

Lesson 10

Reading it right & living it out

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It's one thing to know how to read it right and another thing to live it out. Today we lean in to hear what JESUS says about living out the words of God.

Don't take a blind leap of faith; **take a step of trust...based on evidence.** Examine the Scriptures and see if it's TRUE. That's exactly what a group of Jewish people did when Paul brought the gospel message of Jesus to them.

Jews in Berea

Acts 17:10-11 (ESV)

¹⁰ The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹ Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, **examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.**

These Jews were eager, but cautious, meeting daily and studying carefully, wrestling over whether what Paul preached was what the Scriptures taught. For this, the Bereans were honored rather than belittled, examining the Scriptures to make sure they were reading it right.

But it's not enough to **read it right**; we must also be **living it out!**

The words of God are to be fully obeyed, not merely admired.

- Marriages grow when husbands and wives obey what is written in the Scriptures.
- Children are more likely to follow Jesus when their parents live out the Scriptures.
- Church relationships are sweet when we obey the teachings of the Scriptures.
- Living out the Scriptures means we serve humbly, pray persistently, forgive quickly, give generously, encourage enthusiastically, share faith frequently, love passionately, & stand boldly.

Context: Matthew 5-7 is a collection of Jesus' teachings on the importance of obeying God's commands related to living in purity. dealing with anger and restoring broken relationships (5:21-26), God's expectation of sexual purity (5:27-30), divorce (5:31-32), forgiving enemies (5:38-48), giving to those in need (6:1-4), praying (6:5-15; 7:7-11), eternal treasure vs. earthly treasure (6:19-24), trusting God for needs (6:25-34), Judging with mercy (7:1-6), and how to spot false teachers (7:15-20).

Sadly, many people in our nation, community, and even churches live as though these commands are optional. To this Jesus said...

Matthew 7:21 (ESV)

²¹ "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but **the one who does the will of my Father** who is in heaven.

Luke 6:46 (ESV)

"Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?"

- *Lord* (*kurios*) is a word meaning authority OR ownership.
- Doubling '*Lord, Lord*' emphasizes the position they say Jesus holds in their lives. **Irony:** Their actions betray their words. If Jesus really is Lord, then we must do what He says. Doesn't this sound like many within the 'Christian' American culture?

Warning for those who refuse to obey

Matthew 7:22 (ESV)

²² On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?'

3 powerful claims that **many** will make on that day:

- 1) speaking for God (to prophesy)
- 2) casting out demons
- 3) doing mighty works/miracles

But despite these claims, instead of being invited in, **they will hear the most painful phrase of all time...**

Matthew 7:23 (ESV) ²³ And then will I declare to them, '**I never knew you**; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

Many who think they are destined for eternal life will hear, "*I never knew you.*"

These people might have LISTENED to the words of Jesus all their lives, but they didn't LIVE the words of Jesus.

True disciples build on bedrock

Matthew 7:24-25 (ESV)

²⁴ "Everyone then who **hears** these words of mine and **does** them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.

True disciples dig deep to the bedrock to find a stable foundation. They still face the rain, floods, & winds that threaten to blow down the house.

☀ **D.A. Carson** writes: "*Only storms reveal the quality of the work of the two builders.*"¹

Disciples of Jesus understand that...

The words of God are to be fully obeyed, not merely admired.

False disciples build on sand

Matthew 7:26-27 (ESV)

²⁶ And everyone who **hears** these words of mine and **does not do them** will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

Notice that these people also **heard** the words of Jesus, but **they didn't do** what He said. Jesus compares this to the people who **built on sand instead of BEDROCK**. You can build a house quicker that way and it can look just as good on the outside.

In the end, the outward beauty of the house is completely destroyed all because of they built on a faulty foundation.

¹ Frank E. Gaebel, D. A. Carson, Walter W. Wessel and Walter L. Liefeld, The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 8: Matthew, Mark, Luke (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 194.

What foundation are you building your life on?

Your obedience to Jesus not only demonstrates He is worthy of YOUR life; your obedience also demonstrates that Jesus is worthy of OTHERS' lives.

 **Ravi Zacharias** *"If you really want to reach your culture you have to answer the question: Has your faith changed WHO YOU ARE in your private life? Are you TRULY a believer in what it is LIVING what you proclaim to believe...?"*

May we set the pace for the next generation as we show them that...

The words of God are to be fully obeyed, not merely admired.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These open-ended questions are designed to help you LIVE what you LEARN with your Family, Friends, or Small Group.

1. What about this series has helped you the most? Explain your answer.
2. **Read Matt 7:21-27.** What surprised, challenged, concerned, and/or encouraged you from this passage? How does the teaching from Jesus clarify those who are His true disciples and those who are not?
3. **Read Luke 6:46.** What is Jesus' point here? How might meditating (or marinating) on this question cause you to reconsider decisions you make in the future?
4. Why was the lady interested in Ravi' Zacharias' private life beyond his public persona? How might we be used by God if our private lives matched what we said we believed? Share an example of someone that God has used because of their integrity & genuine faith.
5. Share prayer thanks & needs. Then pray for one another.