1 Lost Sons versus Saved Sons, or The Five Keys To The Kingdom

Keys to the Kingdom in Jesus' Gospel

Speaking to the twelve apostles, Jesus said He will give them the "keys to the kingdom." (Matt. 16:19.)

Keys unlock an entrance. Some imagine this means actual physical keys are in the hands of the apostles. The better view is the twelve were given spiritual keys that unlock entrance to the kingdom of heaven. In the New Living Translation of Isaiah 33:6, it says "the fear of the Lord is the key to this treasure"—the kingdom of God. Jesus gave the apostles the keys to unlock the treasure of salvation. Jesus gave the apostles the keys that instilled the appropriate fear of God's wrath which, if correctly taught and passed down, would become the key to open the door to the treasure of salvation entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

The Five Keys of the Kingdom

In every earlier chapter, we have been repeating Jesus' keys to the kingdom. There are six keys:

- *Inscribe the law on your heart.* God promised the New Testament would "inscribe the Law on the hearts" of New Testament believers. (Jer. 31:31.) Jesus did this by unequivocally telling His followers whoever teaches the Law is to be followed will be "the greatest in the kingdom of heaven," but those who teach against the Law "shall be the least in the kingdom." (Matt. 5:18-19.) That is why Jesus said you must know the Law that applies to you to be able to know what to obey and thus "enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 5:25, your "righteousness must exceed that of the Pharisees" to "enter the kingdom of heaven" while the Pharisees followers who adhere to the shallow law-negating principles of the Pharisees have a defectively shallow obedience.)
- You must go to heaven maimed or you will go to hell whole. You must repent from sin in breaking that Law which is applicable to you. (Mark 9:42-47). This is not merely regret, but a decision to change from sin to obedience which involves sacrifice to guarantee succuss. The only other option Jesus gives you is hell. The sacrifice is stark: Jesus call for the cutting off the body parts that keep you enticed to break the Law.
- You must accept Jesus is Messiah-Prince and keep on obeying Him. Accepting Jesus does not mean recognizing who He was, which even the demons did. Instead, accepting Jesus means you will obey the words of Jesus because He is Messiah Prince. The prophecies of Messiah said the nations would obey Him. (Gen. 49:10, "and unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be.") Thus, believing in Jesus is trust in Him, which cannot be disconnected from the implication that you, as one of the nations, will 'obey him.'This is why Jesus also says you remain saved by continuing to trust in Jesus' words and obeying them. (John 8:51.) By contrast, all those who "keep on disobeying the son have the wrath of God abiding on them." (John 3:36.)
- You must study Jesus' Words and keep holding them down (in your memory) so Satan does not take them away, and bring forth fruit worthy of repentance with patient endurance. The saved fourth seed holds down the teachings of Jesus so Satan cannot swoop in and snatch the word away from your memory. (Luke 8:8 *ff*; Matt. 7:19.) Thus, you must list out Jesus' commands which he said to obey or face hell. The list is clear. For example, do charity to the brethren (Matt. 25:32 *et seq.*); have good fruit (Matt. 7:19); being forgiving once you are forgiven (Matthew 18:23-35), etc.

• Appease the ones you offended. When you fail, you confess your sins again, repent back on track to obedience to the Law applicable to you, and then the covering of Christ once more applies to you. (1 John 1:9.) You are not entitled to bring Christ's atoning sacrifice up to God when you are unrepentant about sin and have not appeased the one you offended — whether God or man or both. (Matt. 5:23-24.) That is abuse of the atonement principle. ¹

Those keys are available in abundance in Jesus' words. They are found in the repetive threats of Jesus on how one becomes lost and sent to hell and a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth. The key to entrance is found in the contrasting imagery Jesus gives on the qualities of those who are saved versus the errors of the lost.

