

## Matthew 12:38-50 - The King's Way!

### Scriptures:

1 Corinthians 1:22-24 - For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Romans 10:17 - So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Luke 16:31 - But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'

John 10:10b - I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees

answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see

G1320 -

Jesus left the perfection of heaven to come down to His creation and make a way for all of us to be saved. But not just saved, but also so that we could live a better life (John 10:10b). That abundant life is not lived passively, believing in your higher power. It is lived actively pursuing God and surrendering completely to His will for your life.

Just as the scribes and Pharisees had no excuse for not believing in Jesus, Christ-followers have no excuse for not committing their whole life to Jesus and His will. To not do that is to deny Christ and refuse to take up your cross and follow Him. The cost of doing that is forfeiting the abundant life Jesus died to give you. You are still saved, just living less than you should.

a sign from You."

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### Notes:

They have just witnessed Jesus heal the blind and mute man who was possessed by a demon. What more did they need to see? They had accused Jesus of being empowered by the ruler of demons. Jesus then responded by calling them a brood of vipers. Why would they now request a sign from Jesus?

They wanted something more than what He has already done. The problem with needing a miracle so that you can believe is that no miracle produces faith (Romans 10:17).

They are asking for a sign that proves Jesus is the Messiah. They wanted a sign from heaven that was different than what He had already done. When John's disciples asked for confirmation that He was the Messiah, Jesus pointed to everything He had done as the evidence they needed. There was only one more sign that Jesus would do – He would rise from the dead! But even that sign was not going to be enough for most of them (Luke 16:31).

"True faith needs a better foundation than sensationalism." (Powell, 1986) page 236

If it takes a miracle to get you to believe – it will take miracles to maintain your belief.

Jesus had already provided more than enough evidence for them to believe. Their problem was not having enough evidence it was a lack of desire to believe.

"There was evidence enough to convince them, but they had no wish to be convinced." (Ryle, 1993) page 99

There is a way in which this applies to believers as well as to unbelievers. God expects a complete surrender of our will to His. Andrew Murray refers to this as absolute surrender. Most Christians believe enough to be saved and headed for heaven but don't fully trust God with their whole lives. They are not seeking Him and His righteousness. They are not loving Him with their whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. They are not diligently seeking Him in His Word and through prayer.

Scriptures:

39 But He answered and said to them, "An evil

Notes:

G4190 – wicked,  
morally corrupt.

and adulterous generation seeks after a sign,

G3428 -

and no sign will be given to it except the sign

of the prophet Jonah.

Scriptures:

40 For as Jonah was three days and three

Notes:

There are some who question the truth of the account of Jonah in the belly of the 'great fish'. Jesus says it really happened. That settles it for me!

Jesus is predicting His resurrection.

nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the

Son of Man be three days and three nights in

the heart of the earth.

Scriptures:

John 1:14 - And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

41 The men of Nineveh will rise up in the

Notes:

Jonah represented God's Word to the Ninevites. 'greater than Jonah' – Jesus is the Word of God ([John 1:14](#)).

I wish I had a copy of Jonah's sermon. One message and a whole wicked city repented.

judgment with this generation and condemn

G2920 – the rendering of the verdict.

G2632 – declare as guilty.

it, because they repented at the preaching of

G3340 - to change one's life, based on complete change of attitude and thought concerning sin and righteousness.

Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is

G4119 -

here.

Scriptures:

42 The queen of the South will rise up in the

Notes:

Solomon represents God's wisdom – Jesus is the wisdom of God.

Sheba traveled a great distance to determine whether the reports of Solomon's wisdom were true. The religious people of Jesus' time wouldn't even go to Bethlehem to see if the reports of the birth of the Messiah were true.

judgment with this generation and condemn

it, for she came from the ends of the earth to

hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a

greater than Solomon *is* here.

Scriptures:

2 Timothy 3:5a - ...having a form of godliness but denying its power...

2 Peter 1:10-11 - Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; 11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

43 "When an unclean spirit goes out of a

man, he goes through dry places, seeking

rest, and finds none.

