

Worship Jesus with Humble, Obedient Belief

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Date: 16 February 2020

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[0:00] Please take your Bibles and go to Matthew chapter 21. Matthew chapter 21, or if you need a Bible, Bible in the chair in front of you, black Bible, go to the back and find page 18, I believe, page 18 in that black Bible.

Matthew chapter 21, verse 23. Matthew chapter 21, we'll start in verse 23. Matthew chapter 21, page 18 in that black Bible.

We'll start, verse 23, go to the end of the chapter to 46. I decided to link these parts together.

Thanks to Jane, Daniel, Kalen, Travis, taking care of things while I was gone.

Thank you to Jason. I heard he was horrible. That's a joke, Barb. Barb's like, what?

So I'm never going to ask him back again. So anyways, Matthew chapter 21, verse 23. I heard he was good, so I'm glad. That's Jason for you.

[1:16] What a great guy. Matthew chapter 21, verse 23. Let's read, and then we'll jump in. And as he came into the temple, the chief priests 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?

And answering them, Jesus said to them, I will ask you one word, which if you tell me, I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John was from what source?

From heaven or from men? By reasoning among themselves, they said, if we say from heaven, he will say to us, therefore, 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. But what do you think? A man had two children.

And he came to the first and said, child, go work today in the vineyard. And answering he said, I will, sir, but he did not go. He came to the second and said the same.

[2:31] But answering he said, I will not. Afterward he regretted and he went. Which of the two did the will of his father? They said, the latter. Jesus said to them, truly I say to you that the tax collectors and harlots are getting into the kingdom of God before you.

Verse 32. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and harlots believed him. And you, seeing it, did not even feel remorse afterwards who has to believe him.

Listen to another parable. There was a man, a landowner, who planted a vineyard and put a wall around it and dug a wine press in it and built a tower and rented it out to tenants.

He went on a journey. And when the season of the fruits came, he sent his slaves to the tenants to receive his fruits. And the tenants took his slaves and beat one and killed another and stoned a third.

Verse 36. Again, he sent another group of slaves larger than the first and they did the same to them. But afterward, he sent a son to them saying, they will respect my son.

[3:46] But when the tenants saw the son, they said among themselves, this is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance. And taking him, they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

Therefore, when the Lord of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants? They said to him, he will bring those wretches to a wretched end and rent the vineyard to other tenants who will pay him the fruits of the seasons.

Jesus said to them, did you never read in the scriptures the stone which the builders rejected? This became the head corner. This came from the Lord and it is wonderful in our eyes.

Verse 43. Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it. And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but

whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust.

And the chief priests and scribes hearing this parable, his parables, they understood that he was speaking concerning them. And seeking to seize him, they feared the multitudes because they held him to be a prophet.

[5:02] Fred Flights, whose former boss and current friend is John Bolton, he said this on January 27th, quote, I don't understand the name of a former national security advisor to publish a tell-all book critical of a president he served during a presidential election campaign that's going to determine the fate of the country.

There'll be a time for Bolton to speak out without appearing to try, appearing to try to tip a presidential election, end quote. Flights also said this, quote, presidents have to be able to candidly consult with their advisors without worrying they're going to leak these discussions for the media or get high-dollar book contracts to publish them.

This book may set a dangerous precedent since it could discourage future presidents from seeking advice from expert advisors on sensitive national security matters.

End quote. Now, he said this because John Bolton plans to publish a book in March of this year on his time as President Trump's national security advisor. Now, I say this to kind of stir the pot, you know.

Now, you might agree or disagree with this, whatever you land on this with John Bolton, really doesn't necessarily matter. The fact is, though, is someone who is a representative is called to be just that, a representative.

[6:41] They represents. Or they speak for the President of the United States. They're not rogue. The same concept was with the religious leaders.

They were supposed to be God's representatives. They were speaking for Him. But oh, how they lost sight of that. Matthew's Gospel is shouting out to us, bow down and worship Jesus.

He's the Messiah, the Son of God. He's the King of Israel. And here in this section, we can narrow it down, title it like this. We bow down and worship Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of God, the King of Israel, with humble, obedient faith or humble, obedient belief.

Humble, obedient belief or humble, obedient faith. This is what it means to worship. Humility, obedience.

I'll put in a statement for you. True Jesus discipleship, true Christianity is humble, obedient belief in the Lord Jesus.