Thus, to understand all that Jesus' teaches about salvation, we do this best by comparing and contrasting whom Jesus identifies as the lost and whom He identifies as the saved. The stark contrast is sometimes the best way to understand what He says. This, in fact, was Jesus' teaching method. For example, He will contrast two sons — one obeys and the other disobeys; one Pharisee trusts his Election as a son of Abraham and thus does not examine himself for sin, but a Publican does examine himself and is sorrowful over his sin, and so on. Jesus wants you to see the characteristics of the lost versus the characteristics of the saved.

The importance of the chart below is we will see *a clear pattern emerge*. The message of Jesus, when compared with like message to like message, *repeatedly* makes Jesus' point absolutely stand out. It is like Jesus is repeating the same idea because we are too dense to get it. We have proven dense. Jesus' message is the exact opposite of the Modern Gospel of Cheap Grace. Listen and call to your own mind all these passages:

^{1.} See chapter entitled "Atonement: Be Reconciled First To The One We Sinned Against Or Otherwise No Effect" on page 1.

Condition	Outcome Lost	Outcome Saved
If confess Jesus		Thief on Cross "This day you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:42.)
If you believe in Jesus but do not confess	You are lost. Rulers "believed" but were "afraid to confess him for fear of being put out of the synagogue." John 12:42. <i>Cf.</i> "cowardly" will be thrown in the "lake of burning sul- fur." (Rev.21:8.)	
Cowardly	In lake of fire with "unbelievers." (Rev. 21:8.)	
If a son says he will obey but later does not obey	He is lost. Matt 21: 21:28-32 (publicans and harlots promoted over you into the kingdom)	
If a son says he will not obey but repents and does later obey his father.		He is saved—promoted into the kingdom over the son who said he would obey but did not later do so. Matt 21: 21:28-32 (publicans and sinners are promoted into kingdom over son who promised to obey but didn't).
If you call Jesus Lord but do not do charity for the breathren by giving food, water, & clothes	Then you are goats who are sent to "eternal fire" (Matthew 25:30-46.)	
Those who call Jesus Lord but do charity for the brethren (food, water & clothes)		You are sheep who go to heaven. (Matthew 25:30-46.)

Condition	Outcome Lost	Outcome Saved
"Continue/keep on trusting in" Jesus		"shouldhave eternal life" (Jn 3:16, KJV)
"Believe for a while but in time of temptation, fall away"	Then you are the second seed who "withered" (died) and are thus lost. Luke 8:8,13 (Parable of the Sower)	
Believe "in a good and noble heart who pro- duces fruit with endur- ance until the end"		Then you are the saved fourth seed in the Para- ble of te Sower, Luke 8
"Tree without good fruit"	Is"cut down, and thrown in the fire." (Matt 7:19.) "Good fruit" is identical to "good works." (Matt. 7:20.)	
"Branch in me that does not bear fruit"	"Is cut off, and is like a withered (dead) branch that is throw outside, and cast into the fire." John 15:1-6	
Branch in me that bears fruit		Is continually cleaned and hence saved. John 15:6
Virgins (innocent) who brought extra oil		Enter banquet (Matt. 25:1 et seq.)
Virgins (innocent) who fail to have any oil left to burn when Jesus comes for them	Outside where weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matt. 25:1 <i>et seq</i> .)	
Believer whose works are neither hot nor cold	Spew out of mouth. (Rev. 3:15-16.)	
Believer who has "repu- tation for being alive but is dead" for their "works are incomplete"	Rev. 3:1-3 (spirit will depart unless repent and do works did at the first)	

