

Jesus' Words For the Young In The Faith

S435R 1015 25W

The message 'Important Truths for Young Christians' speaks to teenagers and those reaching the age of accountability, however, it is a message for everyone, of every age. It should challenge us to reflect on our commitment to Christ and remind us to 'walk same as we talk.' (Luke 6:46) *"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"*

Regardless of our age, important Truths from God's Word should always be welcomed as a reminder to re-assess our own personal commitment to God's Truth, and our loyalty to His Word. After the Life that Jesus Christ gave for us at Calvary, it is time to give our life 'to' Him.

Many times, our focus can be on our own needs and desires, when our desire could be on helping those who are less fortunate and have much less, and many times not even warm and proper clothing for the season.

We are reminded of 'helping the poor' (Matt.25:37-40) *"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'"*

To consider the needs of others ahead of one's own needs is something that a truly repentant person will want to do. When we commit our life to Christ we want to do things for Him, and the way to do that (He said), is to help the poor, the hungry, and the less fortunate.

When we confess our sins and accept Jesus so that He can take His rightful place in our heart, He will enable us to enter into a new life. We will pass from our spiritual lack (that of looking out for ourselves), to spiritual life (considering others needs and wanting to help them!)

Becoming a Christian means going from spiritual darkness to spiritual light, and be changed from, the power and influence of Satan, to the power and influence of God. There should be a noticeable change in us, as we have a brand-new life. If we are still focused on ourselves, we need to take time for a personal spiritual inventory.

God's eternal truths are the 'pearls of great price' for every Christian. (Matt.13:45-46) *"The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it."* (He got rid of a 'self-life', so that he could get the 'pearl of God's Spirit!')

We may think of the 'kingdom of heaven' as being the gift of Eternal Life (promised to all true believers), but Jesus said (Luke 17:21) *"The kingdom of God is within you."* It is not like an earthly kingdom (with geographical and political boundaries), instead, it is the work of the Holy Spirit inspiring us with a Christlike spirit within heart and mind.

The main focus for a new convert to Christ, is how can they learn more about God's truth and put it into practice, and how they may help others to live in the light of that same truth. Jesus told us that we should be a *"light for others to see and follow"*, (and we know that a lesson shown and seen is always better than a 'spoken lesson.' (Matt.5: 16) *"Just so let your light shine before all men, in order that they may see your holy lives and may give glory to your Father who is in Heaven."* The best way to represent Christ is for one to live in the light of God's truth themselves, and their light will shine on those around them.

Although young Christians and others should always be the peacemaker in the home, at work, during school, and, at all times, being a peacemaker does not mean that we go along with the unScriptural actions of others.

Jesus said, *"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come 'to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law-a man's enemies will be the members of his own household,'" (Matt.10:34-36; Micah 7:6).*

One's family can become divided because of their commitment to Jesus Christ. The books that an unbeliever reads, their activities, their music and other interests are all much different. One's interests glorify the only Savior of our soul while the other's interests exalt self-life.

No thing, no activity or entertainment, and no person can be placed ahead of Christ our Savior, because it is He alone who can save us from condemnation to the Lake of Fire. (Matt.10:37-38) *"Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me."* Jesus then explained (vs.39) that, *"Whoever finds his life*

will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

Anything given up for the kingdom of God, results in an eternal reward that far outweighs everything. We should give up secular music and replace it with Christian lyrics that will honor God.

Some friends or relatives may turn against us because of our convictions and our wanting to do God's will, but this is to be expected, (because it has happened many times in the past, as Jesus said that it would happen, because we bear the name of Christian and honor His Name. (Matt.5:11-12) *"Blessed are you when they have insulted and persecuted you and have said every cruel thing about you falsely for my sake. Be joyful and triumphant, because your reward is great in the Heavens; for so were the Prophets before you persecuted."* (Is that not happening as we speak to 'professed Christians' in most countries in this world.)

Some people may be offended by a young person's Christlike ways or by their Christian music, and they may try to put them down, or to discourage them in some way, but a new believer's love and devotion for the Lord must increase, (instead of decrease).

Every old or young believer should always love Jesus first, and they prove that by obeying Him over all others, (who may want them to go against the Lord's teaching, or to ignore His New Testament advice).

Jesus said that those who do not *"follow me are not worthy of me."* To be worthy of Jesus, means to love Him supremely. *"As it is written: 'No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him.'"* (1 Cor.2:9).

