: 'I never knew you; depart from me you who work lawlessness.'"
- a. Christ will repeat the same phrase, over and over. The command comes in three parts:
- (1) The first part is the evaluation of the relationship; there was never a relationship between Christ and this category of people. This would naturally preclude salvation.
 - (a) The verb for 'knowing' here is GINOSKO in the aorist tense. This is apparently a translation of the Hebrew YADAH - the verb for relationship knowledge.
 - (b) The adverb of time OUDEPOTE eliminates the chance that Christ ever had a relationship with this person.
 - (2) The second part is the command which is unique to the baptism of fire: depart from Me. This verb is APOCHOREITE.
 - (a) It is an ironic statement by Christ, because it is the formulaic verb for demon exorcism. In other words, this is what you normally said to a demon as you exorcised him.
 - (b) So they exorcised demons in Christ name, for the excitement or approbation or whatever, and now He is performing an exorcism over them.
 - (c) So these Christian servants without God are command to depart from the presence of Christ.
 - (d) Just where they are commanded to depart is found elsewhere in baptism of fire passages.
 - (3) The third is the evaluation of their works. And this evaluation is pretty stunning. These people have cast out demons and done miracles and even prophesied in Christ's name.
 - (a) An Christ identifies their working as lawlessness. Being apart from the Law meant no good whatsoever.

(b) And more than that, it makes it perfectly clear that we can do great things for God (apparently), and yet not even have a relationship with Him.

(c) We can do great things for God, and not even be in fellowship with Him.

(d) A reminder: the greatest thing you will ever do for God is fulfill His plan for your life, and that does not add up to Christian service.

b. Now the baptism of fire comes into focus here (see attached doctrine).

(1) The Baptism of Fire is the judgment of the unbelievers of the Tribulation at the Second Advent. They are removed from the earth and placed in fire for 1000 years until the Last Judgment.

(2) This involves both the Jews and Gentiles of the tribulation; and therefore the millennium begins with mature believers only. Matthew 3:11-12, "(11) As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (12) His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Also Luke 3:16).

(3) Baptism in Homeric and Classical Greek. The basic definition was to place one thing into another, so that one or the other would be changed.

(a) This meaning began in Homer's time. Homer wrote of the giant Ulysses who took a piece of hot metal and rammed it into Cyclop's one eye, and called it "baptizing." The eye was changed by the metal.

(b) Homer's Odyssey, book 9, used baptism for hot metal changed by water when a smith dipped a piece of hot iron into water.

(c) Xenophon said that the Spartans baptized their spears by putting them into a bowl of blood. The spears were metaphorically changed into implements of killing by giving them an affinity for blood.

(d) Euripides used the word for a ship changed by its sinking. Its hull was now resting on the bottom,

instead of the surface. It was now a completely different ship, one that sailed under the ocean.

(e) So "baptize" in the classical Greek meant to dip one thing into another thing so that the essence of the original thing was changed by the dipping. The change can be either real, or metaphorical.

(4) The time of the baptism of fire is the Second Advent. 1 Thessalonians 1:7-9, "(7) ...and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, (8) dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. (9) These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power."

(5) The Baptism of Fire for the Jews is predicted by the Old Testament prophets.

(a) Ezekiel 20:34-38, "(34) I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out; (35) and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgement with you face to face. (36) As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you," declares the Lord God. (37) I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; (38) and I will purge from you the rebels and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they will not enter the land of Israel. Thus you will know that I am the Lord."

(b) Isaiah 1:25-28, "(25) I will also turn My hand against you, and will smelt away your dross as with lye and will remove all your alloy. (26) Then I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning; after that you will be called the city of righteousness, a faithful city. (27) Zion will be redeemed with justice and her repentant ones with righteousness. (28) But transgressors and sinners will be crushed together, and those who forsake the Lord will come to an end."

(c) Malachi 3:5, "Then I will draw near to you for judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the

sorcerers and against the adulterers and against those who swear falsely, and against those who oppress the wage earner in his wages, the widow and the orphan, and those who turn aside the alien and do not fear Me.”

(d) Malachi 4:1-2, “(1) ‘For behold the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze,’ says the Lord of armies, ‘so that it will leave them neither root nor branch.’ (2) But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall.”

(6) The Baptism of Fire for the Gentiles is mentioned by Christ, Matthew 25:31-46. “(31) But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. (32) All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep and the goats.”

(7) There are five parables that teach the baptism of fire:

(a) The wheat and the tares, Matthew 13:24-30, 36-40.