Notes:

This is a parable regarding incomplete repentance and faith. Incomplete or insincere faith is worse than no faith because they know enough about God to ignore or resist His call on their life.

"The way of victorious Christian living is not to stand with one's attention on sin, fighting it, but to turn one's back on sin and become engaged in positive actions of righteousness." (Augsburger, 1982) page 154

Jesus is speaking against the shallow religion of the Jews at that time. They had all the religious rituals of faith but lacked the reality of faith. For most Jews, Judaism had become a godless religious duty.

The same thing can be said for much of the Christian church. Paul warned us this would be true (2 Timothy 3:5a). There are so-called Christian churches practicing all forms of idolatry and Eastern mysticism. They do not use God's Word as the basis for what they do and instead use the things of man or of this world.

This also describes a person who doesn't fully come to Christ. They may make a confession of faith, say they have repented of their sins, and even attempt to reform their ways. But then, after a while they fall away. Often, they fall much further than before they said they received Christ.

The apostle Peter challenges to make sure that our salvation is real (2 Peter 1:10-11). We do that by continuing to seek Him in His Word and in prayer, through commitment to His church, and through true fellowship with other believers. The diligent we are to seek God, the more assured we become of our salvation.

44 Then he says, I will return to my house

from which I came.' And when he comes, he

finds *it* empty, swept, and put in order.

Scriptures:

45 Then he goes and takes with him seven

Notes:

The book of Revelation describes a godless church that rises to great power in the end-times. It will claim to worship God but in reality, it will be a man-made attempt to be god themselves.

other spirits more wicked than himself, and

they enter and dwell there; and the last state

of that man is worse than the first. So shall it

also be with this wicked generation.”

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Scriptures:

46 While He was still talking to the

multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers

stood outside, seeking to speak with Him.

Notes:

This account is also recorded in Mark 3 and Luke 8. In this account Jesus is not diminishing familial relationships, He is elevating spiritual relationships to equality with familial relationships and obedience to God's will above all other relationships.

God's will cannot lead us into sin or contrary to His Word. If God's will leads us to prioritize our spiritual relationships above family, then it is good and right for us to do that.

Jesus did that perfectly. Because we are not perfect, we need to be very careful managing the balance between spiritual and familial relationships.

As a pastor, there have been times when the needs of the ministry had to come before the needs of my family. I didn't always handle that well, and I still get out of balance occasionally. Listen to your family and listen for God's voice, and when appropriate, seek counsel.

Scriptures:

47 Then one said to Him, "Look, Your mother

and Your brothers are standing outside,

seeking to speak with You."

Notes:

Scriptures:

48 But He answered and said to the one who

Notes:

There is a saying that dates back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century, "Blood is thicker than water." It's original meaning was that family ties and responsibilities are not erased by the waters of baptism. It has since adopted many other meanings. Regardless, Jesus is saying that the opposite is true.

told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My

brothers?"

Scriptures:

49 And He stretched out His hand toward His

Notes:

disciples and said, "Here are My mother and

My brothers!

Scriptures:

50 For whoever does the will of My Father in

heaven is My brother and sister and mother.”

Notes:

Obedience to God's will is not just something we have to do so that God isn't angry with us. We obey God because it is one of the ways we maintain our relationship with Christ. How amazing is it that Jesus calls us brothers and sisters? Jesus, our Savior King is our brother.

There is great encouragement in the word 'whoever.' No matter how small or weak your faith is – Jesus calls you one of His closest relatives. No matter how pathetic you might seem in your own eyes, you are a brother or sister of Christ.

The other reality this reveals is our relationship to each other. As Christ-followers, who seek to obey God in everything we are brothers and sisters.

We are also brothers and sisters of Christ-followers all around the world. No matter what type of church they attend, the nation they call home, the language they speak, the color of their skin, their status in their culture, their wealth or poverty, or any other way of defining them – they are our brothers and sisters.

There may be things about the way they worship God that we disagree with, but if they are true Christ-followers – they are family. They might be the weird uncle of the family, but they are family.

This should also be seen as a warning to those who would mock Christians or persecute the church. They are doing those things to the relatives of the King of kings and the Judge of the whole world.

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