Condition	Outcome Lost	Outcome Saved
Righteousness must exceed that of the Phari- sees "to enter the king- dom of heaven" which is then defined as being merciful, peacemakers, suffering for sake of righteousness, etc.		Matt. 5:20 <i>et seq</i> . Those with such behaviors are sons of God, will inherit Kingdom of God, etc. (Sermon on the Mount.)
Pharisee who teaches less weighty matters of Law, leaving undone more weighty matters of Law	"shut kingdom to men, and do not enter your- selves." Matt. 23:13, 15. They "have left undone the weightier matters of the Law" by teaching only "less weighty mat- ters" of the Law. Matt. 23:23.	
Pharisee-proselytes who were led by Pharisees into incomplete knowl- edge of Law, not being taught more weighty matters of the Law	Pharisees"shut kingdom to men, and do not enter yourselves." Matt. 23:13, 15. Proselytes not taught "the weightier matters of the Law" but only taught "less weighty matters" of the Law such as tithing. Matt. 23:23.	
Those whose teachings ensnare others into law- less behavior	Better a millstone around neck and face God's wrath. (Mark 9:42-43.)	
Ensnared in sin	Tares, gathered and send into the fire where weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matt. 13:41- 44.)	
Obey the Ten Com- mandments		Enter life. (See Matt.19:16-26.)

Condition	Outcome Lost	Outcome Saved
Those who "do good [things]"		"all who are in their graves will hear his voice and will come out—those who have done good [things] to the resurrection of life" (John 5:28-29.)
Those who "do evil [things]"	"all who are in their graves will hear his voice and will come out—those who have done evil, to the resur- rection of condemna- tion." (John 5:28-29.)	
Do will of God		my brothers and sisters (Sermon on Mount)
"Do not do will of God"		"do not enter the king- dom of heaven." (Matt.7:21.)
Keep trusting Him who sent Me and keep trust- ing in me		has passed from death into life. (John 5:24.)
He who "endures to the end"		"shall be saved" (Matt. 10:20.)
One who "keeps listen- ing" and "keeps follow- ing"		"can never be snatched." (John 10:27- 29.)
Deny Jesus	Jesus will deny you. Luk	
Confess Jesus		Jesus will confess you
One who trusts alone in his Election without repentance from sin	"do not say 'We are Abraham's seed""	
One who refuses to even be sorry for sin	"[does not go] home jus- tifid" (Luke 18:9-14.)	
One who repent deeply from his sin		"this man goes home justified" (Luke)

Condition	Outcome Lost	Outcome Saved
Servant who has no profit on spiritual riches God gives him	"throw outside" the unprofitable servant where "weeping and gnashing of teeth." Par- able of the Unprofitable Servant (Matt. 25:14- 30.) <i>Cf.</i> Rev. 7:17; 21:4; Isaiah 25:8 (no tears or weeping in heaven).	
Servant who has profit on spiritual riches God gives him		Profitable Servants in Parable of Unprofitable Servant. (Matt.25:14 <i>ff</i> .)
He who keeps on dis- obeying the Son		"keeps having the Wrath of God remain on him." (John 3:36.)
Faith and great love		Sins forgiven and faith saves you. (Woman who washed Jesus' feet with her tears.).
After you are forgiven all your debt	You do not forgive oth- ers, then sent to jailers to torment you until you can pay an insurmount- able debt. (Matthew 18:23-35.)	
Give all wealth away to the poor	Rich young man refuses to do so and is lost. (Matt. 19: 16-21.)	Zacheus repents and gives wealth to the poor, and Jesus says 'this day salvation has come to this house.'
Lose life for sake of Christ.		Lesson
Gain life in this world to spare yourself from death for Christ.	Lose life in the kingdom to come	
Give up families, deny self and follow Jesus		"shall have eternal life." (Matt. 10:37-39; Matt. 19:)

Condition	Outcome Lost	Outcome Saved
"Believer in me" who is ensnared in sin	if fail to cut off body part, goes to "hell whole."	if cuts off body part, then goes to "heaven maimed." (Mark 9:42- 47)
Kept guard of my word		"should never ever" die. (John 8:51.)
Ashamed of my word	"ashamed of by son of man when He comes in his glory" (Luke 9:26.)	
"If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this proph- ecy,		"God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book." Rev 22:19

A thumbnail of the key verses are:

