

The Word That I Have Spoken

Of all the great orators down through history, the words of Jesus Christ seem to have been the most quoted of them all; whether mostly by preachers and teachers in the church or of those in the denominations, those in the public arena, of those practicing non-Christian world religions or even of those professing atheism, who skewer His teachings in order to contest the existence of God. Of all those who ever mentioned even a portion of His teachings, none can say they were given the authority to speak the truth with the power He wielded because none has, or ever had, the personal relationship He has with the Source of all truth. His words carry the message that came directly from above. Speaking to Satan...

Mat 4:4 ... He answered, "It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

He then makes application to Himself, so as to say even He was subject to them.

Joh 12:49 For I have not spoken on My own authority, but the Father Who sent me has himself given Me a commandment--what to say and what to speak. 50 And I know that His commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told Me."

As Jesus has said in this passage, He spoke as He was directed to speak by His Father, stating "His commandment is eternal life", meaning it carried with it the rewards of Heaven to all who will obey it. So for us to take the great commission into all the world is to take the words of Jesus, Who had received "all authority in Heaven and on earth" (Mat 28:19), to command all who will follow Him to spread that message of truth.

Joh 6:58 This is the Bread that came down from Heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate and died. Whoever feeds on this Bread will live forever." 59 Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as He taught at Capernaum. 60 When many of His disciples heard it, they said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" 61 But Jesus, knowing in Himself that His disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, "Do you take offense at this? 62 Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where He was before? 63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. **The words that I have spoken** to you are spirit and life.

Of course after making such a difficult statement...

Joh 6:66 ... many of His disciples turned back and no longer walked with Him. 67 So Jesus said to the Twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?" 68 Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the **words of eternal life**, 69 and we have believed, and have come to know, that You are the Holy One of God."

There are several "hard sayings" that many can't or even won't listen to that the Bible instructs the faithful to heed and teach. Many of Jesus' words Satan will even exploit to split fellowship between brethren in Christ's body, the church. One such passage

that an unlearned person will use as a means to devalue Christ's authority has to do with His first coming.

Joh 12:47 If anyone hears My words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I **did not come to judge** the world **but to save** the world. **48** The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has a judge; **the word that I have spoken** will judge him on the last day.

Speaking of His first coming, Christ's purpose **was** to show man the way to have eternal life through His shed blood. It was also His opportunity to teach that those who didn't accept the gospel plan of salvation, didn't "receive [His] words", then He would return and punish.

2Th 1:7 ...when the **Lord Jesus** is revealed from **Heaven** with **His** mighty angels **8** in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who **do not know God** and on those who **do not obey the gospel** of our **Lord Jesus**. **9** **They will suffer** the punishment of **eternal** destruction, away from the presence of the **Lord** and from the glory of **His** might, **10** when **He** comes on that day to be glorified in **His** saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.

- On those who "do not know **God**" and "do not obey the gospel" will cover everyone who has been blessed with a mindset to comprehend right and wrong. Of course this excludes children along with those who are "like minded", meaning, those who are underdeveloped or mentally handicapped. But if this "destruction" is to be "eternal", how long will that be?

Eternity

It's very difficult to think of eternity with such human finite minds. Some have taught that God is such a loving God that He couldn't possibly direct that those who are found on the wrong side of the judgment will spend such an unending, conscious existence in such a place as Hell. The "doctrine of annihilation" has been introduced by such ignorance as a way to alleviate the harshness of an unending punishment.

Annihilationism asserts that God will eventually destroy the wicked, leaving only the righteous to live on in **immortality**. Some annihilationists (e.g. **Seventh-day Adventists**) believe God's love is scripturally described as an all-consuming fire^[2] and that sinful creatures cannot exist in God's presence. Thus those who elect to reject salvation through their free will are eternally destroyed because of the inherent incompatibility of sin with God's holy character. Seventh-day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses posit that **hell** is a false doctrine of pagan origin. It stands in contrast to the traditional and long standing belief in eternal torture in the **lake of fire**, and the belief that everyone will be saved (**universal reconciliation** or simply "universalism").