To love the Lord with all our heart is to represent Him in all our ways. With each day that God gives us, let it be conducted in a way that represents Him, by being a peacemaker when playing games, listening to music that glorifies Christ, and thinking about helping those who are less fortunate than we are.

Not one thing, not one choice, and not one person can be loved more than we love God. The possession of our faith in Him far outweighs anything else. To love the Lord should be the focus and commitment of every true Christian. *"Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world, to be rich in faith, and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?"* (James 2:5).

It is quite easy to say that we love the Lord, yet another thing to live like we actually do. The proof is revealed in the way we conduct our life, *"If you love me, you will obey what I command,"* (John 14:15). It is time for Christians of all ages to 'walk as they talk,' because if we are quick to say 'Lord, Lord', then let us also be just as quick to 'do what He says,' (as explained Luke 6:46).

That is why a young Christian reads the Bible every day. Their primary concern should be knowing what Jesus says to do. (Luke 6:27-28), *"Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who mistreat you."*

Loving our enemies, giving a gift to someone who dislikes us, being kind toward those who have talked about us, and praying for the ones who hurt us, is so opposite to the world, that they think a young Christian is not thinking right (when they respond as Christ tells us to).

Luke 6:46 keeps reminding us as a warning, *"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"* By the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, we can do what He says (Luke 29-31) *"If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you."*

There are not many people in this world today, who are allowing another hit, but (instead), are striking back forcefully. Not many are allowing a thief to take what they want, and not too many are giving things, unless they are forced to. If the world treated others as they would like to be treated, worldwide change for better would take place.

Millions are saying 'Lord, Lord,' but not many *"doing what He said to do."* That is why Jesus reminded all Christians (of all ages) to, *"Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to,"* (Matt.13:24).

Young or older Christians should never go along with unScriptural conduct or activities, and they must judge (only) a person's words or decisions. We are not to judge someone's motives. If a person says they will pray for us, we should say, 'Thank you,' and that we will also pray for them.

Many people are saying, 'what can I give myself?' but Jesus told us to, *"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down,*

shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you," (Luke 6:38).

Another important matter of fact in a young person's life in Christ, is one of mistreatment or persecution. Their new life of faith in Christ will bother some people (who have no love for the truth). This could be a friend, coworker, or relative, and a young Christian's commitment to Christ may annoy them, but new believers should persevere in the faith. (Luke 6:22-23) *"Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. 'Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their fathers treated the prophets.'"*

In 1 Peter 4:1-5, the apostle admonished us to 'arm ourselves with the same attitude that Christ had,' and, then he explained (vs.4, as paraphrased) *"Of course, your former friends will be very surprised when you don't eagerly join them anymore in the wicked things they do, and they will laugh at you in contempt and scorn".*

Persecution for a person wanting to live for the Lord, is a fact of a young Christian's life, and may often be in the form of being excluded, insulted, or left out. Loneliness can be something all true 'children of God' may have to deal with.

Some Christians have fallen away from the faith because of tests and persecution (or the fear of that). (Luke 8:13) *"The seeds that fell on rocky ground, stand for those who hear the message and receive it gladly. But it does not sink deep into them; they believe only for a while, but when the 'time of testing' comes, they fall away."*

Older and young Christians must realize then that when (not if), when persecution comes (because of their wanting to follow Christ), they must continue to obey God's Word and 'let their light shine'.

Each one should also be aware of not casting the 'pearls of God's Truth' to those who have no love for His Truth. If someone boldly opposes the Truth of God's Word, we must recall Jesus' words (Matt.7: 6) and not allow them to 'trample the pearl of great price' under their feet. *"Give not that which is holy to the dogs, nor throw your pearls to the swine; otherwise, they will trample them under their feet and then turn and attack you."*

We are to keep walking in faith on God's Word and instructions for us and keep thinking about the promised 'eternal rewards' given to those who hold steadfast and do not fall away in times of

testing. Every true believer has experienced some kind or level of persecution. (2 Tim.3:12 informs us that), *"In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."*

Young Christians (and older) should always stand up for what is right, defend their faith in Christ, and their desire to do God's will. (Heb.11:24-26), *"By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward."*

God's Word must be the basis for our decisions, our activities, and our choices, always. We need to know God's will by reading His Word. Jesus said, *"All this I have told you so that you will not go astray,"* (John 16:1). Knowing what Jesus said, keeps us on a straight path.

