

All That Jesus Taught Bible Study - Part 48

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of our words and the true nature of Christlikeness in this Bible study on Jesus' teachings.

Duration: 25:00

Topics: "Christlike Living", "Judgment Day"

Description

This sermon delves into the importance of our speech, emphasizing that our words reveal the condition of our hearts and that we will be judged based on our words in the day of judgment. It also highlights the significance of Christlikeness, which includes both gentleness and firmness, and the need to be careful with our words, ensuring they are always filled with grace. The sermon further discusses the significance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ as the ultimate sign and the consequences of not replacing evil with good in our lives.

Transcript

We turn again to continue our study in all that Jesus taught. We're looking through the Gospels to see what is it that Jesus taught that we need to do and teach others to do. And we were looking at Matthew chapter 12 and verse 33.

Either make the tree good and its fruit good or make the tree bad and its fruit bad for the tree is known by its fruit. And then he says you brood of vipers. He's talking to these Pharisees who had said that he was casting out demons by the prince of demons and he calls them brood of vipers.

Now there are many people who feel Christlikeness means you never speak strong words. There are numerous Christians. If a preacher ever got up and turned and said this group of people is a brood of vipers there are lots of Christians who would jump on him and say brother be more Christlike.

What does it mean to be Christlike? This is Jesus Christ himself speaking. You brood of vipers. That is to be Christlike.

To those who deserve it you don't call those who don't deserve it by that name but Jesus called those who deserve it by this name you brood of vipers. If someone were to turn the tables of money changers today people would say you need to be more Christlike. The people who say these words don't realize that Jesus himself turned the tables of money changers in the temple.

So many people's understanding of Christlikeness is from their own head. They think Christlikeness means just be gracious and let the devil run the church don't say anything keep quiet that's Christlikeness. That's a lot of garbage and that's the garbage that a lot of Christians believe as Christlikeness.

Christlikeness includes gentleness but it also includes firmness. It's tough love that is Christlikeness. Not wishy-washy sentimental sentimental type of love that ignores the glory of God.

So Jesus turns around to these people and says you brood of vipers how can you being evil speak what is good? The tree will only give forth the type of fruit depending on what type of tree it is and the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. Everything that comes out of our mouth comes from within our heart because the mouth is the overflow valve of the heart. So if your heart is filled with evil, evil will come out of your mouth.

If your heart is filled with anger, anger comes out of your mouth. If your heart is filled with goodness, goodness comes out of your mouth. Now of course we can act and say things which are not in our heart but by a certain measure of self-control I keep suppressed what is in my heart and speak words which are not really true.

You know sometimes diplomatically we speak to people what we don't really feel about them for some personal gain or something like that but whenever you see a person suddenly out of control bursting out with something that you can be sure that's come from his heart. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks and like someone has used this illustration that if I'm carrying a jug of sweet water no matter how heavily somebody shakes it or shakes me only sweet water will spill out. How can that sweet water in my jug suddenly become bitter just because somebody shook me hard.

So when somebody irritates us what comes out is what is always in our heart. There's something we never conquered an irritability or an anger it's in our heart it was carefully hidden submerged but someone approached us said something did something and out it came out like a flood. So let's never say that somebody else irritated me and therefore I said this.

Somebody shook you and what was inside your jar came out. Thank God he shook you so that you could discover what was inside your jar. You should be thankful to that person otherwise you'd have remained constantly ignorant of what was in your jug what was in your heart.

All the nice people around you who never shook you never shook your jug never gave you the opportunity to discover what was in your heart till this evil man came along and shook you really hard and out came all those bitter words for you to discover the bitterness that was in your heart. So should you be thankful or not? If somebody came into your room and toppled the cupboard in your room and the snake came out from underneath there that is living there all along would you be thankful to that man who toppled the cupboard in his anger? Sure. You'd say hey thank you very much I never knew there was a snake living underneath there all these years.

