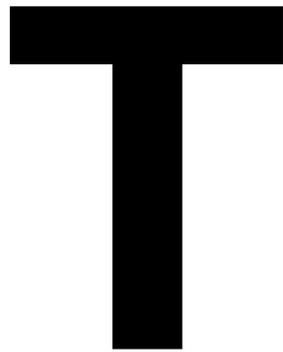


⊕T♥



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About altracts.org

At altracts.org, an effort is made to make the messages of Jesus very easy to understand. In these materials, Bible passages have been rewritten. An effort has been made to make sure that the complete meanings of the teachings are kept. The reader is encouraged to read the Bible and decide whether these efforts have been successful.

References:

King James Bible

New King James Bible

Zondervan NIV Study Bible

JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh (2nd ed.)

Greek-Korean-English New Testament

The Greek New Testament (4th revised ed.)

♥ Responsibility ♥

Jesus taught using parables. A parable is a short story that shows truth. The most important parable that Jesus taught is about forgiveness.

Forgiveness (what Jesus said)
(rewritten from Matthew 18:23-35)

A subject owed a king a lot of money. He did not have the money, so the king wanted to sell him, his wife and children, and all of his things.

The subject begged, 'Please be patient. I will pay.' The king forgave the debt.

Later, the subject saw a man who owed him a little money. The subject grabbed the man and choked him. 'Pay me!' he shouted.

The man begged, 'Please be patient. I will pay,' but the subject had the man put into prison.

Some other subjects told the king what happened. The king said to the subject, 'You are evil! I forgave you. You must learn to forgive others.' The king had him put into prison.

God wants you to *forgive everyone from your heart.*

Message

The king is God. The subject is you. The other man is every other person. The debt is sin. The prison is an unhappy life.

If you want to be forgiven, forgive everyone else.

That is the most important responsibility. If you want grace, give grace. Forgive everyone for everything.

Showing Forgiveness (what Jesus did) (rewritten from Luke 23:33-34)

When they crucified him, Jesus said, 'God forgive them because they do not know what they are doing.'

Lesson

When Jesus died on the cross, he *showed* us how to live the truth of the parable. He lived in that truth, and he died in that truth.

How would you react to crucifixion?

What would you do if it happened to you?

♥ Service ♥

A Good Neighbor (what Jesus said)
(rewritten from Luke 10:25-37)

A lawyer said to Jesus, 'How do I live forever?'

Jesus said, 'What do you think God's law says?'

The lawyer said, 'Love God completely, and love your neighbor like yourself.'

Jesus said, 'Right. Do that.'

The lawyer said, 'Who is my neighbor?'

Jesus told a story:

A man was traveling. Robbers beat him, took his clothes, and left him half dead.

A priest saw the man. He did not help.

A deacon (a priest's helper) saw the man. He did not help.

A foreigner saw the man. He helped.

The foreigner took the man to an inn and doctored him. When he left, he gave money to the innkeeper and said, 'Help him. When I come back, I will give you more.'

Jesus said, 'Who was a good neighbor, the priest, the deacon, or the foreigner?'

The lawyer said, 'The one who gave love.'

Jesus said, 'Do that.'

Lesson

Everyone is your neighbor.

Show love to your neighbors. You can show love to your neighbors by helping them when they need it.

You can think of your neighbors as friends you have now or friends you will have in the future. Good friends help their friends. Be a good friend by helping everyone when you can. Show love by serving others.

♥ Validation ♥

The Tax Man (what Jesus said)
(rewritten from Luke 18:9-14)

Jesus was talking with some snobs. Snobs are people who think they are better than everyone else. They look down on other people for no good reason.

Jesus told them a story:

A holy man and a tax man went to church to pray. The holy man said, 'God, I am glad I am not a bad person like this tax man. I live properly.'

The tax man was too ashamed to go into the church. He could not even look up to heaven. He beat his chest and said, 'God, I am bad. Please be merciful.'

Jesus said, 'God thought the tax man's attitude was good but thought badly of the holy man. God likes humble people more than proud ones. Snobs will be made humble, and humble people will be raised up.'