[8:04] that's what it means to really worship God. That's what it means. And these religious leaders, clueless, they lost sight of that.

I mean, we were just talking about that in the first hour. It was an exclusivity that they believed they were supposed to be on top. I mean, and you see it here. They had challenged Jesus' authority because they felt threatened.

They lost sight of who they were supposed to be. Another statement so we can do this. Learn from these religious leaders of Israel who would deny God's kingdom.

Discipleship is about deeds. Humble, obedient belief that does the will of the Father which is obeying Jesus. Jesus. That's Christianity.

They lost sight of that. They were denied God's kingdom. It was taken away from them. And here you had tax collectors and harlots trusting Jesus.

[9:21] The outcasts. This controversy between Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders it was climaxing and the issue was Jesus' authority and authority.

They certainly did not authorize oh yeah, that's the truth. since he was unsanctioned by them they wanted to know who did. Really?

Jesus' words and works plainly showed his authority was from heaven. Why were they asking about it? Because they felt threatened. And they were going to end up doing the very thing that Jesus predicted they would do.

They would kill him. And yet they really did not want to know where his authority came from because if they did they would not have responded to Jesus in the way that they did.

And Jesus saw right through their hypocrisy. Their authority would be taken away from them and given to others. They would no longer lead Israel.

[10:33] It was done. And their question which was driven by animosity and desire to trap Jesus it led to Jesus giving three piercing parables to show that they as Israel's leaders have been rejected.

They rejected John and thus they rejected Jesus. They refused to do what they promised or they promised we're going to obey God. But they didn't.

And of those three piercing parables today we're going to see two of them. Next week we'll see a third. They were just like this son we'll see that in a moment who said he would do what his father said but he didn't do it.

We asked our kids go do this. I'm going to go do that. Why didn't you make your bed? I don't know. All of a sudden they get brain dead and they don't know. How does that happen? They do know.

They do not do what was promised. Following Jesus is about doing what he says.

[11:48] He who hears these words of mine and does them remember Matthew chapter 7 is like the man who built his house upon the rock. Remember that? Not just empty promises.

So I got three principles we're going to learn from these religious leaders. And I put them in like a you're going to see the religious leaders their attitude and how they are and then I'm going to put a positive end on that on purpose which is more applicable for us.

So for instance here we go three principles we can learn from these religious leaders number one arrogance versus humbleness. Their arrogance versus their attitude should have been humility or humbleness arrogance humbleness it kind of rhymes.

Preachers do stuff like that. Anyways that's what I learned from the conference just kidding. Verse 23 he came to the temple chief priests and elders they're in charge of the temple and how Jesus had acted remember triumphal entry cleanse the temple healing the sick it displayed a higher authority than their own.

So who gave it to him? They the elders the religious leaders chief priests they authorized teachers so what were his credentials?

[13:16] Who sanctioned him? By the way elders they were members of the Sanhedrin chief priests of the high priest family chief priests elders you'll see the Pharisees all of these they all failed both failed to see that all of Jesus words and works testified to his true identity a failure they willingly did not want to see.

Notice the question by what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority? Obviously they're trying to trap him because if he said well this guy or some human well that human that he named off is inferior to them to their status because they're the religious leaders but if he said from God well then they could accuse him of blasphemy so they're trying to trap him so what did Jesus do?

He turned the tables on them look at verse 24 I will ask you one word which you tell me I'll tell you also but what authority I do these things answer my question I answer yours John's baptism was from what source heaven or men their attempt to trip Jesus had failed oh the tide had turned and they're in a quandary notice there in verse 25 reason among themselves from heaven their disbelief would be exposed well I don't want that to happen well if we say from men all the people get mad at us why because they thought of John as a prophet all these people from all over the Roman empire they heard about John and they considered John to be a prophet it verse 27 answering we don't know they claimed ignorance which in essence betrayed what they really thought about John what do they think about

John he was a farce he was a nutcase they did not affirm John in his ministry they refused to believe John Jesus knew that their answer was a sham one writer put it like this if they cannot tell whether God was at work in John the Baptist they are not competent to question and judge Jesus that's so true see neither side was politically practical notice Jesus neither will I tell you but what authority do these things I won't tell you what authority do these things which really does show the source of his authority right in that Jesus subtly affirmed John and his ministry being likened to his own and thus