- Jesus' mention of the Law's ongoing validity and how crucial it is to teach every command, small and large. (Matt. 5:18-19.) Jesus later ties entry into the kingdom as *conditioned* on obedience to the Ten Commandments. (Matt.19:16-26.)
- Jesus' promise of justification for repentance from sin. (Luke 18:10 ff.)
- Jesus' salvation principles in the Sermon on the Mount which turn on variuos virtues of being a peacemaker, merciful, etc. (Matt. 5:1 *ff.*)
- Jesus' hell-whole or heaven-maimed statement. (Mark 9:42 ff.)
- Jesus' emphasis on works for salvation in the Parable of the Sheep & The Goats without which one will go to hell. (Matt. 25:32 *ff*.)
- Jesus' emphasis on works in Revelation without which Jesus will spew you out of His mouth. (Rev. 3:16 *ff*.)

This is what Gospel tracts should look like. That is, if Jesus is Lord. Had we never replaced His gospel with a gospel more to our taste, it would resemble what we see above. However, the cheap gospel of today which has replaced Jesus' Gospel of Costly Grace. This is why the most freightening warnings of all are the last *two* on the list. Our modern religous leaders are ashamed of Jesus' words,

proven by their shameless effort to relegate them to a bygone dispensation. In this way, they keep their gospel of cheap grace free from its greatest foe: the Lord Jesus Himself. Or others twist Jesus' words so His meaning is suppressed due to slavish adherence to the cheap grace gospel. Either way, our leading commentators and spiritual leaders are embarrassed by Jesus' words. They bend and twist until His gospel of costly grace supposedly comes out never contradicting (supposedly) the doctrine of cheap grace.

Jesus' Analysis of A Dead Response to His Gospel

We should not be surprised at the current state of affairs. Jesus said *wide* is the gate that leads to destruction, but *narrow* is the way that leads to life. People tend to the *wide* gate even though Jesus' words are saying, 'don't go there.'

Jesus confronted a similar an audience whose hearing was biased and rejected His teachings. Please listen to Jesus' comments. He will explain that error starts by not even adding *one* truth to then build other truth upon.

> And he answered and said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the *mysteries* of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. (12) *For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath*. (13) Therefore speak I to them in parables; because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. (14) And unto them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand; And seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive: (15) For this people's heart is waxed gross [*insensitive*], And their ears are dull of hearing [*i.e., heard heavily with their ears*], And their eyes they

have closed; Lest haply they should *perceive* with their eyes, And *hear* with their ears, And understand with their heart, And *should turn again*, And I should heal them. (Mat 13:11-15 ASV.)

This has a lot more meaning than you at first might suppose. It is one of those passages that you read, gloss over, and do not really know how to catalog. However, Jesus is making several points.

First, He tells you what the people's *insensitive* and *weighed down* listening skews them to *fail* to do. Jesus says they fail to "turn again...." (Matt. 13:15.) What does *turn again* mean? It means *repentance*. Why is that important? Because Jesus said the way to go home *justified* (*i.e.*, right with God) was to repent (*i.e.*, make a firm decision to turn around from sin).

Second, the people's flaw for not understanding Him was they were *insensitive* and had *heavy hearing*. The word *insensitive* means they were *hearing* but not *comprehending* Jesus. It was bouncing off of them like the first seed in the Parable of the Sower where the seed lands on the hard ground. The seed on the *good soil* was a heart, by contrast, which was *prepared* already to hear the word. Jesus said it was the *good and noble* heart. (Luke 8:8 *ff*.) Thus, the people's hearts were *insensitive* because they were not *good and noble* hearts. Rather, they were people bent on sinning. Hence, the people did not understand Jesus because they did not want to understand.

In other words, the people were taking Jesus' remarks in their hearing, but had no interest or desire to apply those words to require a self-examination. This would have led to personal repentance. This is not what the people were hoping Jesus' words would give them, and thus they *missed* His points.

Third, the people's were hearing *heavily*. The Greek word *bareos* means *heavily*. Or *with difficulty*. It only appears in Jesus' words in this particular verse. Its root word is *baros*. It means *weighty* literally, and figuratively *burdensome* or *grave*. While some translate *bareos* in Matthew 13:15 as *dull*, there is a different Greek word to convey that: *nothros*. It means *slow, sluggish* or *dull*. It is translated that way in Hebrews 5:11 ("dull in hearing").