Message

Be humble.

It is nicer to be humble than to be a snob. Snobbery is not respectable. If you want to be right with God, check your attitude.

The Poor Woman (what Jesus said)

(rewritten from Luke 21:1-4)

Jesus saw rich people giving money to a church. A poor widow also put in two small coins.

Jesus said, 'This poor woman has put in more than all the rich people. *They* gave because they were rich, but *she* gave all she had even though she was poor.'

The Lost Money (what Jesus said)

(rewritten from Luke 15:8-10)

When people lose money, they look for it, and when they find it, they are happy. When just one bad person chooses to be good, there is happiness in heaven.

Lesson

What did Jesus value? Was it money? In the stories, he valued the lowest person. Why do you think he did that?

What do *you* value?

Amazing Grace (what bball1989 said)

If grace is water, then the church should be an ocean.

Lesson

Grace *is* water (free water). Make the grace of the church into an ocean. Value other people. Validation is about seeing the good in people.

Do you make an effort to validate people?

♥ Play ♥

Jesus Makes Wine (what Jesus did)

(rewritten from John 2:1-11)

Jesus, his mother Mary, and his main followers were at a wedding. Mary said, 'They ran out of wine.'

Jesus said, 'Mom, why are you putting this on me? It is not my time yet.'

Nearby stood some big jars. Jesus asked the servants to fill the jars with water and then take some of it to the chef. They did.

The chef tasted the water. The chef took the groom aside and said, 'Usually, people bring out the best wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests are drunk, but you saved the best for last.'

This first miracle revealed the glory of Jesus, and his main followers put their faith in him.

Message

(from Ecclesiastes 3:1 NIV)

There is a time for everything...

Lesson

There is time for play. If you worry that God might be angry if you play, you can ask yourself some simple questions. Use RSVP as a way to remember.

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| ♥ Responsibility | Am I being responsible? |
| ♥ Service | Am I useful? |
| ♥ Validation | Do I value people? |
| ♥ Play | If you are responsible and useful and you value people, then you can play. |

The Command (what Jesus said) (rewritten from Mark 12:28-31)

Jesus said that the most important command is to love God with all your heart and soul and to love your neighbor like yourself.

Lesson

The most important of God's commands can be summarized in a one-word sentence.

Love.

Just do it. Can there be any question?

♥ Think ♥

Jesus and the Bad Men (what Jesus did and said) (rewritten from Mark 2:14-17)

Jesus ate a meal with some bad people. Some keepers of the old laws (Pharisees) wanted to know why he did that. Jesus said, 'Healthy people don't need a doctor. Sick people need a doctor. I am not here to help healthy people. I am here to help sick people.'

Lesson

Jesus compares himself to a doctor. His message is medicine.

If you are healthy, do you need medicine?

Why were the Pharisees worried about the company Jesus kept?

The Farmer and the Seeds

(what Jesus said and explained)
(rewritten from Mark 4:2-20)

[Public Teaching]

Jesus told a story in public:

A farmer went out to plant seeds. Some seeds fell on the road. Birds ate them. Some seeds fell on rocks. They grew fast, but the sun dried them up because they could not take root. Some seeds fell in with weeds. The weeds stopped the seeds from growing. Some seeds fell on good soil. They grew well and made much food. Then Jesus said, 'Do you understand?'

[Private Teaching]

When he was with only his main followers, he explained the story:

The farmer plants God's message. Some people are like the seeds on the road. When they receive God's message, Satan comes and takes it away. Some people are like the seeds on the rocks. They receive God's message with joy, but when trouble comes, they forget about it. Some people are like the seeds in the weeds. They receive God's message, but they worry too much, so God's message does not help them. Some people are like the seeds planted in good soil. They receive God's message, use it, and make the world a better place.

Message

Be useful.

Lesson

What kind of seed are you?

Are you useful?

Pigs, Dogs, and Pearls (what Jesus said) (rewritten from Matthew 7:6)

Do not give holy things to dogs. Do not show pearls to pigs. If you do, the pigs might step on the pearls. Then the pigs might kill you.