Wikipedia

If the average person, who lives a life of average morals, were to believe such a teaching, he would have a choice of either suffering now, as a Christian might suffer neglecting the will of the flesh, and receive an eternal reward later, or live in the now and party

hardy and not worry about being punished for eternity later, but will simply no longer exist. Many an atheist has taught that the teachings of eternal punishment are the only way to keep the faithful in line with certain church doctrines. That may well be the case with how false religions keep their un-Biblical power and influence over their flocks, but such wasn't the intention of our loving God from the beginning. Don't even loving parents teach their children about the dangers of alcohol, illegal drugs and other self-destructive lifestyles? If there were no consequences why would there be such restrictions? And why would Jesus mention an "eternal punishment" (Mat 25:45) if such was never intended by God to be the final destiny of those who will not obey Him? Wasn't He trying to point out to His creation the danger that would result from a life of such sinful behavior?

"In addressing this erroneous doctrine, several factors need to be taken into consideration. First, the passage affirms that ungodly rebels will "suffer punishment," which is equivalent to "eternal destruction." Suffering surely implies consciousness. Hence, the "destruction" is not that of an unconscious state of nonexistence. How can one who does not exist suffer?

Second, the word "destruction" ([Gk.3639-ruin, punishment] olethros) does not demand the concept of annihilation."

Wayne Jackson- The Christian Courier/ 2 Thes 1:9-Everlasting Destruction

And of all who made whatever contribution to the N.T. the One Who spoke the most about Hell was Jesus! But the question is often asked "why would such a loving God send anyone to an eternal Hell?" And of course the follow-up question "why for an eternity when even a lifetime of crime on earth shouldn't deserve such a sentence?"

"Is it the case that genuine justice can be served even when an evil man's punishment is extended beyond the time involved in the commission of his crime? Do we, for example, in our criminal justice system, ask the murderer, "Sir, how long did it take you to kill your wife?"—then assign his incarceration accordingly? Would justice be maintained by such an approach?

*Here, then, is the point. True justice, combined with genuine goodness, allows the possibility that a wrongdoer may be required to suffer a penalty that is considerably longer than the duration of his evil. The real issue, therefore, is not punishment per se, or even protracted punishment; rather, it is **eternal** punishment. The skeptic (or religious materialist) simply wants to tell God how long the penalty is to be! Remember, however, in a system of true justice, the offender is not allowed to set his own sentence."*

Wayne Jackson- The Christian Courier/Why Would a Loving God Send us to Hell?

So what of the other side of eternity? If after the final day when Christ returns will a faithful saint realize some of their loved ones on earth didn't make it? How could such a torment even exist in such a paradise?

“... a problem for many is this: “How could I be happy in heaven if I discover that precious loved ones are not there?”

The question assumes that family emotions will be the same then as they are now. And that is very unlikely. It is virtually certain, in fact, that in the final state of glory our sense of holiness and goodness will be so far transcendent to our current perceptions of these qualities that all human relationships will be viewed in a different light.

I say what I am about to say with the deepest reverence and most profound sensitivity, but I must say it. If we really perceived how terrible it is to reject God and the gift of his beloved son, we would see those who are of that vein — even our dearest ones — in an entirely new way. It is very likely that we will not miss the “enemies” of God (cf. Luke 19:27) at all — no matter who they are. Let that sink in.”

Wayne Jackson- The Christian Courier/**The Terror of Death: Causes and Cures**

With only human emotions to rely on we can often get so depressed over such thoughts. Many, many faithful brethren are in such a position as many of us here are too. What is our current solution?

Rom 15:4 ... through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Jas 5:8 You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the **Lord** is at hand. **9** Do not grumble (**Gk.4727- grudge**) against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the **Judge** is standing at the door.

Which brings us to the next subject that Jesus often admonished and even encouraged His followers to be active in.

Judging

Gk.2919- Properly to *distinguish*, that is, *decide* (mentally or judicially); by implication to *try*, *condemn*, *punish*: - avenge, conclude, condemn, damn, decree, determine, esteem, judge, go to (sue at the) law, ordain, call in question, sentence to, think.

