

Matthew 21:28-32 The Parable of the Two Sons

Introduction: The Jewish leaders had intended to arrest Jesus as soon as He arrived, but they didn't dare. They thought they had Him trapped when they challenged His authority, but they didn't. If Jesus had not cared what happened to these men He would have dropped the matter, but He could not let these men go on to hell without trying again to win them to salvation. Thus He presented them with a question which was intended to make them see the error of their ways.

I. The two sons.

- A. The first son (elder) was asked by his father to work in the field.
 - 1. This son said he would not work in the field.
 - 2. But afterward he repented and went and worked in the field.
- B. The father likewise went to the second son and asked him to go and work in the field.
 - 1. This son said he would go.
 - 2. But he never did.

II. The question to the chief priests and elders.

- A. Jesus asked them, "Which of the two sons did the father's will.
(Actually neither son was anything to brag about.)
- B. But one did do the father's will and even the chief priests and elders could answer the question.
 - 1. It was the elder son who did the father's will.
 - 2. The second son served only with his lips – not in deed.

III. The application of the parable as Jesus gave it.

- A. The father of the two sons represented God, the Heavenly Father.
- B. The older of the two sons represented the publicans and harlots.
 - 1. These people, by their life style, had said "No" to God.
 - 2. Yet when John came preaching "Repent for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand," they repented and they trusted in the Messiah – King that John preached about.
 - 3. The result was that they entered the Kingdom. (They got saved.)
 - 4. Another result was that they cleaned up their lives.
(Example: Zacchaeus and the woman who washed Jesus' feet with tears.)
- C. The second son represented the chief priests and elders.
 - 1. They made a pretense of serving God, but they never did.
 - 2. They talked a good game, but it was all talk.
 - 3. The publicans and harlots were entering the Kingdom of heaven ahead of them.
 - 4. They saw the change that the gospel had brought in the lives of the publicans and harlots who had trusted Jesus.
 - 5. This should have awakened them to their own need of repentance and faith, but they did not repent.
- D. Jesus did not say this to them just to get them told, but to awake them to the error of their ways and to their need of repentance.

IV. An application of the parable today.

- A. Some of the most ungodly people of our day have turned to God, repented of their sins, trusted in Jesus and now they are saved.
 - 1. Some of these people were prostitutes, dope addicts, alcoholics, thieves, murderers, convicts, hippies, etc.
 - 2. But now some are most dedicated Christians.
 - 3. The grace of God can save the most sinful of men.

4. The grace of God can change the worst of lives.
 5. The love of God welcomes these to His Kingdom.
- B. Some people who live very religious lives still need to be saved.
1. Many have followed the Lord in baptism who have never repented of their sins and trusted Jesus as Savior.
 2. Many have their names on church rolls who are not on the roll of the Kingdom of God.
(Not in the Lamb's Book of Life.)
 3. Many are active in church work who are not saved.
 4. Some are church leaders who are not saved.

Conclusion:

1. God is inviting all to be saved.
2. God invites the worst of sinners to be saved. Repent and trust Jesus right now.
3. Mere church membership and church activity is not enough. You must be born again.
4. If you are saved, then God does want you to live for Him. (This may require a change in your life.)

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