

14. Maximum or Minimum for the Lord

In our last study we looked at the difference between being religious and spiritual. We would like to think a little bit more about that because it is such a vital area to be a true Christian.

We all know the difference between a servant - a worker working in a shop or a factory and a son working for his own father in the same shop or factory. Their attitude towards their work will be fundamentally different. A servant will be working for wages. He works for certain fixed hours. If he has to work longer than that, he expects overtime pay. He expects a bonus at the end of the year. And after maybe one or two years, he may expect a raise in salary. But a son is so different. He doesn't think in terms of the number of hours he works. There may be more work required in the office or the shop or the factory and the son would gladly stay on long after the workers have gone away. And if the factory is going through a difficult time financially, the son will not expect his father to give him any money. What is the difference?

In the difference between the attitude of the worker and the attitude of son, we can see the difference between the Old Testament way of life and the New Testament way of life. You know that your Bible is divided into two parts: the Old Testament and the New Testament or it is also called the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Now these are not words that we use so much nowadays. Testament, Covenant - they sound more like legal words. In very simple language it only means an agreement.

14. 給主盡可能多,還是盡可能少

前面我們學習到,「屬宗教」與「屬靈」的區別。我們想要針對這個決定一個人是否是真正基督徒的至關重要的問題,再更深入地思考一下。

我們都知道,一個商店或工廠的雇員,和這個商店或工廠老闆的兒子,是不同的。他們對待工作的態度會有本質上的不同。雇員是為了工資而工作。他工作固定的那幾個小時。如果他要多工作一些時間,就會想要加班費。並且他希望這能給他年底帶來獎金。一兩年後,他還會希望得到加薪。但若是兒子則完全不同,他不會算計自己工作了多少個小時。若是這商店或工廠有額外的工作,作為兒子,他會很樂意留下來多幹很長一段時間,即便大家都已經離開了。如果工廠財政上有困難,兒子甚至都不會讓父親給他錢。那麼區別在哪裡?

雇員和兒子態度上的不同,我們能看到舊約時代的生活方式和新約時代的生活方式。你們都知道《聖經》是分為兩部分的:舊約和新約,也就是「舊的契約」和「新的契約」。約,或是契約,聽起來更像是古代法律上的名詞。用簡單的話來說,就是協定/合同。

We all know what an agreement is like. When a person sells a property or hires a worker, they sign an agreement - both the person who is buying and the person who is selling or the person who is employing and person who is being employed. And that agreement is the picture of this Old Testament and the New Testament. God made an agreement with man in the Old Testament times with Israel. But when Jesus came (He is called the mediator of the new covenant), God made a new agreement with man.

In very simple terms, we could say, under the old agreement man was like a servant. You know a servant can't call his master, 'father' and, that is why in the Old Testament the Jews could never call God, 'Father', because they were servants. They could call Him, 'O Lord', 'God', 'Mighty Master', and all that, but they couldn't call Him 'Father.' But when Jesus came, He gathered His disciples around and said, 'I am going to teach you how to pray under the New Covenant. When you pray you say, 'Our Father, who is in heaven.'" What does this mean? - That this was a new agreement.

We are now going to be like sons and daughters of God and our relationship with God is not going to be any more like that of a Master and a servant. It was not even going to be like that of a friend - a friend is higher to the master than a servant. It is going to be more than a friendship. Abraham was called the friend of God. But you know the difference between a friend and a son. If a rich man says, 'This is my friend' and points to another one and says, 'This is my son,' you know who has the inheritance. Who is going to receive everything from the father? - Not the friend, but the son. To be a son of God is greater than to be a servant of God. It is greater than to be a

我們都知道合同是什麼樣子的。如果一個人賣房子或是雇工人,他們需要签合同——買方和賣方,或者雇主和雇工。合同就类似于「舊約」和「新約」。神與以色列人在「舊約」時代定下一個合約。但當耶穌來到世上以後,神與人定了一個新的合約(耶穌被稱作是新約的中間人)。