*“The basic term is neutral in its character; only the context can suggest either a positive or negative connotation.” **

*“That “judging” is not intrinsically evil is demonstrated by the fact that God judges (Heb. 12:23), and so does Christ (Acts 10:42; 2 Tim. 4:8). The common retort to this observation, though, is this: “Yes, God and Christ have the right to judge; but we, who are but mere mortals, do not.” While that may sound noble, it is not under-girded [**backed up**] with scriptural evidence.*

The truth of the matter is, “judging” is both condemned and commended in the Bible. It is prohibited and commanded. But how can this be, if, as Christians commonly claim, the Scriptures are inspired of God, and thus do not contradict one another? The

answer is a very simple one. The concept of “judging” is employed in **different senses** in sacred literature.”*

- None can judge, i.e. condemn, but all are to judge, i.e. make decisions. None can know what’s in a person’s heart but we can judge, i.e. distinguish, whether or not a person is saved according to their response to the great commission.

Mar 16:15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

- To say otherwise is to deny the words of Christ. It also shows a lack of regard for the truth when Jesus Himself said...

Mat 7:13 "Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

- But then comes the rebuttal “Well, you’re not Jesus that you can just say who is saved and who is lost!” None of us are the final Judge but we can, in fact we’re commended to, make decisions based on application of Biblical truths. How else could we fulfill Jesus’ purpose for coming to “seek and to save the lost” (Lk 19:10)? And we are to continue to do so, especially when it concerns our treatment of each other regarding this and other hot button topics.

Jas 4:11 Do not **speak evil against** one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges (Gk.2919- *condemns*) his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. 12 There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, He Who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge (Gk.2919) your neighbor (Gk.2087- *other*)?

To speak against a fellow Christian here is to do so with malice, otherwise it wouldn’t be considered sinful. Remember, all things are to be done toward the edification of others. Now notice Jesus’ directive on how we are **not** to, along with how we **are** to judge in the same sentence.

Joh 7:24 Do not judge (Gk.2919- *condemn*) by appearances, but judge (Gk.22919- *distinguish*) with right judgment (Gk.2920- *justice [specifically divine law]*)."

*“There is a principle here set forth. Judging (drawing correct conclusions) is not merely an option; it is an obligation. “Righteous” depicts both the character, and the manner, of the one who does the judging. All of us make judgments regarding others; indeed, we are forced to every day. But those judgments should be rendered compassionately and in conformity with the facts.”**

Mat 7:1 "Judge not (Gk.2919- *condemn*), that you be not judged (Gk.2919- *condemned*). 2 For with the judgment (Gk.2917- *decision*) you pronounce you will be judged (Gk.2919- *tried*), and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. 3 Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in

your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

*“There is a wrong way to judge (and surely the best of people err in this manner on occasion), but there also are right ways to judge, and these must not be neglected due to a misconception of what judging actually is.”**

Each of us have, at some time or another, made judgments that haven't been to the best interest of others or even to ourselves. So, before we think to pass judgments on others we need first to consider whether we might have some skeletons in our own closets. Sometimes making such judgments are a form of 'a mere defense mechanism that "judges" the alleged "judge"!'.

Wayne Jackson- The Christian Courier/*Don't Judge Me!*

Judging Within

It's not complicated to assess that the world outside the church has a need for the blood of Christ. Otherwise, why even evangelize when we can't even think the world is lost in the first place? Is that condemning the world or is it making a proper examination of the facts as laid out by Jesus and His statement in Mat 7:13-14? That aside, we are to judge, i.e. condemn, certain actions within the congregation that will impact the church negatively, such as gossiping, backbiting, holding grudges, etc. Another sin Paul dealt with, when he wrote to the church at Corinth.

1Co 5:4 When you are assembled in the Name (*Gk.3686- authority*) of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, 5 you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

Notice the perspective between those outside the church and those within and how we are to associate with each. It should give us a better understanding on how we are to practice "discipline".