So if we take that attitude we can cleanse ourselves but if you get upset with the person who revealed the snake then you got it all wrong. So the mouth speaks out of the abundance that fills the heart. It's a principle we must remember and the good man out of his good treasure brings forth what is good naturally.

If the tree is good it will bring forth good fruit and the evil man out of his evil treasure brings forth what is evil. Imagine this that a man can have an evil treasure in his heart. One wouldn't think that evil is a treasure good is a treasure we can understand good thoughts about people and good attitudes to people is certainly a treasure but imagine people can be so bad that they have evil attitudes and evil thoughts about others and they call it a treasure.

This is satanic and from that evil treasure in when some pressure comes in like you squeeze a toothpaste tube out comes what is inside that's it. I say to you now if you think that the way we speak is unimportant so long as I've done a lot of good and done a lot of good things the way I speak is unimportant then you must be believing that which many religions believe that in the final day of judgment God's going to take a weighing balance and put all your good deeds on one side and all the evil words you spoke on the other side and the evil deeds and weigh the two and if the good deeds outweigh the evil deeds you go to heaven if the evil deeds outweigh the good deeds then you go to hell.

Now you know that's what many many religious religions really believe deep down and that could be your belief too even though you're a Christian even though you say salvation is through the death of Jesus Christ you may feel oh these bad words I've spoken they are taken care of by all the good that I have done which God will see well your faith is then the same but look at the of Jesus I say to you verse 36 and Jesus sometimes use that expression I say to you to emphasize that which most people wouldn't believe that every careless word that men shall speak they shall render account for it in the day of judgment I have sometimes wanted to write a little article on all real article on all the verses that Christians don't believe that born-again Christians do not believe and do not take

seriously and this would be one of them I don't know how many of you who are really born again believe this that every single careless useless word that you speak you'll have to give an account for it in the day of judgment I mean Jesus forgave them for calling him Beelzebul but they would still have to give an account for it in the day of judgment that they cannot escape because forgiveness has two directions whenever you sin against a human being you first sin against God and then against the human being the vertical and horizontal like the arms of the cross every sin is against God but some sins are only against God for example if you have dirty thoughts or you do something that harms your body that's a sin against God but if you hurt another person in some way with words or actions

you've seen not only against God but you've sinned against that person and that person can forgive you only the horizontal element of that sin that is the man-to-man part he cannot forgive you your sin against God how can he forgive what you have sinned against God that's impossible so when the Pharisees spoke against Jesus or you speak against somebody that person may forgive you but that's only the horizontal aspect of that sin the vertical aspect you're still responsible for when Jesus said on the cross father forgive them but they don't know what they're doing he was forgiving that horizontal element he says as far as I'm concerned I've forgiven them but there was a vertical element to it in the sense that they had crucified the Son of God that was a terrible sin against God and one

day they will all answer for it and the Jewish nation answered for it also by 40 years later after 40 years God gave them to repent he scattered them all over the world so we see that God is very righteous in these matters so every careless word that people speak and in the context it appears to be words of accusation carelessly spoken have you carelessly spoken against God's people against God's servants without thinking how serious a sin that is when you haven't known all the facts you've judged people you've criticized people based on hearsay without knowing all the facts that's what I mean by careless

speaking careless means you don't take care to find out if that thing is true you don't take care to think is this something which I can stand before God and say is the truth or is it

something I just heard and I'm spreading scandal or is it something how I feel about this person I feel this is the Prince of Devils operating here well your feeling is unimportant do you have some evidence for it that's the test so he says every careless word that men shall speak they shall account in the render account in the day of judgment in other words think of all the words we have spoken every day we had to be very careful that we don't speak words that hurt people unnecessarily there's a need sometimes to speak strong words like Jesus spoke to even to Jesus say Peter saying get behind me Satan God is a judge of the motive with which we have spoken different words but you can be pretty sure that the words we have spoken are being recorded somewhere in our memory perhaps and which