Jesus authority was from the same source as John's authority from God he nails them right here and then he's going to drive it home farther but before I do that just small point I want to bring up a great lesson for us we come to God with humility not with arrogance we got to remember God is so gracious to us who did they think they were the arrogance they they they position themselves before God friends we deserve nothing from God he's given us such grace hasn't he great lesson for us to learn arrogance versus humbleness number two another one emptiness versus performance emptiness versus performance notice verse 28 here's the first parable he gives them three piercing parables the first one is here what do you think two children can the first go work today he says

[17:36] I will and he doesn't go came to the second says the same thing he says I'm not going to go but then he goes and I think in some versions some manuscripts they have it backwards says I won't go but he does you know it's whatever the point's going to remain the same but Jesus is doing this to show they truly have rejected his authority and he's exposing their unbelief so the point is we try to say when he gives a story son says no but then he says he's going to go the other son says okay I will go but he doesn't do it what's the point do what is right and not just talk about it just having empty words but no practice behind it that's the point or another way to put it good intentions don't matter what matters is our actions which truly show what's real and genuine our actions should match our words what counts as one writer put it is not promise but performance and we don't mean performance in terms of the sense of going through the motions that's not what we're talking about here but performance in the sense of doing versus just talking about it not that words don't matter

Jesus had brought it up earlier that they show the heart he's really trying to make an emphasis because one part they say I'm not going to go but then they do it the other part says oh yes I will go we're going to go do it it was nothing but empty promises they did not do it these fake religious leaders had a lot of words blah blah blah blah blah but no obedience to God and his word because notice what Jesus does look at verse 31 he's going to nail him here verse 31 which of the two did the will of his father they said the latter he asked them to respond as a way for them to condemn themselves their unbelief was just like the son who said yes I will go but didn't do it who did notice what Jesus says truly I say to you that the tax collectors and the harlots are getting into the kingdom of

God before you see they promised to work in God's vineyard but they did nothing all they gave were empty promises in contrast to that the tax collectors and harlots believed John they initially refused but later they repented as he says in verse 32 for John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him but the tax collectors and harlots they did believe him one writer said this about the tax collectors and the harlots he called them the no hopers these were no hopers they were outcasts due to the way of their living the way they lived their lives so what did they need they needed hope grace mercy and when called to repent it was these no hopers who responded to John it was these no hopers who repented and believed

John's message see these kinds of people were cut off from the religiosity that was central to the chief priests the elders and the Pharisees these ones responded to the message of the kingdom more openly than those who held to their religious observances of their religious establishment oh we just follow the law we just go down our legalistic type tendencies and we're just fine you harlots and tax collectors get out of here it was these religious leaders they didn't cause a huge scandal they just easily they conveniently went through their outward motions of religiosity but they were the ones that were guilty of not responding to the demand of wholehearted repentance and true dedication to God by belief in Jesus they were a sham they were liars and here you see the most notorious blatant

Jewish sinners who would repent and believe they entered God's kingdom before these leaders these leaders who would not repent these responded to John's call to repent and they changed their whole way of living and the leaders just balked at John they thought he was a crazy nutcase these leaders should have represented God that's what they were called to do they were called to represent God they weren't doing that remember how Jesus says John came in the way of righteousness but the leaders rejected him the way of righteousness denotes life and obedience to God's word remember that that's going to come up again in the next parable pair of the wicked tenants notes life and obedience to

[23:51] God which the leaders did not do the leaders didn't do that they were like that fig tree remember the fig tree just had leaves and Jesus walked up to it because it looked like it had fruit he was going to pick the fruit there's no fruit no fruit at all and you know something even the changed lives of tax collectors and harlots that didn't even faze him look at the next part look at here the next part verse 33 excuse me verse 32 and you seeing this did not even feel remorse afterward so as to believe him what's he saying these leaders they should have learned from the example of the tax collectors and harlots but instead of learning from them their arrogant pride kept them from believing John and thus believing in