(b) The good and bad fish, Matthew 13:47-50.

(c) The ten virgins, Matthew 25:1-13.

(d) The sheep and the goats, Matthew 25:31-46.

(e) The talent test, Matthew 25:14-30.

c. Christ is trying to motivate His audience by informing them about the coming judgment of the Baptism of Fire. He is motivating them to believe and initiate a relationship with God through Him.

6. The parable of the foundations, vv.24-27 (Luke 6:47-49): “Therefore whoever hears these words of mine and does them, he will be compared to a wise man, who dug and went deep and founded his house upon the rock; and the rain descended, and the torrent came and the winds blew and burst against that house, and it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine does not do them will be compared to a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand without a foundation; and the rain descended, and the

torrents came, and the wind blew and burst into that house, and it fell and the fall of it was great.”

a. This is a harmony of the two passages from Matthew and Luke.

b. This is the application for the entire Sermon on the Mount. They contain Christ’s concluding remarks about all that He has just spoken.

c. Therefore it is a parable about the effect of the Word of God in our lives, from the gospel of salvation to the doctrines leading to maturity.

d. “Therefore whoever hears these words of mine and does them, he will be compared to a wise man, who dug and went deep and founded his house upon the rock; and the rain descended, and the torrent came and the winds blew and burst against that house, and it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock.”

(1) This first section has to do with the person who is positive to the teachings of Christ.

(2) Notice the twofold provision: hearing and doing, AKOUEI and POIEI. They are simple verbs in the Greek. Hear and do (HAPIRU).

(3) The indefinite pronoun HOSTIS is a proclamation of the faithfulness of God - it is ‘whoever.’ That means if you do it, God will always be faithful in response.

(4) The point of comparison is a PHRONIMO ANDRI, a man of decisive thinking; a wise man.

(5) This wise man dug and went deep and founded his house upon the rock, EPI TEN PETRAN.

(6) The rock is Bible Truth; it is ‘these words of mine,’ according to Christ. So Christ has given His kingdom offer, and described the tenets of that kingdom in some detail.

(7) The region of Israel has no great floods as we think of great rivers overflowing their banks. They did however have flash floods, much like what we have here in the west; flash floods which are exceptionally powerful by nature.

(8) There are many torrents in this world and even greater ones in the next; there are torrents of suffering that can potentially destroy our spiritual well-being and our most-precious relationship with God.

(9) The house is the house of our spiritual lives - it is really the house of our souls.

(10) Suffering may destroy our mental well-being, the way we perceive and react to the world.

e. The second half of the parable outlines the actions of a fool.

(1) The fool builds his house on the sand without a foundation.

(2) The rain is going to come; sooner or later there will be a flood of suffering that comes.

(3) And the house without a foundation will fall, and the fall of it will be great.

(4) Principle: suffering causes you to check your premises.

(a) Many people ask the question, "How can a loving God allow His creatures to suffer?" In other words, suffering causes a dissonance in the soul.

(b) This is a legitimate question that is answered completely by the Bible, and there are two answers:

- Because they choose to suffer.
- Because suffering is designed for our own good.

(c) Because God is righteous, there exists the concept of absolute right, and a difference between right and wrong.

(d) Because God is just, when people choose against God, they suffer, and when they choose for Him, they are blessed.

(e) God gave people the freedom of choice, and He respects that freedom, even when people make the wrong choice.

(f) When people make bad decisions, they must be made responsible for those decisions, and they suffer.

(g) Suffering, however, is always for our own good, even when it is the result of a bad decision.

(h) Also, suffering often comes through no fault of our own. We can suffer from the bad decisions of others, or from the apparent whim of nature.

(i) Even this category of suffering is for our own good.

(j) No matter when, or for what reason any human being suffers, it is designed by the plan of God for the benefit of that person.

(k) The way that God works suffering for our good is a marvelous revelation of His character.

(l) If we are in the plan of God, then we can understand suffering and benefit from it. In essence, we can turn adversity into advantage.

(m) If we are outside of the plan of God, then the suffering is intensified, because we do not understand why we suffer.

(n) In human history, there are two categories of people. Those who benefit from suffering and those who do not.

(o) In life, suffering is always an agent for change, and you will either be a better or a worse person for it, but never the same.

(5) Doctrinal orientation to life.

(a) Infallibility means that Scripture never fails to work when applied on the basis of accurate interpretation.

(b) Inerrancy means that the original autograph of Scripture contains no errors whatsoever.