簡單來說,「舊約」之下的人就像是雇工。你們都知道雇工不會稱雇主為「父親」,所以舊約時代的猶太人不稱神為「父親」,因為他們是雇工。他們可以稱祂為「主啊」,「神」或是「偉大的主人」等等,可他們就是不能稱祂為「父親」。然而耶穌來到世上以後,祂聚攏了門徒並對他們說:「我要教你們在新約之下如何禱告。當你們禱告的時候,要說『我們在天上的父』。」這是什麼意思呢?這是說,現在開始的是一個新的契約/合同。

我們現在將會像是神的兒子和女兒,我們與神的關係將不再像主人與僕人。甚至都將不像是朋友的關係——朋友關係是要比主僕關係更親近些的。而我們新的關係是要比朋友關係更親近。亞伯拉罕被稱作是神的朋友。但你們都知道朋友與兒子的區別。如果一個富有的人指著一個人說「這是我的朋友」,指著另一個人說「這是我的兒子」,你立刻就知道哪個將是繼承遺產的。誰會從父親那得到一切?對,不是朋友,而是兒子。作為神的兒子,比當神的雇工要好得多。

friend of God.

Now, very often we use the expression that, so and so is the Lord's servants and, subconsciously, we think that that man is greater than the other person who is only the son of God. But is that really true? If you were to come to my house and I introduce you to two people and say, 'This is my servant and this is my son,' who would you think is more important in my house? Is it greater to be the servant of the Lord than to be the son of God? These are all wrong concepts that we have got in our mind which are not from Scripture. Of course, the son of God should also be a servant, if he is a responsible son.

We need to recognize that Jesus came to deliver us from merely becoming slaves and wants us to become sons. There we see the difference between being religious and being spiritual. A religious person behaves exactly like a servant. A spiritual person will behave like a son. Let's put it in two different words. A servant would think in terms of the minimum that he has to do in order to fulfil his duties, whereas a son - a responsible son that is, would think in terms of maximum that he can do to please his father or to help his father. In these two terms - the minimum and the maximum, you can see the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant, between being a slave and being a son.

That is why, when Jesus was preaching, what is known as the Sermon on the Mount, He tried to teach his disciples the spirit behind the commands. He said, for example, under the Old Dispensation, you were told, 'You shall not commit murder'. That is good. What is the minimum required? - You shall not commit murder. But, is that the maximum that God

現在我們經常說,誰誰是神的僕人,下意識裡我們覺得那個人比其他只是神的兒子的人要強。但那是真的嗎?如果你來我家,我介紹兩個人給你:「這個是我的僕人,這個是我兒子。」你覺得在我家這兩個人哪個更重要?做主的僕人,難道比做神的兒子更好嗎?這些都是我們腦子裡的錯誤觀念,而不是從經文中得到的。當然,神的兒子,如果是個負責任的兒子,也應該同時是盡職的僕人。

我們應該看到,耶穌來世上,不單是為了救我們脫離奴役,祂更要我們成為神的孩子。這裡我們可以再次看到「屬宗教」與「屬靈」的區別。一個「屬宗教」的人表現的完全就和僕人一樣。而一個「屬靈」的人則是表現的像個兒子。這麼說吧,一個僕人常常所想的是,為了完成任務,至少需要做的,然而一個兒子——一個負責任的兒子——則會想,我該盡可能多的做什麼來讓父親高興,並且幫到父親。這兩個條件——「至少的」和「盡可能多的」,你可以看到「舊約」與「新約」的區別,僕人與兒子的區別。

這也就是為什麼,在大家熟知的登山寶訓,耶穌講道的時候,祂在試著向門徒講解「誡命」背後的「靈」。比如說當祂講到舊的教規說「不可殺人」。這很好。最低的要求是什麼?你不可以謀殺人。但這是神所要求的最高標準嗎?當然不是。那麼在這個領域,怎樣才能盡可能多的討父神喜悅?

required? Certainly not. What would the maximum be in that realm - in that area to please the Father?

Where does murder come from? It comes from anger. So Jesus said, "I say to you 'don't be angry.'" What was He trying to say? He was trying to say, 'If you meditate on the commandment, 'thou shall not commit murder,' you will discover that that is just the minimum.' If you meditate on it you will discover the way to please the Father. If your attitude is, 'What is the maximum I can do,' then it will be, 'I should not even get angry with my brother or with anyone.' Then I have pleased the Father. I have not pleased the Father if I have only refrained from committing murder.

