

Messages From The Gates of Jerusalem
14 - Dung Gate - Part II

Spiritual "dung:" These will prevent me from absolute surrender, humility and knowing Jesus.

1. Glory of the Old Life
2. Throw Out Strange gods and Idolatry
3. Legalism
4. Being Judgmental
5. Being a Stumbling Block (see p.5-7 of lesson #13)

6. Throw Out Wrong Motives for Serving Him

We Must Obey Him Unreservedly - Matthew 19:27—20:16

Peter was quick to see the contrast between the wealthy ruler and poor disciples.

a. "We have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?"

b. Jesus gave them a marvelous promise of eternal rewards.

They would share thrones when He established His kingdom.

Good things they had forsaken for His sake would be returned to them a hundredfold.

c. They were not making sacrifices—they were making investments.

Note: Not all of the dividends would be received in this life.

d. Jesus detected in Peter's question the possibility of a wrong motive for service.

e. So He added the warning that some who were first in their own eyes would be last in the judgment, and some who were last would end up first.

This truth was amplified in the parable of the workers in the vineyard.

a. This parable has nothing to do with salvation.

b. The penny (a day's wages) does not represent salvation > nobody works for his salvation.

c. The parable is not talking about rewards; we are not all going to receive the same reward.

I Cor. 3:8 "And every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor"

The parable is emphasizing a right attitude in our service.

Note: 2 kinds of workers were hired

a. Those who insisted on a contract and agreed to work for a penny a day

b. Those who had no contract and agreed to take whatever the owner thought was right.

This explains why the householder paid the workers as he did:

a. He wanted those who were hired first (who insisted on a contract) to see how much he paid the workers who were hired later.

b. The owner could show those first workers how really generous he was.

Put yourself in the place of those workers who were hired first but paid last.

a. They each expected to get a penny, because that was what they agreed to accept. But imagine their surprise when they saw the laborers who were hired *last* each receiving a penny!

b. This meant their own wages should have been twelve pennies each!

c. But the three o'clock workers also received a penny—for only three hours of work.

The men last in line quickly recalculated their wages: four pennies for the day's work.

d. When the men hired at noon also were paid a penny, this cut the salary of the contract

workers considerably, for now they would earn only two pennies.

e. But the owner gave them one penny each. Of course, they complained!

f. But they had no argument, because they had agreed to work for a penny.

They received what they asked for.

g. Had they trusted the goodness of the owner, they would have received far more.

But they insisted on a contract.

The lesson for Christ's disciples is obvious.

a. We should not serve Him because we want to receive an expected reward.

b. We should not insist on knowing what we will get.

c. The highest kind of obedience is not based on a desire for reward or the fear of punishment. It is motivated by love.

d. God is infinitely generous and gracious and will always give us better than we deserve.

Now we can understand the perils that were hidden in Peter's question in:

Matthew 19:27 "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?"

1. We must not "suppose" (Matt. 20:10) that we will get something more if we really do not deserve it.

2. It is possible to do the Father's work and yet not do His will from the heart.

Eph. 6:6 not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart,

3. If we serve Him only for the benefits (temporal and eternal), we will miss the best blessings He has for us.

4. We must trust Him unreservedly and believe that He will always give what is best.

DANGER OF PRIDE "What shall we have?" asked Peter.

This parable warned him, "How do you know you will have anything?"

1. BEWARE of overconfidence when it comes to the rewards God will give, for those first in their own eyes (and in the eyes of others) may end up last! Likewise, do not get discouraged, for those who consider themselves "unprofitable servants" may end up first.

2. BEWARE of the danger of watching other workers and measuring yourself by them.

I Cor. 4:5 Paul warns: "Judge nothing before the time."

Note: We see the worker and the work, but God sees the heart.

3. BEWARE of criticizing God and feeling that we have been left out.

Had the early morning workers trusted the generous owner and not asked for an agreement, he would have given them much more. They did not rejoice that others received more; instead, they were jealous and complained.

The goodness of the owner did not lead them to repentance.

Rom. 2:4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

It revealed the true character of their hearts: They were selfish! It's not fair!

Truth: A complaining servant has not fully yielded to the master's will.

7. Throw Out Seeking Glory of Myself

We Must Glorify Him Completely - Matt. 20:17-34

For the third time, Jesus announced His arrest, crucifixion, and resurrection to His disciples. Now He clearly mentions the cross, but the message did not penetrate the disciples' hearts. In contrast to this announcement of suffering and death, there is a request of James and John and their mother, Salome.

a. Jesus just spoke about a cross, but they were interested in a crown.

They wanted reserved seats on special thrones! Salome was interested in promoting her sons.

Things wrong with their request:

1. It was born in ignorance. "Ye know not what ye ask," Jesus replied. (request of flesh)

Little did Salome realize that the path to the throne is a difficult one. James was the first of the disciples to be martyred, and John had to endure hard days on the Isle of Patmos.

These three believers wanted their will, not God's will, and they wanted it their way.

2. Their lack of heavenly direction - They were thinking like the world: James and John wanted to "lord it over" the other disciples the way the unsaved Gentile rulers lorded it over their subjects. Their request was *fleshly* (sensual), because they were selfishly asking for glory for themselves, not for the Lord.

3. The request was not only of the world and the flesh, but it was of *the devil*.

It was motivated by pride. Satan sought a throne (Isa. 14:12-15) and had been cast down.

Satan had offered Jesus a throne and had been refused (Matt. 4:8-11).

Satan magnifies *the end* (a throne) but not *the means to* that end.

Jesus warned Salome and her sons that the special thrones were available to those who were worthy of them. There are no shortcuts in the kingdom of God.

Result of this request: "Indignation" on the part of the other disciples—probably because they had not thought of it first! Threw the disciples into an uproar!

The wisdom from above always leads to peace; the wisdom of this world leads to war.

(James 3:13—4:3). Selfishness will only result in dissension and division.

In His kingdom, we must follow His example of service to one another.

He came to give His life; therefore, we should give our lives in service to Him and others.

The key to greatness is not found in position or power, but in character.

We must identify with Jesus Christ in His service and suffering.

Note: Even He could not reach the throne except by way of the cross. (Philippians 2:1-18)

Prayer in the will of God does not mean escape; it means involvement.

If our prayers do not bring us nearer to the cross, they are out of God's will.

Salome learned her lesson.

When Jesus was crucified, she was standing near the cross.

(John 19:25, "his mother's sister") and sharing in His sorrow and pain.

She did not see two thrones on either side of her Lord—she saw two thieves on two crosses.