Jesus I mean when you see someone who responds to Christ doesn't that excite you when you see someone who who is walking in the path of wickedness and yet their life just changes I mean this

should excite you right you don't go like oh that's horrible get out of my face man I don't want to be around you you'd be like what's wrong with you you don't say stuff like that right you don't act like that that's exactly the way the religious leaders are acting they had no remorse they didn't care about tax collectors and harlots their whole life's changing it didn't even face them what and these these guys was Israel's leaders not only did they not repent and believe John they didn't feel one ounce of remorse when they saw tax collectors and harlots repent and believe this showed the darkness of their hearts at the end of the day one writer puts it like this quote discipleship is fundamentally about deeds end quote with all the knowledge of the temple the old testament they shockingly did not obey the father's will even more shocking even more shocking is that God's grace calls and saves the most hideous notorious sinners who will repent and believe these will truly enter God's kingdom because they humbled themselves before God because they responded to the gospel God calls us as Jesus followers to persevere in the faith and he calls sinners to repent and believe it just goes to show you that entrance into God's kingdom is promised not just to those who say it but to those who actually respond to Jesus that's why it comes down to this the unrepentant religious establishment Israel's religious leaders they would be replaced by a non status repentant Jesus believing group of people for starters the 12 band of these renegade type riffraffs his disciples

Israel's leaders and the people they're going to pay severely for rejecting their Messiah all would end up suffering Israel as a nation would be hardened to the gospel so that the fullness of the Gentiles may come into the kingdom that's what we just read in Romans chapter 11 but it would be Jesus 12 disciples who would pave the way for it the foundation for the church which leads us into the last point for us to learn defiance or you can even use the word obstinance versus compliance compliance or obedience defiance versus compliance obstinance versus obedience Jesus gives the second parable the parable of the wicked tenants reminiscent of Isaiah chapter 5 verses 1 through 7 yet Jesus changes a little bit of the things here from Isaiah chapter 5 so again defiance versus compliance or if you want an

O word obstinance versus obedience you see how the leaders are responding versus how they should have been responding and Jesus does this by telling a story let me give you kind of the correlation between the people that he's using in the story how it correlates within the Old Testament the father is the land owner Israel is the vineyard the religious leaders are the wicked tenants or wicked vine growers I think you have in your translations the slaves represent the prophets and of course Jesus is the son and I put there it's a mini Old Testament it's a mini little picture of the Old Testament that's exactly what this story is three times the land owner he acted to try to obtain fruit from the vineyard fruit stands for right living or right obedience to God remember when Jesus mentioned that in the first story the way of righteousness the land owner wanted to receive his share of the fruit which stands for right living or right obedience to [30:02] God but these religious leaders did not display that fruit of obedience they would end up killing God's son as a way to retain their authority Jesus as the son was the final culmination of the father and the people rejecting Jesus was their final rebellion notice how God was extremely patient with the leaders of his people who were consistently rejecting the messengers the prophets the prophets but he wanted the fruit the land owner was calling for the fruit which again the fruit equals life and obedience to God and his word and yet notice he says here in verse what was it verse 35 the tenants took the slaves and beat one killed another and stoned a third he sent a second group they did the same thing to them these defiant disobedient abstinent tenants refused to give the fruit to the land owner which was his land they thought they owned the vineyard which stood for God's kingdom blessings they had failed to remember

God's grace God was gracious to Israel Israel didn't deserve any of this stuff their religious leaders didn't deserve any of this God was showing his grace to them Israel was the vineyard excuse me God's kingdom blessings was the vineyard it was there you're supposed to give it to him but they took it for themselves God will replace these obstinate tenants with new true ones the mistreatment by the way of the land owners slaves depicts Israel's constant rejection of God's prophets in the Old Testament notice God is a kind patient compassionate God who showed mercy to these rebels three different times and the third time he says I'm going to send my son they will respect my son notice this is the heir come let us kill him and seize his inheritance verse 39 taking him they threw him out of the vineyard which depicts Jesus being killed outside of the city of Jerusalem and they killed him verse 40 when the lord of the vineyard comes what will we do to those tenants he asked