(c) Doctrinal orientation means that you seek the truth, and then orient your life to it.

(d) Doctrinal orientation means that there is no question too puzzling for Bible truth to answer.

(e) Doctrinal orientation means that there is no problem too great for Bible truth to solve.

(f) Doctrinal orientation means that the #1 priority in your life is the intake, inculcation and application of Bible truth.

7. The end of the Sermon... Matthew 7:28-29, "(28) And it came about when Jesus concluded these words, the crowds were lightning-struck at His teaching; (29) For He was teaching them as having authority and not like their scribes."

a. The verb EXEPLESSONTO comes from EKPLESSO. It meant to be struck by lightning, or knocked senseless.

b. So the Sermon on the Mount was a lightning-bolt to this audience - they were shocked by the teaching.

c. And Matthew goes on to explain why. It was dogmatic Bible teaching. EXOUSIAN is the word Matthew employs to describe that teaching. It is the Greek word for rightful authority.

d. And further description is given by comparison to the Scribes. The Scribes did not teach with authority, and so the people were unused to the concept.

e. Teaching with authority is the only way to effectively communicate anything. When you do so, you convey to your listeners the idea that you believe in what you say, and you know the subject matter well.

f. Sometimes scholarship is the enemy of authority.

g. There are certain elements in scholarship which lead to a righteous dogma.

- (1) It must have right motivation.
- (2) It must stay within the basic framework of orthodoxy.
- (3) It must follow proper and thorough methods without getting lost in the details.
- (4) It must understand the principle of necessary detail.
- (5) It must have self-esteem.

Christ and the Centurion

Matthew 8:5-13

"(5) And after He entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him beseeching Him, (6) and saying, "Lord, my servant has been stricken paralyzed at home, suffering great pain." (7) And He says to him, "I myself will heal him after arriving." (8) And after formulating an answer, the centurion said, "Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof, but just say a word, and my servant will be healed. (9) For I myself am also a man under authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to this one, "Go!" and he goes, and to another, "Come!" and he comes, and to my slave, "Do this!" and he does it." (10) Now after Jesus heard this, He marveled, and said to those who were following, "Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith from anyone in Israel. (11) And I say to you, that many will come from east and west and recline at the table with Abraham, and

Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; (12) but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." (13) And Jesus said to the centurion, "Go; let it happen to you as you believed." And the servant was healed that very hour."

Luke 7:1-10

"(1) When all of His words were finished for the hearing of the people, He entered into Capernaum. (2) Now a certain slave of a centurion, who was precious to him, having a severe affliction was continually at the brink of death. (3) After hearing about Jesus he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking Him in order that He might save his slave after he came. (4) And those appearing before Jesus were urgently exhorting Him 'He is worthy for whom you will do this. (5) For he loves our nation and he himself built a synagogue for us. (6) And Jesus went with them. But when He traveled [to a point] not far from the house at all, the centurion sent friends saying to Him, 'Lord, do not be bothered, for I am not worthy for you to come under my roof. (7) Therefore neither did I consider myself worthy to come before You; but say a word, and let my servant be healed. (8) For I myself am also a man under authority having under my own command soldiers, and I say to this one 'Go!' and he goes, and to another, 'Come!' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this!' and he does.' (9) And after hearing these things Jesus marveled at him and after turning to the crowd following Him said, 'I say to you, never in Israel have I found such great faith.' (10) And after returning to the house the messengers found the slave permanently healed.

Exposition.

The centurion was the rough equivalent of a modern captain of infantry. He ruled 100 men. The ISBE describes his duties in this way: "The ordinary duties of the centurion were to drill his men, to inspect their arms, food, and clothing, and to command them in the camp and in the field."

The Roman army was a tough, extremely disciplined force. They kept themselves in superb physical condition, and were the masters of the battlefield during this period of history.

The centurion of this story was a leader of the military outfit in Capernaum. It was tough duty; many miles from home, and in a place that was much different from the shores of the Italian peninsula. The Roman military men were a hated lot, and Capernaum in Galilee was a seething hotbed of rebellion. The Roman soldiers were alienated from the populace, and treated like dirt by them.

But this centurion at least has an awareness of public relations while he is among the Gentiles. He has built the Jews a synagogue and this is evidence to the Jews that he loves their nation.

Christ was well known for healing and miracles, and the word was spreading that He was the messiah, the king of the Jews.