Now a religious person is one who takes the letter of the law and says, 'Well, I have kept it.' Religious people become Pharisees, and Pharisees gradually drift away from the truth. In every denomination of Christianity you will find Pharisees - people who have taken up the letter with the traditions and who are more interested in keeping those external traditions of their particular group than in life in Jesus Christ. This is the form of godliness that we are told in 2 Tim. 3:5 to beware of.

See, if you keep your fellowship with people who are proud and arrogant, gradually you will get a little of their spirit. If you constantly keep companionship with murderers, you will get their spirit. And in the same way, if you keep companionship with the people who are a little bit godly, you will get their spirit. So, when it says in 2 Tim. 3:5 to avoid people, who have only a form of godliness, it is to preserve us in life. The Holy Spirit warns us not to spend a lot of time with people who are just doing the letter of the law, who are righteous externally. That type of

兇殺從何而來?它來自憤怒。因此耶穌說:「我告訴你們不要動怒。」祂要說的是什麼?祂在試圖說:「如果你仔細思考這誡命,『不可殺人』,你會發現那只是最低標準。」假如你沉思于此,將發現討父神喜悅的方式。你的態度若是「我要盡可能多的去做」,那就是「不要對兄弟或任何人動怒」。那樣我就討了父神的喜悅。如果我單單只是克制住不去殺人,那是無法討父神喜悅的。

一個「屬宗教」的人會拿著一本律法說:「看,我全部都遵守了。」屬宗教的人逐漸就變成了「法利賽人」,爾後「法利賽人」逐漸疏遠了真理。基督教的每個教派,都能找到「法利賽人」——那些只想謹守傳統,只在乎他們自己小團體傳統的外在形式,而不在意活出在耶穌基督裡的生命。這是在提摩太后書 3 章 5 節所說的那種「虛有敬虔的外表」,這樣的人我們要躲開。

看,若是你與自大傲慢的人做同伴,逐漸地,你也會沾染他們的精神。你要是經常與殺人犯為伍,你也會沾染到他們的精神。同樣地,若你與只敬畏神一丁點的人為伴,你也會被影響。因而在提摩太后書 3 章 5 節說,那些只有敬虔的外貌,而無敬虔的實意,這等人你要躲開,從而保守我們在基督裡的生命。聖靈勸導我們,不要和那些只做表面功夫的人來往,浪費時間,那些只在意字面上的律法,和表面上的正直。那種宗教完全不被神喜悅。神所喜悅的是一個兒子,一個負責任的兒子。

religiosity does not please God at all. Be a son, be a responsible son.

In the same way, when Jesus spoke about adultery, He said, under the Old Dispensation, the thing was to avoid adultery - the physical act. That was certainly a sin, but is that the maximum that God required? No, that was the minimum. What was the maximum? The son would look at that commandment of God and meditate on it and say, 'Well that is the minimum that God requires.' It is like the servant saying, 'well I got to work from 9 AM to 5 PM. Once my eight hour shift is over, I will be home.' But a son may stay on until 9 PM or all through the night, if there is work to be done. So the 9 to 5 attitude says, 'I don't have to commit adultery, that's all.' But the son's attitude is what is behind that - 'I should not be impure in my attitude or thoughts towards anyone. There must be purity in thoughts towards the opposite sex.' Jesus emphasized it to such an extent that He said, "If your eye offends you, it is better to pluck it off."

Now who understands that? Only a son, who is desperate to please his Father, who has longed that his Father will be totally satisfied with his life. Only such a person can be really spiritual. He seeks to understand the spirit behind the commandments in Scripture and not just the letter of the law.