them this and they walked right into their own judgment their own words would condemn them notice they said he would bring those wretches to a wretched end yep exactly verse 42 Jesus said to them have you never read the scriptures he quotes psalm 118 verse 22 you're ignorant but they proclaim to know the scriptures so well did they really not read it of course they've read it but did they really read it the builders had rejected the stone which became the foundational cornerstone which is Jesus himself and this stone would be the corner of two walls so not only would it count as like the foundation like the piece as they laid the foundation but it would set the position of the whole rest of the building Jesus was the head corner and notice this came from the Lord and it's wonderful in our eyes it's marvelous in our eyes that God has done this and here comes one of the most debated passages in Matthew's gospel if not in the whole Bible verse 43 therefore I say to you the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it to whom does this refer does the church replace Israel not exactly the kingdom will be taken away from defiant religious leaders and given to a nation who will lead the church they will comply and be obedient to God Jesus 12 disciples would be the foundation upon which the church would be built with Jesus as the head cornerstone Jesus just mentioned that to his disciples in Matthew chapter 16 the kingdom was taken away from these leaders it will be given to those who produce the fruit of it and even if you say the church replaced Israel it would only be temporary since Israel nationally will be grafted back into the branch with one people of God that's why we read Romans chapter 11 but all in all it seems Jesus referred to the leaders not to Israel as a whole the leaders were the most to be blamed for the way for the waywardness of the people the people being wayward themselves not only did they not enter the kingdom these leaders they prevented others from entering the kingdom you'll see this in Matthew chapter 23 when Jesus will condemn the Pharisees scribes the hypocrites because they will prevent people from entering God's kingdom look at verse 44 and he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces but on whoever it falls it will scatter them like dust anyone who rejects this cornerstone are the ones who would stumble over the stone and fall they'd be broken into pieces grounded to dust for their defiant disobedient attitude this is a warning of judgment that would come to the temple to the temple establishment as well as all the people of [36 : 06] Jerusalem from 70 AD that temple that they were in would be totally destroyed and yet do you see the hint of mercy notice the hint of mercy it says he who falls on the stone will be broken to pieces so if you fall on this stone you will be broken but you can be healed but if it's that stone or he falls on you you'll be grounded into dust you will face his judgment which is why you should come which is why you should repent which is why you should trust Jesus today yes he'll break you yes you'll be broken yes he will humble you and yet he will restore you and heal you he will save you he'll forgive you of all your sins you'll be reconciled to

God don't respond the way these religious leaders did don't be arrogant don't have emptiness and obstinance towards God don't resist him trust him let it down let it go and come to God and notice the religious leaders they understood this verse 45 when they heard this parable they understood that he was speaking concerning them they knew contextually this is referred to religious leaders they recognized Jesus directed this parable at them not the people not Israel which is why notice verse 46 they were seeking to seize him just like Jesus had predicted in the parable and they're going to do it right they're going to kill him yet they feared the crowds because they held Jesus to be a prophet all these people were enthusiastic about Jesus they're going to arrest him now I doubt it so they stopped short of doing that you know that fig tree illustration earlier in chapter 21 it kind of lies in the background of what would happen next with the religious establishment questioning Jesus authority they didn't believe John which means they wouldn't believe Jesus in opposition to the tax collectors in opposition to harlots these notorious sinners and yet the fruit they were to yield which is right living obedience to God barren so the place of authority will be taken away and it will be given to those who would rightly lead God's people by building upon the head cornerstone building upon Christ so learn learn from these religious leaders who were denied God's kingdom discipleship is about deeds humble obedient believe that does the will of the father obeying Jesus humbleness performance compliance obedience that's discipleship learn these truths from these religious leaders learn these principles from God's word from what happened to them and their arrogance before God true Jesus discipleship true Christianity is humble obedient belief in the Lord Jesus that's what it means to really worship him go all through emotions right living before God because he's been so gracious to us you're so

amazed over his grace to you you just can't help but respond in worship and so help us father help me help us all to be so overwhelmed with your grace towards us that that grace would be the thing that spurs us on not to obstinance not to defiance not to arrogance not to emptiness but in compliance obedience submissiveness humbleness doing your word work in us we pray we ask that you father would do that by your spirit in our hearts bring true worship

I encourage you this time as we normally do each Sunday time of silence for you to think and ponder that you allow God by his spirit to apply these truths to you maybe taking time to pray maybe reading through notes whichever the case may be and we have our forms we do a time of giving we'll sing we'll pray we do those things which are good we should do those things those are ways that we can worship God and yet remind yourself of the gospel truth remind yourself of God's grace to you and let your mind dwell on these things and may it spur you on to respond the way harlots did to respond the way tax collectors did the hated despised outcasts of Israel with humility submissiveness and obedience to our

[42 : 11] Lord because we just love him we're so amazed of his grace take a few moments to do that him to say things again what he says who Thank you.