This particular centurion was a conscientious man, who cared very much for his servants. The kind of servant here is not a slave, but a hand-servant or even armor bearer. It is the Greek PAIS. He was honored by the centurion - ENTIMOS means to honor or value highly.

One of them fell terribly ill.

There is a clear association between the healings done by Christ and His atonement on the cross.

The healings of physical ailments foreshadowed the healing of sin on the cross.

The exorcisms foreshadowed the final subduement of demons.

The miracles foreshadowed the fantastic nature of the eternal kingdom.

These things validate because they are supernatural, and no one else could do them. But they are also full of meaning.

The power of the Lord was unto Christ for healing. Luke says it in 5:17: KAI DUNAMIS KURIOU EN EIS TO IASTHAI AUTON.

This is important. Here it says clearly, explicitly, that Christ heals by the power of the Lord, and not by the power of His own deity as the second person of the Godhead. This is the exact representation of the doctrine of kenosis.

Also, there is an implication that there were times when the power was not available. So this was a God given and directed power, and God chose the

timing. It includes self awareness of that power. In some way, Christ could detect what was going on, and be prepared to heal.

Matthew's gospel describes the ailment as follows:

BEBLETAI - The perfect passive indicative, third singular of BALLO. It means literally, 'has been thrown.' The nature of the verb indicates a very sudden occurrence, and even an accident. The perfect tense shows that this was believed to be a permanent condition.

PARALUTIKOS means the servant was prostrated by his ailment or accident.

DEINOS BASANIZOMENOS concentrates on what the servant felt - continual terrible pain.

(1) The adverb DEINOS is the same as the one included in the word dinosaur - 'terrible lizard.'

(2) The present passive participle BASANIZOMENOS portrays on ongoing action that is received by the servant. The verb itself describes one thing: physical torture.

Luke's gospel adds these distinctions:

KAKOS ECHON is 'having severe affliction.'

The adverb KAKOS here is employed as a noun.

EMELLEN TELEUTAN denotes his status on the brink of death.

(1) The imperfect tense of MELLO demonstrates a continual past action, and so he was continually about to die.

(2) TELEUTAN is 'to end,' but here more properly 'to die.' The present active infinitive complements the preceding verb.

And when he heard about the proximity of our Lord, he immediately placed his hope in Him for the healing of his servant. When someone is in this kind of condition and pain, it lends a great sense of desperation and urgency to those responsible. Such was the case here.

He sent the local elders of the synagogue to Christ with the news; they had been at his house with concern for the slave. But it took this centurion's initiative to send them. He is a decisive man indeed.

And the elders plead his case before Christ.

The plead urgently, SPOUDAIOS is the adverb; it means speedily or urgently.

They identify the centurion as a man who is worthy due to his love for their nation and because he built their synagogue. Christ no doubt had another definition of worthiness.

Christ offers to come heal him, without hesitation. Christ shows no prejudice to this military foreigner. He desires to come personally.

The intensive use of the personal pronoun EGO indicates Christ's desire to come in person and heal the servant - "I myself will heal him after arriving."

The future active indicative THERAPEUSO tells us of Christ's total confidence in His ability to heal this servant. The indicative mood is the declarative indicative, showing a complete correlation to reality - this definitely will happen.

Now Christ got almost right up to the house; in some way the centurion knew our Lord was near - perhaps he even saw Christ coming down the street with the elders and the crowd.

And so the centurion sent his friends out and through them makes his great statement of faith.

First, he says KURIE. This is the title of respect, given to someone of greater respect or rank. It is quite a statement coming from a Roman centurion, who would have outranked every Jew in the world.

Then he tells Christ not to be bothered, ME SKULLOU. This is the present passive imperative. The implication is that the act of walking that extra hundred yards or so would be a bother.

The centurion identifies the reason as his personal HIKANOS. This is insufficiency or unworthiness or even incompetence.

It would have its own frame of reference for a military man who was used to rigorous personal and professional standards.

This man identifies that he is not up to the standards of the Messiah; this is not only true humility, but it is also the exact kind of humility that is necessary for salvation and spiritual growth.

The centurion realizes that there is nothing he can do to impress the Son of God; that the Messiah has superior standards that he cannot meet.

This is the prerequisite to faith: understanding your own insufficiency. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven!!!

Now this centurion is a commander of men; and he knows how authority works:

You have authority, which allows you to give commands.

And those under your authority had better obey. The Roman army had a rigorous system of discipline. Disobedience could get you killed rather quickly.

And he has correctly identified that Christ has the authority to heal.