Thus, Jesus may have had a shade of meaning different than *dull* where something instead is *weighing* on the hearing of the listener. This is proven by experience. For the main response to Jesus' words, catalogued carefully in this book, reveal a *weight* constantly battling against taking Jesus' words literally. It is a pressure external to the text that keeps bearing down on anything Jesus says about the costliness of grace. This *weight* tries to twist it so it comes out a costfree grace.

In our modern vernacular, we would call several names: *bias* or *presuppositions*.

Weight Brought To Bear To Skew Jesus' Words

For example, when Jesus says every tree without good fruit is cut down and thrown in the fire, there are not many options to avoid this is a costly grace principle. Yet, cheap grace will deny the fire is hell. Or it will deny good fruit means works of obedience.

For example, Jesus says the dividing line between the sheep that inherit eternal life versus the goats who go to eternal fire is that the sheep did works of charity and the goats did not to the brethren of the king. There are virtually no options to avoid this is a costly grace principle. Yet, cheap grace will claim the brethren are Jews in the tribulation period, and we must accept this is a tribulation-only principle or otherwise we have lost the principle of cheap grace.

Another example arises from Jesus' parable which says the good servant who was put over his master's household but then loses patience for his master's returns, turns to oppressing his fellow servants and reveling in drunkeness. Jesus says this good-servantturned-evil will have a fate outside with the unbelievers in a place of weeping and gnashing. There are virtually no options to avoid this is a costly grace principle. Yet, cheap grace says the good servant was not a true servant, or the good servant is not the same as the evil servant. Cheap grace cannot simply apply the parable as it reads. Another blunt statement by Jesus was about the unmerciful servant. This fellow is forgiven a mountain of debt that spares him from prison. Yet, later, the fellow is unforgiving to others in turn. Jesus says the master will be "wroth" (in hot wrath) with him, and sent him to the jailers (at the prison he first avoided) to be "tormented" and pay the insurmountable debt — implicitly forever. This parable is virtually impossible to deny is a principle of costly grace. Yet, cheap grace will insist that the jailers, torment, and the insurmountable debt due to unforgiveness means only earthly torment. They insist, in direct contradiction of Jesus, that a Christian who is not forgiving to others has his sins forgiven forever.

In fact, when Jesus is the most obvious in His meaning, we find cheap grace even more aggressively attacks Jesus' principles of a costly grace. For example, we find in the parable of the two sons that the religious rulers who are the disobedient son in the parable are to be excluded from heaven and the publicans are to be elevated in preference over them into heaven. However, cheap grace insists the disobedient religious rulers enter anyway but supposedly as second class citizens.

Or when Jesus says the second seed believes for a while and in time of temptation falls away and withers (dies), cheap grace says that Jesus cannot mean a believer is lost due to sin. Cheap grace insists that this *believing* must have been a false faith. But Jesus said in Greek "the second keeps on believing for a while...," which He clearly defines as "receiving the word with joy." Thus, no matter how clear Jesus is, cheap grace must *weigh* down the passage with presuppositions to drive the passage to an outcome at odds with Jesus' meaning.

Thus, it is obvious in hindsight that Jesus' choice of words about *heavily hearing* was deliberate. Those who hear but do not understand are bringing bias and presuppositions to the text to drive it so it does not penetrate, and listener does not *turn away* from sin. Instead, they form other beliefs and adopt other doctrines. They are *true believers* in a different version of what Jesus' means. But it is a *false* faith that can quote Jesus and claim He is Lord, but their doctrine isbased on *missing* Jesus' points by *weighing* on it with bias.

Little You Have Wil Be Taken Away

Remember Jesus said in Matthew 13:

(12) For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath.