The Bible says that our relationship with Jesus Christ is like that of a bride to bridegroom. This is true Christianity - It is a marriage, it is not a religion. It is a relationship between two people. It is not worshipping a book; it is being united to a person - to the person of Jesus Christ. Religious people worship a book. The Bible is the most important thing to them. Now the Bible is very important to me,

同樣地,當耶穌談到姦淫,祂說,在舊的律法之下,你需要避免姦淫——是肉體上的避免。肉體上的姦淫是非常明確的罪惡,但神要的最大值是什麼?一個兒子看到父神的誡命,會沉思然後說:「這對於神所要求的,是最基本的。」如同雇工說:「早上 9 點到下午 5 點,我必須工作。可只要這 8 小時一結束,我馬上就回家。」然而作為一個兒子,如果有需要,他可能工作到晚上 9 點,甚至通宵。所以那種早 9 晚 5 的態度就類似于:「只要沒犯姦淫,就夠了。」但兒子的態度則是在表像之下的:「我不該對任何人有不純潔的態度和想法。對於異性,我必須要在思想裡保持純潔。」耶穌對於這一點強調到如此程度,祂說:「若你的一隻眼使你犯罪,就剝出來丟掉。」

現在你們明白了嗎?只有那一心想要討他父親喜悅的兒子,渴望父親對他的生活完全滿意。只有這樣的人才能成為「屬靈」的人。他渴求理解經文裡誡命背後的靈,而不止是律法的文字。

《聖經》說我們與耶穌基督的關係如同新娘與新郎的關係。真正的基督信仰——是婚姻關係,而不是宗教。它是兩個人之間的關係。不是去膜拜一本書,而是去與一個人重新結合——那個人就是耶穌基督。「屬宗教」的人會敬拜一本書。《聖經》對他們來說是最重要的。《聖經》對我也極其重要,但是並不比耶穌基督更重要。如果我和耶穌基督沒有建立起親身的關係,那麼《聖經》對我來說就只是一本死書。而

but not more important than Jesus Christ. If I didn't have the fellowship of Jesus Christ, the Bible would become a dead book to me. It is living because Jesus can speak to me through it.

Our relationship to Christ is to be like that of an earthly bride who is deeply in love with her bridegroom. The Bible speaks of our relationship with Christ like that, and then one day, Christ will come and will be married to her. It is the exact picture of a bride who is engaged, waiting for her wedding day, eager to correspond to her bridegroom, to telephone and to listen to her bridegroom, and wanting to spend time with him, until the day of the marriage. During that time, how does she live? She is only interested in her bridegroom's opinion. She is not bothered what anybody else in the world thinks about her. She wants to please her bridegroom and she doesn't do the minimum.

Think of an engaged couple that are deeply in love with each other. When they get an opportunity to spend time with each other, do they think of the minimum time required? Do they look at the watch and say, 'Ok, we have spent ten minutes and it is enough?' No, they feel even five hours is not enough! When they write letters to each other, an engaged couple that are deeply in love with one another, how long are those letters going to be - half a page? Do they say, 'Well that is enough, I have told you I am okay and hope you are okay?' No, they may write 25 pages and next day they may write another 25 pages again! This is due to love.

True spirituality is the result of a loving relationship with Christ. Religiosity, on the other hand, is a merely formal relationship with Christ, like a servant

《聖經》之所以是活的,那是因為耶穌可以通過它直接和我說話。

我們與基督的關係就類似于世上那種深深愛著新郎的新娘一樣。《聖經》說我們與基督的關係就是如此,直到有一天,基督回來娶那姑娘。那畫面真的是像訂了婚的新娘,等著她婚禮的那天,她會熱切的盼望與新郎相呼應,打電話傾聽,想要花時間和他在一起,一直到有一天結婚。在那期間,她會是怎樣生活的?她會只在意她未婚夫一個人的看法。全世界任何人怎麼看她,她都不在意。她只想讓他高興,她不會想僅僅做到最低限度。

看看那些訂婚的深深相愛的人們。有機會在一起的時候,難道他們會想,只要達到要求的最短見面時間就行了嗎?難道他們會看看表說,「好了,我們已經花了整整十分鐘時間在一起了,這應該夠了吧?」當然他們不會這樣,因為恐怕 5 個小時都覺得不夠!兩個訂了婚的深深相愛的人,給彼此寫信的時候,會寫多長?半頁紙嗎?他們會說,「我說了我很好,也祝你好。這足夠了吧?」當然不會,他們會寫 25 頁,然後第二天再寫 25 頁!因為他們是相愛的。

真正的「屬靈」,是因為與基督相愛的結果。而「屬宗教」,是因為與基督的關係僅僅類似一種官方的正式關係,如同雇工與主人。那麼現在,請讓我們一起尋求

to a master. Let us seek to be spiritual.

「屬靈」的關係吧。