1Co 5:9 I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people-- 10 **not** at all meaning the sexually immoral **of this world**, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, **since** (*Gk.686- drawing the conclusion*) then you would need to go out of the world. 11 **But** now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler--not even to eat with such a one. 12 For what have I to do with judging (*Gk.2919- punishing*) **outsiders**? Is it not those **inside** the church whom you are to judge (*Gk.2919- punish*)? 13 God judges (*Gk.2919- punishes*) those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you."

- In this sense the word "punish" fits the context since withdrawing from the disorderly is a form of punishment that we are to use as a means to **lovingly** restore our erring brethren. We can't inflict such punishment on those

outside the body of Christ because they'll probably, and rightly so, just look at us as though we've lost our collective minds, because...

1Co 2:14 The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned (*Gk.350- to scrutinize, investigate, determine*). 15 The spiritual (*Gk.4152-non-carnal*) person judges (*Gk.350*) all things, but is himself to be judged (*Gk.350*) by no one. 16 "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct Him?" But we have the mind (*Gk.3563- intellect*) of Christ.

- See where the word for judge has different meanings according to the way they are incorporated into each sentence? Only a spiritually minded person is able to “discern” spiritual things, and can therefore “discern all things” according to his understanding and growth in the word of God. As we grow we gain more knowledge according to the “intellect of Christ”.

2Ti 2:15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, **rightly handling** the word of truth.

Joh 12:48 The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has a judge; **the word that I have spoken** will judge him on the last day.

- Jesus thus gave the standard by which we are to judge; His word.

2Ti 2:16 But avoid irreverent babble (*Gk.2757- fruitless discussion*), for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, 17 and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, 18 who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened (*or as in our lesson today on judging without fully understanding scripture to back up our arguments against it*). They are upsetting the faith of some. 19 But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the Name of the Lord depart from iniquity."

“The Lord knows those who are His”. He’s especially in tune with those who are called Christians. He’s watching and knows our inmost thoughts even better than we do. Which is how, in His words to the seven churches of Asia, Jesus was able to condemn those that were in need of strong rebuke but spare those, who were strong in their faith, from what was “coming on the whole world” at that time (*Rev 3:10*).

Rev 2:1 ... the church in Ephesus ... 2 I know your works... 4 ... abandoned the love [they] had at first.

Rev 2:8 ... the church in Smyrna...10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. ... that you may be tested...

Rev 2:12 ... the church in Pergamum...14 ... I have a few things against you...

Rev 2:18 ... the church in Thyatira ...19 I know your works... 20 ... that you tolerate... (*What teachings or attitudes do we tolerate that Christ would not be pleased with?*)

Rev 3:1 ... the church in Sardis...I know your works... 2 Wake up...

Rev 3:7 ... the church in Philadelphia... 8 I know your works...and yet you have kept My word and have not denied My name (*Gk.3686- authority*).
(Do we deny Christ's authority by not submitting to it in every aspect of our lives?)

Rev 3:14 ... the church in Laodicea... 15 ... you are neither cold nor hot. ... (*Useless!*)

Which of the seven best describes the church in Mt. Holly? Being honest we need to ask ourselves where we lack and could use some improvement and also where our strong points lie so we can build on them.

Luk 6:45 The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. 46 "Why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?

- "Why do you give Me the title of supremacy but then show indifference to My instructions?" A person's viewpoints on life begins within the heart; mind. The evidence of it is revealed by that individual's actions. Jesus' rebuke was that they were saying one thing and doing another. They weren't following "the word that He had spoken". They were following a carnal world view. Paul would later instruct the brethren at Rome...

Rom 12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

- What is the will of God? God "is not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance" (*2 Pet 3:9*). It is the "repentance that leads to life" (*Act 11:18*) that concerns Him the most. Note again the words that Jesus spoke concerning what must be done to attain that life.

Mat 28:18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

- Have you obeyed "the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (*2 Thes 1:8*)? Have you submitted to being buried with Him?

Rom 6:5 For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His.

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