Compare this to the first sown seed in the parable of the sower. It represents a person who hears the word, does not correctly understand it, and then Satan comes along and snatches it from their heart less they believe (based on a correct understanding) and be saved. (Luke 8:8 ff.)

Thus, it is crucial to understand Jesus' correctly, which will prevent Satan from then snatching His words from your heart, and then you can be saved. A faith based on an incorrect understanding of Jesus cannot save. In fact, this represents a faith where Satan must have snatched the truth before you could absorb it.

All the passages above teach costly grace. There is absolutely no way to refute each and every passage. It is an overwhelming case. But the Cheap Grace Gospel has an answer for each and every one. They are not good answers. But they are answers of a sort, and serve their purpose well. When combined with Sunday-after-Sunday repetition about the false assumptions of cheap grace, it is clear Satan is the one blocking Jesus' points from penetrating our minds.

For example, if you are like me, you read Matthew a thousand times, and were puzzled a thousand times. You then glossed over the troublesome passages. You supposed someone else had solved the dilemmas. And you and I are free to believe in a cheap grace where workds are irrelevant to add to faith.

Conclusion: The Real Gospel

However, there actually are no solutions to the problem passages from Jesus. There is simply presuppositional interpretation dished out constantly on radio, tv and sermons. Yet, there is never one single passage from Jesus that teaches cheap grace. It is all an external pressure brought to bear on His words.

Nor can Jesus's commands be dismissed to a defunct dispesnation between God and Jews which no longer apply to the era of grace. The reason is obvious: after Jesus died and rose, but before the Ascension — unequivocally the era of grace, Jesus gave the great commission. There Jesus said the apostles were to teach all His commandments to the nations so they observe (obey) them. Thus, it is impossible that Jesus was planning on giving new principles of cheap grace that would replace His costly grace principles. Instead, Jesus invoked the memory of His teachings just before the Ascension, and reimposed them *in the era of grace*. Thus, dispensationalism is Satan's tool once more to snatch Jesus' words from your heart.

Conclusion: The Real Gospel

Jesus is absolutely clear, and repetitious about it: there are five principles for salvation:

- 1. Inscribe the law on your heart. (Jer. 31:31; Matt. 5:18-19, 25.)
- 2. You must go to heaven maimed or you will go to hell whole. (Mark 9:42-47).
- **3.** You must accept ('believe') Jesus is Messiah-Prince and keep on obeying Him. (Gen. 49:10; John 3:16; 8:51. *Cf.* John 3:36.)
- 4. You must study Jesus' Words and keep holding them down (in your memory) so Satan does not take them away, and bring forth fruit (works worthy of repentance) with patient endurance. (Luke 8:8 *ff*; Matt. 7:19.)
- 5. Appease the ones you offended. (1 John 1:9; Matt. 5:23-24.)

If you do these things, the atonement applies to you and you will be saved. (1 John 1:9; Matt. 5:23-24.)

These five principles are not real jazzy. They are not easy to sell. People do not like things that cost them anything. But a gospel of compromise is no gospel at all. If Jesus really said these things, then the truth of God's word will sell itself.

There's an old adage. If it sounds too good to be true, it likely is not true. That is the gospel of cheap grace: a wonderful gospel if it were true. It teaches that if you just believe for a moment in time, then you can sin and violate every principle of God with no repurcussion on your salvation. That would not only be good news — it would be fantastic news. Unfortunately, it is lie with not a shred of support in the words of the One these adherents call Lord. For them, this is the warning Jesus gave if their hearts would ever open to it:

> Not every one saying to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but the one doing the will of My Father, the [One] in [the] heavens. (22) Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, we prophesied *in Your name*, and cast out demons *in Your name*, and did many miraculous works *in Your name*, did we not?' (23) And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; be departing from Me, *the ones practicing lawlessness*!' (Mat 7:21-23 ALT.)

The only reason to persist in this false gospel is the adherents are in denial. They just cannot believe so many people have been on the wrong track. However, wrong tracks do not become right tracks by how many people go down the wrong track. Let's get on the Jesus' train before it is too late.