will be played back in the day of judgment every human being and if they're going to be judged on the basis of those words and we're not referring here to humor for example God is the one who created humor and I believe there's a place for humor in the Christian life so if you crack a clean joke which doesn't hurt anybody that's a good thing it sort of sometimes builds relationships that's not a careless word we're talking about words that are spoken instigated by Satan or did designed to hurt people etc and now here see these very important words we've all heard of justification by faith Romans chapter 4 we've all heard of justification by faith that produces works James chapter 2 or just if you are justified by our works which come out of faith but have you ever heard of this to be

justified by the words you speak that is part of James chapter 2 the works that we do include the words we speak and that's what Jesus himself said in Matthew 12 37 by your words you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned so here we see how important our words are that they are going to determine in the final day whether we're going to be justified or condemned in other words the our words in the context of this passage are the fruit which determines what type of tree we are you listen to a person's words and you can pretty much tell what type of tree that is I mean I can listen to a man for 15 minutes and gauge pretty much where he stands imagine God you can see much more our words are a very important revelation of our nature and our character especially the words

that we speak when we are under pressure so be very careful with your words in Colossians chapter 4 there's an amazing verse which says how we are to speak now these are some words which most Christians don't take too seriously but it says here in Colossians chapter 4 and verse 6 let your speech always be with grace always always always means 24 7 every sentence we speak must be with grace seasoned as it were with salt so that you know how to respond to each person so he says when grace is lacking in our speech it's like salt missing in the food it's tasteless so it's not just speaking about evil words we can speak these tasteless words God wants us to speak words rich in grace it could be strong words like you brood of vipers to shake people up into reality but it's spoken in love or it

could be gracious words like neither do I condemn you so by our words we can encourage people by our words we can condemn people let's make sure our words are always words of encouragement or challenge or comfort then we go on to Matthew 12 and verse 38 some of the scribes and Pharisees they were always trying to catch Jesus in something or the other came to him and said we want to see a sign remember we are trying to understand all that Jesus taught and Jesus taught a lot here about our speech which is very important teach others to do what I've commanded you teach others to speak like I have taught you how to speak and here is a group of people who wanted to see a sign they wanted to see some type of miracle they expect they thought Jesus was some type of magician who had come to show

magic shows on earth and he answered and said to them an evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign and no sign will be given to them but the sign of Jonah the Prophet do you know that it is an evil and adulterous generation that is always looking for signs to ask God please do a miracle please do a sign for me it's it is to be part of an evil and adulterous generation when God has given us his word and spoken to us through Christ there's no need to ask God for a sign he has shown us his will in the scriptures through the life of Jesus and through the words the Holy Spirit has given us in the Bible an evil and adulterous generation asked for a sign and he says this only sign you'll get is a sign of Jonah the Prophet and that is sign of resurrection as Jonah was in the whales but in

the belly of the sea monster for three days and three nights so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth and then he'll come out that's the sign the Jonah came out of that sea monsters mouth and the Son of Man will come out after three days and three nights in the heart of the earth and that resurrection is the only sign that God is going to give to an evil and adulterous generation so remember that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a very very important aspect of our witness for him then he says here about Jonah being in the belly of this fish for three days and three nights you know a lot of things that Christians believe in practice are tradition and not according to Scripture a lot of people think Jesus was crucified on what they call Good Friday

and that he rose from the dead on a Sunday now if you calculate simple arithmetic will tell you that Friday to Sunday morning is not three days and three nights it's only two nights Friday and Saturday and perhaps two days but Jesus said it's so clearly that it'd be three days and three nights that he would be in the heart of the earth so it is obvious we know definitely that he rose on the first day of the week that's clearly written in John's Gospel and in the other Gospels but if that be that that is the case which you know is true then Jesus Christ was crucified on Thursday afternoon at three o'clock in the afternoon he died so that would be part of Thursday one day Thursday night Friday day all day and Friday night Saturday whole day and Saturday night that's three days three nights