Lesson

Which people in the stories are like the dogs and the pigs?

What kind of people are there now who are like the dogs and the pigs?

♥ Lead ♥

The Trap (what Jesus said) (rewritten from Luke 20:19-26)

After a while, some judges and lawyers (chief priests and religious teachers) were angry with Jesus because of his teaching. They set a trap for him. Some spies asked him in public, "Is it right for us to pay taxes to Rome?"

Jesus saw that it was a trap. He said, "Who is in the picture on a Roman coin?"

They said, "The emperor of Rome."

Jesus said, "The coin belongs to him. Give it to him. Give to God what belongs to God."

The trap failed. The spies were silent.

Lesson

The trap was a difficult one. Jesus and his people were subjects of Rome. The tax money supported an evil empire. Everyone knows that it is wrong to support evil.

Everyone was expecting Jesus to say that. If he said that, he might be arrested for speaking against Rome. If he said it was right to pay

taxes to Rome, he might lose followers. Jesus had to answer the question, but he could not say 'yes' or 'no'.

The spies were trying to start a fight, but Jesus was very clever. He sidestepped the fight. He put his foot out and let the spies trip over it.

All of the coins had a picture of the Roman emperor on them (Caesar). They were Roman coins. They had to give back to Rome what came from Rome.

Jesus answered the question in a way that made his followers happy but kept him out of danger (for the moment).

The Meek (what Jesus said) (rewritten from Matthew 5:5)

The meek are blessed because they will control the world.

Lesson

Meek people do not start fights, and they follow the rules. Bullies controlled the world for a long time. Now is the time of the meek, just as Jesus promised.

Message

The money may belong to the bullies, but your heart is your own. You can give your heart to God if you want to. No bully can stop anyone from doing that.

Know the rules, and learn how to follow them. Then learn how to step around them.

Know when to stand your ground and when not to fight. Know how to trip the enemy the way Jesus did.

♥ Understand ♥

The Cheating Woman (what Jesus said)
(rewritten from John 8:2-11)

Jesus was teaching in a temple. Some lawyers and judges brought in a woman, and said to Jesus, 'Teacher, someone caught this woman cheating on her husband. The law of Moses is clear. We must kill her with stones. What do you think?'

Jesus was busy writing on the ground with his finger. He ignored them. The lawyers and judges kept asking him to answer the question. Jesus said, 'If one of you here is perfect, go ahead. Let that person throw the first stone.' Then Jesus went back to writing.

The people who heard Jesus started to go away slowly, one by one. The older ones left first. After a while, only Jesus and the woman were there. Jesus looked up at her and said, 'Where did everyone go? Did they judge you?'

She said, 'No, they didn't.'

Jesus said, 'Neither do I. Go and be good.'

Message

No one is perfect.

Lesson

Do you judge other people? Jesus might have been a perfect man, but he chose to not judge the woman. The law was clear. She should have been stoned to death. Jesus chose to forgive her and suggested that she try to be a better person.

What would you do? Would you throw the first stone?

What is more important: obeying the law or doing the right thing?

Sinful Thoughts (what Jesus said) (rewritten from Matthew 5:27-28)

You have heard that you are not to cheat on the person you married. I tell you that anyone who *thinks* about sinning already sinned.

Message

Everyone sins sometimes.

Lesson

Jesus showed us something very important. Sinning is bad. Thinking about sinning is also bad. Jesus understands. It is okay to make mistakes. Jesus does not judge us for our mistakes.

Are you careful with your thoughts? Do you try to correct them?

Do you understand when other people make mistakes?

Do you try to be better after you make mistakes?

Worrying (what Jesus said)
(rewritten from Matthew 6:25-34)

Don't worry about life. Don't worry about food or drink. Don't worry about your body. Don't worry about clothes.

Life is more important than food. Your body is more important than clothes. Look at the birds. They don't plant seeds or harvest crops. They don't save food. God feeds them. If you worry, can you live longer?

Why worry about clothes? Look at the flowers. They don't work or make cloth. No king ever looked as good as the flowers. God takes care of the grass. Do you believe that God will take care of you? Don't worry about what you will eat, drink, or wear. People who do not have faith in God worry about these things. God knows that you need these things. Be right with God first. Then you will get everything you need. Don't worry about tomorrow. It will come. Every day has its own problems.