Christ has the authority to heal; He commands the healing although not from His deity.

So Christ commands the power of the Spirit toward healing, and it is done, because He has the authority.

And this is faith: the trust in someone else to have the power and authority to exercise command over what you want done.

But Christ does not question the reason for the man's sense of inferiority; rather, He respects it. And more than that, He finds reason to praise this man's faith.

Christ calls the centurion's explanation the greatest expression of faith that He has ever seen.

This is because faith is simply putting your trust in someone else's legitimate realm of authority.

When you trust authority, you let them provide what it is they provide. Children let their parents provide the things that they need. They trust their authority. When parents tell their children what to do, it is because they know what is best for their children. When the centurion gives orders to his unit, it is because he knows what is best for them.

In the case of God, He provides salvation, and all that we need to rehabilitate our souls after salvation. But our trust of Him is required if we are to make these things a part of our lives.

This is why the grace plan of God has been attractive to military men throughout the ages. They have a ready made human frame of reference for these things.

So, faith-authority orientation, and the centurion is more than HIKANOS to reside at the table of Jesus Christ in the kingdom of heaven.

And Christ also compares his faith to that of anyone he has met of Jewish descent. This Gentile Roman soldier has greater faith than anyone Christ has ever met, including Jews.

Note that Christ never once rides this man for being a soldier; that he does not require him to repent from his soldierly ways. This was not required. This man had likely led his men in battle, and was likely to have killed in combat. Yet this is a man of great faith.

And then our Lord says this: “And I say to you, that many will come from east and west and recline at the table with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

East and west is ANATOLON KAI DUSMON. This is an idiomatic saying that means ‘all over the world.’

And the context here is the future - HEXOUSIN ‘come’ and ANAKLITHESONTAI ‘recline’ are both future tense verbs.

HEXOUSIN concentrates not on the arrival, but the presence of an affair. “There were 20 guests present at the party.”

The everyday citizen did not own chairs. The table was low, so that they reclined at the table.

Reclining at the table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven means that you have survived the tribulation and you are now living in the millennium.

The sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness - this is the imprisonment of the Jewish unbelievers from the tribulation; they are cast into Tartarus, and share their prison with the fallen angels.

The wailing and gnashing of teeth occur because of the fear of the last judgment at the great white throne. There is fear and utter regret.

Christ focuses on the sons of the kingdom - those who bear the hereditary imprint of Abraham, and yet do not believe in their Messiah. They carry the same judgment as all other believers.

Christ communicates this as a surprise to his Jewish listeners who are all around him. They may indeed have been shocked to hear this, considering their radical ethnocentrism.

The epilogue is this: “And Jesus said to the friends of the centurion, ‘Go, let it happen to you as you believed.’ And the servant was healed that very hour. And after returning to the house the messengers found the slave permanently healed.”

GENETHETO is ‘let it happen.’ This verb portrays the introduction of something new on the scene. It is the aorist passive imperative, third singular of GINOMAI.

The aorist tense here depicts an action occurring in one moment’s time.

The imperative of entreaty shows Christ as giving a polite command to someone He respects.

Remember, He has authority to heal this servant; and that power comes from God the Holy Spirit, a fellow member of the trinity.

HOS EPISTEUSAS - ‘as you believed’ - indicates that the occurrence of the healing is commensurate with the centurion’s faith, but you have to be careful here.

Faith is not subjective; that is, it does not depend at all on our efforts or concentration or intensity of thought.

Rather, it is objective, so it depends on what we know about the authority of the powers that can make it happen.

Faith always works insofar as you understand how and under what circumstances the power and authority works in your behalf.

If there is a measure of faith, then, it is only in your understanding of Bible truth.

Your accumulation of truth forms the limits of your faith. The more you know, the more you can believe, the more you have.

So the centurion believed because he understood the function of Christ's authority in healing.

And the servant was healed that very hour. Christ had exercised His authority, and the power came from the Spirit to accomplish His bidding.

So the messengers, friends of the centurion, returned to his home and found the servant permanently healed.

HEURON is 'they found.' A simple description of a past action from the Greek aorist tense.

The direct object is TON DOULON, the servant.

And the description of his healed state comes from HUGIAINONTA.

- (1) This is the present active participle.
 - (2) It describes an ongoing action extending from the present time.
 - (3) So the servant was not just healed temporarily, but permanently. It was not just a death rally or a temporary state that included a death lapse.
 - (4) The servant was permanently healed from his malady.
-