Knowing God's will can prevent us from going astray or stumbling. Jesus said to His disciples (and we are all His followers), (John 15:18-19), *"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you."*

Young Christians and others should be hungry to know God's truth, for it is an indication of saving faith in Christ. Each one must be aware, however, of erroneous doctrines. There are many false religions today, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Catholics, Muslims, Seventh Day Adventists, etc. Many such people can be friendly and zealous, but they are spreading deadly false doctrines, especially about salvation. Jesus warned us, saying, *"Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves,"* (Matt.7:15).

Aside from those religious groups, there is very much false teaching on television and radio, as well as in books (and especially so on the Internet today. That would also include all 'eternal security' teachers, those of the Catholic church who compromise with the Truth of God, and all teachings and doctrine that does not recognize the deity of Christ.

A writer has correctly said, 'Eternal security is (commonly referred to as OSAS, 'once saved, always saved', teaching), for the most part an unrecognized and rampant 'heresy' in our dark day.' Anyone giving a false doctrine or teaching is far more dangerous than a murderer who can only

take your life. Jesus told us (Matt.10:28), *"Do not fear those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna."*

Eternal security teaching is dangerous because it downplays 'sin' (in the life of a Christian), and it de-emphasizes the importance of bringing forth 'fruits of the Spirit'. Jesus said (John 5:29) [referring to the end times judgment], *"Those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned."*

Many people who have accepted the delusion of 'once saved, always saved,' have fallen away from the faith, and they no longer put God's Word into practice. But Jesus said that His true children are those, *"Who hear the word of God and do it,"* (Luke 8:21). [Many of those under that delusion, will try to say that there is no more sin in the world, while, in reality, sin is rampant all around us every day and night, and we must trust God to protect us from those sins of mankind.]

A young Christian needs to know that God's Word is the final authority. The basic Bible in itself is the only Book necessary to learn about Salvation and, of what God requires of us. Young Christians should surely avoid the so-called 'study Bibles,' since many of the explanations are written by OSAS teachers [or by some people who do not trust and believe on God for things in their life, and, we know from the Words of Jesus and His apostles in the New Testament, that the Holy Spirit of God is sent not for unbelievers, but for Believers.] Some of their notes may be correct, but most are not, and Satan will always try to use them to confuse the learner about the real Truth of God. It is difficult to tell where they swerve from the truth. (so best not to read them at all).

While Hymns, spiritual songs, and godly music is beneficial to a young Christian, Christ-centered lyrics would keep their attention on Jesus' sacrifice and on His gift of forgiveness (upon one's true Repentance). On the other hand, secular music would have an adverse effect on young Christians. Any music that is not spiritually edifying is potentially dangerous and should be avoided. If any such music is in our possession, it should be discarded.

Television shows should definitely be avoided. All such programming is produced by ungodly people, to attract the ungodly. Besides being a complete waste of time (which could have been used for much better things), TV programs are spiritually harmful, because of the immorality, violence, and wickedness that is shown constantly

[along with them encouraging people to 'avenge wrongs done to them', instead of following Bible Scriptures to 'meet things right' and not 'to avenge ourselves.].

To learn Bible verses is an Important Truth for a young Christian, even if only a few favorite passages, such as Psalm 19:14, *"May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer."*

Regardless of discouragement that is often felt, and the persecution that is often met, a young 'believer in Christ' should never cease from doing God's will. Life here is too short, and eternity too long, to not make our calling and election sure.

Young Christians must remain true to their faith on God, and stay strong for God's Truth, because not many in the world are doing that today. There are only very few good examples for young people, that is why Jesus cautioned us all, to *"Make 'every effort' to enter through the 'narrow door', because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to,"* (Luke 13:24). The Bible gives us examples and teaches us where to concentrate our 'every effort', so that we will be able to 'enter through the narrow door',

Nothing that we could ever own could compare to the value of our soul. That is why young people need to guard it carefully. *"Above all else, guard your heart,"* (Prov.4:23) *"for it is the wellspring of life."*

It is worth any sacrifice on our part to enter God's kingdom, and to escape eternal punishment. The road to Eternal Life is not easy (Matt. 7:14 says) *"few are those who find it"*, and there are enemies along the way, so we need the full armor of God. True Christians must continue in the faith (even though difficult times can be experienced) so (Acts 14:22) warns *"We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God."*

In concluding the message with Psalm 119:9-11, it asks the question, *"How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to Your Word. I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you."*

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