Message

Don't worry.

Lesson

The plants and animals do not worry. Do you need to worry? If you are right with God, then you will know that you do not need to worry.

Worrying about a problem does not solve the problem. The only thing that solves a problem is solving the problem. The best solution to all of life's problems is being right with God.

God is taking care of everything. Believe it.

How can you be right with God? It is easy.

1. Forgive everyone.
2. Be a good neighbor.
3. Be humble.
4. Love.
5. Be useful.
6. Follow the rules.
7. Understand that nobody is perfect.
8. Believe that God will take care of you.

Do you forgive everyone?

Are you holding onto anger against someone?

Are you a good neighbor?

Are you humble?

Do you show love?

Are you useful?

Do you follow the rules?

Do you understand other people when they make mistakes?

Do you believe that God will take care of you?

♥ Recognize ♥

The Law (what Jesus said)
(rewritten from Matthew 5:17-20)

I did not come to end the law or to ignore the prophets. I came to finish what they started. I promise that nothing will come out of the law until everything is ready. If you break even a little law and teach people to break it, then you will not be important in Paradise. If you follow the laws and teach people to follow them, then you will be important in Paradise. For you to enter Paradise, you have to be better than the lawyers and the judges.

Lesson

The lawyers (the keepers of the law) and the judges (Pharisees) are the people who persecuted Jesus. This means that they kept bothering him during his ministry because they wanted him to fail. They set traps for him. They are the ones who made sure that he was tortured to death.

Are you better than the judges and the lawyers?

Will you be important or unimportant in Paradise?

Does it matter? Is it not enough just to be in Paradise?

Reread the last sentence of what Jesus said.

Can you guess why the lawyers and judges had him killed?

Taking Credit (what Jesus did and said) (rewritten from Matthew 12:22-32)

Jesus healed a man who was blind and mentally ill. The judges said that he used Satan's power to heal the man.

Jesus answered, 'Any city, country, or household that fights itself will fall. If I use Satan's power to heal sickness that Satan caused, how can Satan win? If I use Satan's power to heal, then what power do your followers use? Your followers will judge you for what you can do. If my power comes from God, then God's power is here with you. If you want to steal from a strong man, you have to tie him up first. Then you can rob him.

'People who are not on my side are against me. People who are not working with me to unite people are dividing people. Every sin and every bad word will be forgiven, but speaking against the spirit of the message will never be forgiven.'

Message

Recognize what God does.

Lesson

Jesus is the strong man. The judges (Pharisees) wanted to take credit away from God. They gave the credit to Satan. They wanted to tie up Jesus with words. Jesus had the power to heal. The judges and their followers did not have that power. The followers will see the judges for what they are, and they will judge the judges.

Do you recognize what God does for you?

Do you work to unite people?

♥ GOD'S ADVICE ♥

(rewritten from Exodus 20:1-17)

1. Love God first.
2. Show love to God, not things.
3. Use God's name wisely.
4. Keep a weekly holy day.
5. Respect your parents.
6. Don't murder.
7. Don't cheat on your spouse.
8. Don't steal.
9. Don't lie to hurt someone.
10. Don't want other people's things.



The King's Wisdom (inspired by Matthew 18)

A man owed a king lots of money,
so much that it just wasn't funny.
"Settle in full, or your fam'ly I'll sell.
One way or another, you'll pay me."

The man dropped to his knees and did ask,
"King, forgive me. I don't have the cash."
The king listened well and forgave it all.
He said, "Be gone. It's all in the past."

The man went out shopping for vittles
and saw one who owed him a little.
That man also begged. To jail he was led.
In prison, the debt could be settled.

The king heard the news and was angry.
He said, "How could you do this to me?
I forgave it all. You sure have some gall!
In prison, learn forgiveness like me."

This story is for me and for you.
Jesus said what God wants us to do.
The words of this man reveal God's grand plan.
He told us of God's point of view.

AMEN!

