

March 8, 2015

Get Real about Jesus:

We regularly hear that Jesus was tolerant, open-minded, non-judgmental and inclusive; the type that hung out with all sorts of persons and didn't care about their lifestyles. "He hung out with prostitutes", is their cry. He didn't judge! The picture portrayed is a young man with soft eyes, gazing into the distance, with long flowing hair and tender emotions. For those of you who were around in the 50s – or watch classic television -- the term "beatnik" might be used as a descriptor of this Jesus. Jesus was, to use their 50s vernacular, a "cool cat." If you lived in the 60s/70s, this Jesus might answer to what was called a "hippie" or a "peace-nik." I tremble to think what such a Jesus would be compared to in more recent pop culture.

But what does the Scripture tell us about the real Jesus? And more to the point, what words came out of the mouth of our Savior during his pilgrimage on this earth that will give us a true and accurate representation? The Bible contains hundreds of words spoken by Christ while he was here on this earth for some 33 years.

Today, we will look at a small sampling but a fair representation of those sayings of Christ. From a Bible-books chronological standpoint, I will focus primarily on the book of Matthew, recognizing that much of what is set forth in Matthew also appears in the other gospels.

I do not include here words of our Lord during his various Old Testament appearances, though what he said on those occasions very much synchronizes with his New Testament-recorded sayings. For example, in *Genesis 19:13* the Lord says he will destroy Sodom, etc. **"because the cry of them is waxen great"** and in *Joshua 5:14* it is clear Jesus has exclusive interest in only his people when he proclaimed **"Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come."** Also not included in this talk are the potent words of Jesus recorded in the Revelation, specifically the first 3 chapters.

Moreover, I recognize that all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and that in **"the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"** (John 1:1), so of a truth the entire Bible is the Word of God. But, **"the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth."** (John 1:14). So for our purposes, as I say, I attend today to our Savior's words while he was here in the flesh.

So, with those understandings and clarifications, let's get started --

Matthew 4:10: **Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.** So much for universal religion; so much for worship and serve who you want, because we will all end up at the same place any way. So much for anything goes, and it really doesn't matter if you are a Buddhist, a Muslim, a Deist, etc. This language of Jesus showed exclusivity, not inclusiveness.

Matthew 4:17: **Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.** This language suggests an energetic and intelligent turning away from sin and illicit behavior. So, we here see that Christ was not about "live and let live", but the exact opposite.

Matthew 4:19: **Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.** Again, this is exclusive terminology. Christ did not say "follow Mohammed", or "follow Zeus", or "follow anybody or anything you want, just so long as you practice some kind of religion." No, he said "follow me."

Virtually all of chapters 5, 6 and 7 of the book of Matthew contain utterances of Jesus Christ, including:

Matthew 5:11: **Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.** Here we learn from the words of our Savior that serving him will carry with it some difficulties. No soft and easy life is promised. It won't be all sugar and spice. Blunt and realistic expectations are provided to the sheep.

Matthew 5:29: **And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.** The commentators generally agree that, to the auditors of that time, various body parts (such as the eye, the hand, etc.) represented different types of affections of the mind and heart. So Christ is in essence here saying: If there is some vile affection or evil passion that is a stumbling block, "pluck it out." The intent of the language is this: the dearest objects, if they cause us to sin, are to be abandoned. In any event, and no matter how you look at it, this is strong and uncompromising language.

Matthew 5:31-32: **Whosoever shall put away his wife . . . causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.** Clearly, this is strong, hard-hitting language that gets people where they live. As we have often said in this place, it is virtually impossible to find any so-called "church" or "religion" that adheres to this vital truism. It is not too much to say that this issue has become a watermark in these last days, and failure to obey this standard has led directly to same-sex marriage.

Matthew 5:37: **But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatever is more than these cometh of evil.** No word games. Jesus is telling us to let a simple "Yes" or "No" suffice to affirm the truth or the untruth of anything. With the false religionists, there is no end to

palaver (profuse and idle or meaningless words) being thrown into the air, all of which serves to obfuscate the simplicity that is in Christ.

Matthew 6:7: **But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking.** Oh no, don't tell me that Jesus just called a group of people "heathen." Say it ain't so! How in the world does that jibe with the open-minded, never-say-a-bad-word-about-anybody Jesus we have thrust on us every day?

Matthew 6:23: **But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!** This is more direct and hard-hitting talk from the Great Shepherd; your entire body is chock-full of darkness! Everywhere you look, dark – dark – dark!

Matthew 7:5: **Thou hypocrite, first cast the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast the mote out of thy brother's eye.** A hypocrite is one who is insincere; one who dissembles. A dissembler is one who hides or disguises the real nature of his feelings or motives. This is yet another example of Christ being direct, frank and cutting to the chase in his speaking. I like that adjective "frank" as being highly applicable to the words of Jesus; it means "direct and unreserved in speech; straightforward; sincere; without inhibition or subterfuge; undisguised; unmistakable."

Matthew 7:6: **Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend (tear, lacerate) you.** Here we have the ultimate in reality speak; Christ is referring to human beings as dogs and swine. That sounds exceedingly judgmental; some may even say harsh. But it's gospel truth and speaks to what is actually happening on the ground.

