

Actions Speak Louder than Words 3/31/2019 Sunday AM

Introduction

- Last week we spoke about **The Consequences of Standing on Your Convictions**.
- We said, be prepared to have people and the law turn against you, be prepared to be thrown into the “lion’s den,” and be prepared for God’s hand to move on your behalf.
- We are living in a world today where it is getting harder and harder for people to stand on their convictions, especially when they are rooted in the Word of God.
- However, we need to model Daniel as he stood on God’s Word despite the law, and he seen God’s hand move.
- This morning we are going to discuss **Actions Speak Louder than Words**.
- We may have the best intentions at times and we may give lip service to many projects, however what we actually do seems to matter a whole lot more than what we simply just talk about doing.
- We will see how this principle really matters a lot when it comes to our Judgment Day.

Matthew 25:31-46

³¹“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. ³⁴“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ ³⁷“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ ⁴⁰“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.’ ⁴¹“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴²For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’ ⁴⁴“They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’ ⁴⁵“He will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’ ⁴⁶“Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

- **Vv.31-32** – When Jesus returns he will separate the people for judgment. These verses give the imagery of a shepherd who separates his sheep from goats.
- Sheep and goats would have grazed together, however when it came sheering time, they were separated.
- **Vv. 33-34** – He puts the “sheep” on the right side and the “goats” on the left side.
- The sheep represent the righteous people because he says to them, “Come, you who are blessed by my Father...”
- **Why were these people on the “right” side? How did He determine that they were righteous?**
- **Vv. 35-36** – He says because when he was hungry they fed him, when he was thirsty they came him something to drink, when he was a stranger they invited him in, when he needed clothes they clothed him, when he was sick they looked after him, and when he was in prison they came to visit him.”
- Jesus was referencing Old Testament teaching found in **Isaiah 58:7; Ezekiel 18:7; and also Hebrews 13:2**.
- These were just examples of actions that the Scriptures used to teach how a Godly person would treat others.
- **Can a person guarantee their own righteousness by simply doing these actions mentioned?**
- **Vv.37-39** – What is really interesting in all of this is that the “sheep” did not even realize what they had done.
- They were confused because they didn’t recall feeding the King or any of the other actions he mentioned.
- They were just living their lives in a genuinely righteous way/

- **V. 40** – The King responded to them, “I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.”
 - This is was a revelation to the “sheep,” they had no real idea that all of those things they had done for the “least of these” were being credit to them as righteousness before God.
 - This shows that we cannot guarantee our righteousness by simply performing actions that seem to be righteous.
 - **Actions do speak louder than words, however the motive behind our actions matter a great deal too.**
 - The things mentioned by the King here, are things that every believer should naturally do.
 - We should not have to be coerced to do it, and we certainly should not do it in order to get “points” from God.
 - The “sheep” here were living out their faith as evidenced in the daily lives. **Can you say the same?**
 - **Vv. 41-** “Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’”
 - The ones on the left are the goats. These represent the unrighteous people.
 - **Where are they going?** The verse seems to imply a place that has “eternal fire” and that was “prepared for the devil and his angels.”
 - This is specifically talking about the “lake of fire” which the Bible speaks about as the “second death.” (**Rev 21:8**)
 - **Why are these people going to this place?**
 - **Vv. 42-43** – The King tells them that they did not feed him and all the rest of the actions he mentioned.
 - They acted the direct opposite as the sheep.
 - **V. 44** – However their question was the same.
 - They asked the King when they had seen him in need and not helped him?
 - **Vv. 45** – “He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’”
 - The “goats” were found to not have righteous actions that could be credited to them.
 - They had not looked out for the needs of others and treated others the way the Scriptures had taught them.
 - **V. 46** - "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."
 - Once the Judgment takes place, the true separation happens and we either go to eternal life or eternal punishment.
 - Those are the only two options.
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- It is clear in this passage that in fact, **Actions Speak Louder than Words.**
 - However, we cannot miss the truth that is spoken of in **vv. 37-39.**
 - Righteousness does not come from actions, it comes from the heart.
 - That is why the Scripture says in **Romans 10:10**, “For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved”
 - Our justification comes from the heart and that is not something that we can fake.
 - With all of that being said, Jesus is going to look at what we have actually done in this life because our actions should be reflecting our heart.
 - We should be spreading the gospel message to the people around us, we should be letting our lights shine, we should be standing firm in our convictions...
 - **When your judgment day comes, what side will you be on?**

Wednesday Night Bible Study

Romans 11:1-10