and then early Sunday morning before dawn he rose up from the dead that's the only way it could be three days and three nights so I don't have the slightest doubt in my mind that Christ was crucified on a Thursday and because that was the Passover day under the law the next day had to be a Sabbath day the first day of the feast of unleavened bread and that's why it says the disciples could not go I mean the women could not go and anoint Jesus' body the next day it says in John chapter 19 that when Jesus was crucified verse 31 John 19 31 the Jews because it was the day of preparation so that the body should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath day for that Sabbath was not an ordinary Sabbath it was a special Sabbath there's a high day it was not the regular Saturday it was a Friday which

was according to the law the day after the Passover was to be a Sabbath so there were two Sabbaths there and that's why they couldn't come till Sunday and that's how Jesus Christ died on a Thursday and he was three days and three nights in the grave and arose on Sunday morning and the other question people have is this I've had certain people ask me this if Jonah was alive in the belly of the fish does it mean Jesus was alive in the grave well it doesn't say he was in the grave for three days and three nights people read carelessly he was in the heart of the earth the heart of the earth is the center of the earth where at that time all departed spirits went it had two sections one was hell and the other was what is called paradise or Abraham's bosom and those who qualified to be in

paradise went there like the thief on the cross and the others went to hell and Jesus made it very clear to that thief on the cross that that very day they would be together in paradise and here it says in the heart of

the earth so from that we know that paradise at that time was in the heart of the earth and there Jesus was alive in the heart of the earth his spirit his body of course was in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea but he himself was not in his body then he was alive the Son of Man was alive in the heart of the earth where paradise is three days later he came into his body in the grave and rose up from the dead that's how if you don't read scripture carefully you can be mistaken there so he goes on to say the men of Nineveh shall stand by the way paradise was then taken up to the

third heaven when Jesus ascended Ephesians 4 says he took all those captives captive and ascended with them and when the Apostle Paul was caught up to the third heaven he found paradise was there so that paradise is no longer in the heart of the earth after the ascension of Christ it is in the third heaven we go up to be with the Lord now and we leave this earth moving on to verse 41 the men of Nineveh shall stand up with this generation and the judgment and condemn it because they repented of the preaching of Jonah and some than greater than Jonah is here to whom more is given more is required if the men of Nineveh repented of the preaching of an ordinary preacher like Jonah and here people are listening to Jesus Christ the Son of God and they don't repent their crime is greater was 42

the Queen of the South the Queen of Sheba will rise up in judgment and condemn this generation because she came all the way all those many kilometers to hear the wisdom of Solomon and someone greater than Solomon is here it's amazing how even today we find so many Christians who ignore the privileges they have right in their own street some own town across the street sometimes the gospel is being preached and they don't realize it next door to them may be living a man of God and they don't realize it well their judgment will be greater one last thing it speaks here about unclean spirits that when they leave a man and go out they're always looking for somebody else to possess evil spirits have a longing to possess human beings they pass through waterless places seeking for some place to

settle down and they don't find it they go back to visit the man from whom the unclean spirit was cast out and they find the man has not surrendered his life to Christ and be filled with the Holy Spirit so they take along seven other spirits more wicked than themselves and go and live there this is the way with this evil generation this is how it happens with many individuals as well when we cast out an evil if you don't replace that with something good we'll find we get into worse evil I've come across cases like that of demons that are cast out of somebody and they did not seek to surrender their life to Christ to be filled with the Holy Spirit they get possessed by the demons all over again sometimes worse situations so this is a warning not only about demon possession for example if

we get rid of the habit of grumbling replace it with the habit of Thanksgiving and then that grumbling attitude won't come back but if you just try to get rid of grumbling you'll find that and don't replace leave it empty you'll find grumbling comes right back this is an application in many areas we'll continue our study in our next episode

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