Matthew 7:15: **Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.** Here we have more hard-hitting prose. Indeed, the phrase "false prophets" could almost be considered fighting words in this day and age. And here again we have the use of a simile, comparing humans to animals, providing a very accurate and colorful description of these lying preacher types. They are not only wolves, but "ravening" wolves, and that word "ravening" means rapacious, voracious, which is to say they are inordinately greedy, predatory and extortionate. Think of these words the next time you see one of those half-grinning phony preacher types smiling out at you or spreading their lies in the media.

Matthew 7:23: **And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.** With these words, our Savior makes it quite clear to anybody with a modicum of intelligence that there are people in this world that "work iniquity." That means those people spend their life's energies and brains thinking up ways to do wrong, and then

performing those wrongs. Further, we learn here that Jesus wants nothing to do with those folks – “depart from me” he says. That is NOT inclusive and tolerant language.

Matthew 8:22: But Jesus said unto him, Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead. In this, Christ Jesus is telling his auditors that there are living and breathing people on this earth that are, for all intents and purposes, dead. They are spiritually dead; they are morally dead; they are intellectually dead – dead, dead, dead. The Lord’s people must avoid such individuals and follow Jesus. Let those “dead” people take care of burying their kind. Now I ask you, does this language suggest Jesus was open and inclusive to all kinds and sorts? Of course not!

And the following language from *Matthew 10:5 and 6* is more proof that Jesus did not preach a universal salvation or an open-ended religion: **Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter not; But go, rather, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

The Jesus of the Bible preached a fierce and destroying God, which you will see from such language as this found in *Matthew 10:28: [F]ear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* And he told then-living citizens that they were hurtling down to hell as they lived, as we see for example in *Matthew 11:23: And thou, Capernaum, which are exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell.*

And there is nothing peaceful (as the people of our times use that word) about the genuine Jesus as reflected in the Bible, when it comes to those he has not chosen. For example, you read in *Matthew 10:34: Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword.*

And this that you find in *Matthew 12:30* puts a lie to the popular notion that Christ is one big happy Open House: **He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.**

Additionally, what do those powerful words in *Matthew 12:34* do to your craven claim that Jesus Christ is some type of mealy-mouthed wimp with no bite: **O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things?** He called them a brood of serpents! And he follows that up by immediately telling them they were an **evil and adulterous generation.** *Matthew 12:39.* Then he tops it all off by describing that generation as not just an **unclean spirit** but an unclean spirit joined by seven other spirits **more wicked than himself. . . . Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.** *Matthew 12:43-45.*

In *Matthew Chapter 15*, we find Jesus conversing with the Pharisees. At verses 7 and 8, he gets right to the heart of the matter: **Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people draw nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.** In essence, Jesus Christ tells these phony religionists that they are in fact –

wait for it – phony religionists. It’s all about running their mouths and making a show, but not an ounce of inner sincerity.

And similarly in *Matthew Chapter 16*, this time in response to Pharisees and Sadducees, our Savior laid the axe to the root of the tree. They wanted a sign, don’t you know. Christ said at verse 4: **A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet, Jonah.** This is as far away from being open and inclusive as you can get. He virtually condemned an entire generation then and there, describing them as “wicked” and “adulterous.” Keep away from such people, is the import of his words.

Along those same lines, if you get over to *Matthew 17:17* you find these comparable words: **O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you?** So right there in a short span, you have that generation faithfully described by Jesus as wicked, adulterous, faithless and perverse! (Any time you start talking “perverse”, you are talking homosexuality and more).

Jesus speaks clearly about the world and those of the world. For example, in *Matthew 18:7*: **Woe unto the world because of offenses!** No pussy-footing around trying to make friends and have one big happy family of humanity. No, WOE to those of the world that are not the Lord’s people and are instead bringing offenses to his sheep.

And of course of particular relevance and interest in these last days, recall the words of Jesus in *Matthew 19:4-5* that we often quote: **Have ye not read that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female; and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh?** In other words, no divorce and remarriage, no casual cohabitation *du Jour*, and for Pete’s sake, no same-sex marriage! Now that’s beginning to sound downright hateful and bigoted, if you ask me. Yet these lying false prophets around the world today ignore such preaching and insist this same Jesus loves and accepts the unrepentant homosexual and his “spouse.” (Insert gagging, choking and coughing sounds here!).

And for those who insist Jesus is open to one and all, irrespective of life style, remember this powerful clause: **Many be called, but few chosen.** *Matthew 20:16.* And this: **Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.** *Matthew 22:13.*

And all of *Matthew Chapter 23* is well worth our time and attention in the context of the blunt and direct speech of Jesus:

23 Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,

² Saying The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:

³ All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

⁴ For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

⁵ But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

⁶ And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,

⁷ And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

⁸ But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.

⁹ And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

¹⁰ Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.

¹¹ But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

¹² And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

¹³ But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

¹⁴ Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

¹⁵ Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

¹⁶ Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!

¹⁷ Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?

¹⁸ And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.

¹⁹ Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

²⁰ Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

²¹ And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.

²² And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

²³ Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

²⁴ Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

²⁵ Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

²⁶ Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

²⁷ Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

²⁸ Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

²⁹ Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

³⁰ And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

³¹ Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

³² Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

³³ Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

³⁴ Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

³⁵ That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

³⁶ Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

³⁷ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

³⁸ Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

³⁹ For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Any saint of God has a vital interest in understanding and worshiping the true Lord and Savior. To that end, the saint must disregard the lies that we swim in today regarding Jesus of the Bible and look at His words, and powerful words they are!

I love you!