

INSIDE/OUT (GOSPEL OF LUKE) – Dave Solmes

Under Lock and Key / Jesus vs. Religion | Luke 11:45-54 | March 27, 2022

Read: Luke 11:45-54

In today's passage we meet a "lawyer" and read about a conversation this lawyer had with Jesus. To understand who this "lawyer" was we must concentrate on the root word "law". In this passage the "law" referred to, is the Mosaic Law. So, to the lawyer – the key to finding relationship and favor with God was tied to the codified system of rules and regulations that were meant to govern Israel, God's ways.

The lawyer business was threefold:

1. to study and interpret the Mosaic law;
2. to teach & instruct people about to obey the law; and
3. to interpret and answer questions of the law.

So how did that play out? To accomplish this threefold job description the "lawyer(s)" they went around pronouncing judgement upon people. And by doing so became prosecutors. Of course, ultimately discouraging people ... because people fall short of the law ... Impossible ... Placed a huge discouraging burden upon people. Those people fell short ... we fall short and we do every time.

So, When Jesus came, He said of Himself. I am Your advocate / defender.

Read: 1 John 2:1

This is good news. There is no good news found with the law. Jesus comes and says to the sinner, "I am your advocate. I forgive sin and will defend you." The law says guilty and prosecutes quickly / Jesus says yes guilty, but you can be forgiven, and I will be your advocate – let's walk the road together.

The **three** WOES Jesus speaks to: legalism, hypocrisy, and deception

#1. Read Verse 46 [Legalism]

In that day the Lawyers were dealing with legalities, Legalism.

QUESTION: What is legalism?

ANSWER:

- Legalism is the lie that God will find more pleasure in me because OF my obedience, and most certainly if my obedience is greater than others. The opposite is true of legalism .. that God looks at me with disgust because I am not growing in grace, or growing as quickly as others.
- Legalism is the failure to remember that God's pleasure for us comes from outside of us and is found in what Christ has done for us.
- Legalism causes the heart to forget that God sings over us because of the work He has done, not because of what we have done.

Followers of Christ equally bring pleasure to God because of what was purchased for us on the cross that Jesus died on, period. Any imagined superiority to other Christians is the sure sign of a legalist. Appreciate this – Jesus is not saying obedience is unimportant or unnecessary.

Question: In what way is legalism is a false gospel?

Read: Hebrews 8:10

#2. Read verse 47 [Hypocrisy]

Some historians use this verse to point to the times when the lawyers / pharisees would wash / clean up around the tombs of the prophets that would be seen when pilgrims would make their way to Jerusalem for their religious festivals. These tombs were on route and could be seen.

The idea was to the traveller the tombs were cleaned up to signify honor, esteem, and regard. But the tombstones don't tell the real story. The traveller was being presented with false pretenses. Those tombstones represent a history full of disobedience and rebellion. The tombstones represent the killing, murder of God's prophets, shows the great opposition over the years to the ministry and message of the prophets that were sent by God to bring God's word ... call Israel to repentance.

A hypocrite – is not who they say they are. These tombstones were built and washed to send a message that the lawyer(s) honor the prophets. They come from a long line of ancestors that do. That was not the case at all. That is hypocrisy – claiming to be someone that you are not.

The tombstones represented a time when people rejected the teachings of the prophets and had the murdered. How ironic that things were no different in **Luke 11** that right after these exchanges the pharisees and lawyers are heard plotting Jesus death.

#3. Read verse 52 [Deception]

Through their constant leverage for power and authority over people and their narrow interpretations of Scripture the lawyers were seeing people become filled with strong prejudices against the gospel. This was their ultimate goal. The lawyers not only rejected Jesus themselves but were hindering others. They didn't tell the truth. They found ways to deny and criticizing the miracles and ministry of Christ, and also by threatening people with excommunications from the temple.

Application:

#1. Scripture itself does not necessarily lead to someone to a good place or person:

The lawyers were experts in the Hebrew Bible and Hebrew religion and yet they never saw how all the law and all the prophets point to Jesus and because of this they remained condemned by the law they taught. The scriptures all point to Jesus. If you can't see Jesus read a little longer and study a little deeper.

Jesus Christ came to be our advocate. An advocate that speaks sovereignly and finally to the prosecution of the law – the damage of sin. It is still the same today.

This passage points very plainly to the difference between someone who is a devoted follower of Christ verses someone who travels in Christian and religious circles but is not day by day being radically transformed by the power of the gospel.

#2. The Keys of the Kingdom is Belief and Trust in Jesus Christ.

Faith in the permanent sign of Jesus empty cross and Jesus empty tomb. Believing this as foundational to a faith journey is key. This gospel. We don't do the gospel. We receive the gospel. The gospel is not about self-improvement, making a better you. The keys of the kingdom are believing and receiving the truth of the gospel that transforms / saves

us out of sin and rebellion into a relationship as God's redeemed child. Move along Being and doing what God has on His mind for us. This is key.

Keys symbolize power and authority, in both the Old and New Testaments. Through Peter's faith filled proclamation of the gospel in this passage (Matthew 16), Peter opens the door of the kingdom to all and any who respond in faith to that message, while at the same time keeping the door of the kingdom shut from those who do not respond in faith and confess Jesus as Lord. The focus in Matthew 16 is Peter, a few chapters later this same authority is extended to the entire church in Matthew 18:18 and **further explained in 1 John 1:9**

1 John 1: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Question: Why is confession so important?

So, the keys of the kingdom are God's gift to his people that state heaven's verdict on who will and will not enter the kingdom of God based upon an individual's response to the gospel.

As such, when you and I share our faith, we can exercise authority because of the delegated authority that comes from the message we are sharing.

Question: Why do we hesitate to share our faith when we have been given such authority?

Think about this: When you share your faith, you can say you become a child of God, or you are now a Christian. We can say to people, "You have received forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

Such good news: This is the power and authority that comes from holding the keys of the kingdom. Again, these keys open doors by way of sharing / proclamation / telling of the gospel.

Oswald Chambers says, "Beware of rejoicing with a soul in the wrong thing but see that you do rejoice in the right thing. Watch for all you are worth until you hear the Bridegroom's voice in the life of another. Never mind what havoc it brings, what upsets, what crumbling's of health, rejoice with divine hilarity when once His voice is heard.

This is to be a priority for followers of Christ – because just as it was a matter of life for death for us – so it still is literally a matter of life and death for people who have yet to hear.

#3. Each of us are story tellers sharing our faith story every day.

We must realize that as Christian we literally hold the keys of the kingdom. We hold the key that can open the door for many people to hear, learn, and experience the love and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. **Read: Romans 10:4**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What should motivate us to share our faith?
2. When is the last time you shared your faith with someone?
3. Do you recall a time when you felt prompted to share your faith, but hesitated? Why?