

LESSON 13

Foundations Curriculum

What Did Jesus Teach?

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Introduction

What Did Jesus Teach?

In this thirteenth lesson, we will begin the second cycle of the teaching of Jesus. Up to this point in the teaching, we have studied the deity and humanity of Christ, the evidence that He is the Messiah awaited by Israel. We studied how Jesus pleased the Father with a perfect and blameless life, and how He was used with power and anointing of the Holy Spirit to accomplish His redemptive work, with signs and miracles.

We also saw how Jesus devoted Himself to a close relationship of proximity with the twelve who walked with Him, in order to form them. Jesus worked by levels to form His disciples, and this was essential for fulfilling His work.

1) An Infallible Principle: What Did Jesus Teach?

Where are you building your house? On the rock or on the sand?

The teachings of Jesus are vast and, at the same time, profound. We have been learning for years and will never finish learning.

Let us begin our reflection with the text from Matthew:

*“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them,
I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:
and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that
house;
and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.
But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them,
will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand:
and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that
house;
and it fell. And great was its fall.”*

Matthew 7:24–27 (NKJV)

This text helps us understand the importance of our foundation in Jesus and in His teachings and principles. Moreover, it is necessary to help the Church see the simplicity and directness of the Master's teaching.

Three Main Ingredients in the Preaching of Jesus

First ingredient: Jesus presented Himself

Jesus loved the Father and wanted to lead us to Him, but the way to do so was through Himself. That is why He said "I am..." always followed by a consequence.

1) *I am the way, the truth, and the life... no one comes to the Father except through Me.*

He proposed — He extended an invitation to a relationship with God as our Father. Think about this: do you live in a relationship with the Father, or do you live in fear?

One of the works of the Creator during the pandemic we have experienced (since March 2020) has been to lay bare whether our relationship with God the Father is shaky, fragile, confused, or wavering. Whoever is not firm in that relationship is struck by fear. The problem is not the virus, but the fragile relationship with God that some Christians have been experiencing.

2) *I am the light of the world... he who follows Me shall not walk in darkness.*

Think about this: is there any kind of confusion in your life? Have you been illuminated by the light of Christ?

3) *I am the bread of life, the living bread which came down from heaven... he who feeds on Me will live forever; he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.*

Are you feeding on Christ? How do you feed on Christ? (His words are spirit and they are life.)

4) *I am the door... if anyone enters by Me, he will be saved.*

Have you surrendered to Christ? Are you united to Him? Have you received of His Spirit?

5) *I am the resurrection and the life... he who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.*

The most that a virus like COVID-19 can do is kill us (physically speaking). Is that the end? Are you afraid of death? The text of Hebrews 2:15 states that He delivered those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Will you forfeit the greatest of all blessings — being free from the dread of death? Think about this!

6) *I am the good shepherd... I know My sheep, and they know Me; they hear My voice.*

Do you know Him? Does He know you? Do you offer prayers, or do you converse with Him? Do you hear Him?

Think about this: What is Jesus to you? A distant Savior or the God who is present?

CHART 1

1. Much more than believing that He existed...
2. It is believing in what He is.
3. It is believing in what He said.
4. It is believing in what He does today and can do in your life.

Second ingredient: His doctrine (His commandments)

The text of Matthew 7:28–29 tells us that the people were astonished, amazed, after hearing the preaching of Jesus. The original word for “astonished, amazed” was “ekplesso,” and its most common usage would be “struck with a blow.” Perhaps the best translation would be “shocked.”

“And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.”

Matthew 7:28–29 (NKJV)

Characteristics of the Teaching of Jesus

CHART 2

1) Practicality

Conceptual definitions versus a way of living. They are commandments for life. They contain the things He commanded us.

2) Richness

In Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3). There is nothing in all the history of literature that can compare to the Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon on the Mount is widely known and produces faith and fear. The simplest man without academic training becomes wise.

3) Sharpness

Who reads and meditates on these truths and teachings and does not feel laid bare before a mirror? Who meditates and does not realize that it is the opposite of the human heart and culture? Who does not see that this came from heaven? These words came from the throne of heaven.

Our response must be obedience!

- 1) Obedience is the only way for faith to be seen.
- 2) Faith is something inward, intangible, but obedience is the visible part of faith.
- 3) The apostle James speaks of works without faith (obedience) and challenges that faith be shown through works. There is a definition for faith without obedience: “it is dead.”
- 4) The question, then, is not whether you have faith, but whether that faith is alive!
- 5) Is not our salvation and redemption entirely by faith? Yes, but it is a living faith that must manifest itself, that must be seen. “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me” (John 14:21).

Is it possible to live out a message of such high demands? The answer is simple: *he who feeds on Me will live because of Me* (John 6:57).

A PRINCIPLE:

Do you pay attention to all the commandments of Jesus, or are you content to practice a few minimum rules imposed by the church environment?

Third ingredient: The warnings

The strongest examples of warnings are found in the parables taught and preached by Jesus throughout the Gospels.

The text we read at the beginning of this lesson is a warning. It clearly explains what will happen to the one who practices and to the one who does not practice (keep) the commandments of God.

Jesus is warning what happens to the one who practices and to the one who does not practice.

Let us look at examples of warnings found in the parables:

- 1) The unforgiving servant: a servant whose debt was forgiven, and who did not forgive one who owed him, was delivered to the torturers. “So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses” (Matthew 18:35).
- 2) The ten virgins are also a severe warning (Matthew 25).
- 3) The parable of the talents.

The warnings of Jesus are primarily for those who believe in Him and in His principles.

Understanding the Goodness versus the Severity of God

The care not to see God through only one lens: goodness without severity, or severity without goodness

“Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness.”

Romans 11:22 (NKJV)

CHART 3

GOODNESS WITHOUT SEVERITY	SEVERITY WITHOUT GOODNESS
We will see a God who is indifferent to sin, a “nice guy.” This kind of message produces Christians without character and without the fear of God — and liars as well.	We will see an implacable God. This kind of message produces rigorous religious people who cannot truly live and who become hypocrites.

It is worth remembering that Jesus promised heaven and warned us many times about hell. Jesus spoke about the lake of fire, about hell, clearly.

Our response to the warnings of Jesus must be fear.

True faith never eliminates the fear of God — on the contrary!

Fear without faith is dreadful; it produces the dread of death!

Faith without fear is a trivial and deceptive faith.

Without fear there will be no obedience either.

Do you think the grace of God is a door to negligence, or do you live with holy fear, knowing that God is a consuming fire?

A PRINCIPLE:

Faith, fear, and obedience always walk together. None of them is exempt from the need of the others.

Brief Summary

CHART 4

Teachings of Jesus	Expressions	Response
He Himself	“I am”	Faith
Commandments	“Be, do,” etc.	Obedience

Warnings	"Beware! See that no one deceives you! Take heed!"	Fear
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CONCLUSION

In this thirteenth lesson of the Foundations Curriculum, we presented the teaching that Jesus preached — His doctrine, His teachings — and how it is possible to ground our faith in Him out of love and not out of fear. We spoke about the main ingredients in the preaching of Jesus: He Himself as the only way to God; the living out and practicing of His commandments sincerely (in obedience); and the warnings He left to keep us walking on the right path.

CONSIDER CAREFULLY

- 01** What is Jesus to you? A distant Savior or the God who is present?
- 02** Do you pay attention to all the commandments of Jesus, or are you content to practice a few minimum rules imposed by the church environment?
- 03** Do you think the grace of God is a door to negligence, or do you live with holy fear, knowing that God is a consuming fire?

*having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.*

Ephesians 2:20 (NKJV)