

I. Introduction

Deuteronomy 32:45–47

45 When Moses had finished speaking all these words to all Israel,

46 he said to them, “Take to your heart all the words with which I am warning you today, which you shall command your sons to observe carefully, even all the words of this law.

47 “For it is not an idle word for you; indeed it is your life. And by this word you will prolong your days in the land, which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess.”

A. Israel had the oracles of God, which, if they obeyed them, they would enter life.

1. How much more, now that Messiah has come, do we live if we keep His commands.

2. This is the basis of the NT.

B. Deuteronomy 8:3; 30:20

8:3 “He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you ¹understand that ^aman does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.

30:20 ^aby loving the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and ^bby holding fast to Him; ^cfor ¹this is your life and the length of your days, ²that you may live in ^dthe land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.”

4:40 ^a“So you shall keep His statutes and His commandments which I am ¹giving you today, that ^bit may go well with you and with your children after you, and ^cthat you may ²live long on the land which the Lord your God is giving you for all time.”

C. The promise is always to live if you listen and obey; death if you ignore and disobey.

Illustration:

- D. In a real sense, Adam would live if he obeyed, and die if he disobeyed.
1. Genesis 2:16-17
 - a) *If Adam obeyed the command of YHWH, he would live forever, which would allow him ongoing fellowship with God.*
 - b) *If Adam disobeyed, and ate of the wrong tree, he would be cut off from God.*
 2. He died.

VV. 47-50 THE SAYINGS OF JESUS

II. v. 47 “And if ever one/anyone will hear/listen to My words, and does not guard them, I do not judge Him, because I did not come in order that I might judge the world, but rather in order that I might save the world.”

- A. Our Lord makes an incredible statement here.
1. He is so patient.
 2. He is very much in reserve mode here.
 3. When preaching to the crowds, He expects obedience (Psalm 2:12).
 - a) *He is right to expect that.*
 - b) *He is just to expect that.*
 4. However, if they do not, He does not react with judgment!
 5. This is very convicting to me, in a sense.
 - a) *I expect people to obey the Word of the Lord.*
 - b) *I expect people to take the Word of Christ and put it deep in their hearts and cling to it.*
 6. However, if they do not, I cannot react with judgment/condemnation.

- B. There is more going on.
1. Jesus truly had a right to expect that.
 2. However, He preached with the judgment of God in mind.
 - a) *John 5:22-24 = "All judgment (has been given) to the Son."*
 - b) *And, in that context, and this, the Judge is giving indication as to what He will judge....so as to avoid judgment!*
- C. But for now, If ever anyone hears the word of Christ, but does not "guard" (obey, keep, hold to, remain in) it, then the day is coming when he/she will be judged by the Judge for that rejection.
1. However, for now, the Lord is in the "seek and save" ministry, and is not sent to judge.

III. v. 48 "The one denying Me! and not receiving My Words, he has the judgment (in regards to) him: the word which I have spoken. That same (word) judges him in the last day."

- A. For a person like this, who hears the Words of Christ, but leaves them on the ground and walks away, there is a judgment awaiting.
1. To deny Christ is to ignore His Word.
 2. It is inseparable to have Christ, but deny His Word.
 - a) *You can't.*
 - b) *Consider that Jesus is speaking to real people standing in front of Him.*
 3. His voice is being heard ("cried out" - v. 44) by people standing around Him.
 - a) *His words have been heard for over 3 years.*
 - b) *Many in the crowd have listened to Him intently and for long periods of time.*
 4. Therefore, a person who, after listening to Jesus for hours on end and still does not obey Him, that person is denying Him.

B. I want to focus on the relationship between denying Jesus and not receiving His Words.

1. In short, Jesus is saying that denying Him = not receiving His Word.
2. The people in the audience that day needed to respond to what Jesus had been teaching for years with fear and obedience.
 - a) *However, since they were not doing that, they were not receiving His Words as truth, and therefore, were denying Him.*
 - b) *Ultimately, these are the people who crucified Him.*
3. Therefore, their rejection was their response.

C. But, what about us today?

1. Hebrews 2:1-3
 - a) *"drift away" = like a boat that has slipped off from their moorings.*
 - b) *The writer is saying that because of the constant reality of drifting away from Christ, we must listen ever more carefully to the Word.*
2. This act of drifting away is that of slipping off from the concrete of God's Word into a sea of confusion.
 - a) *It is to be wrong about:*
 - (1) Christ,
 - (2) Salvation
 - (3) God
 - (4) Life
 - (5) Death
 - (6) Reality
 - (7) Right
 - (8) Wrong
 - (9) Love
 - (10) Hate
 - (11) Truth
 - (12) Error
 - (13) Righteousness
 - (14) Sin

3. This condition is called “drifting away.”
- D. What is the cause of drifting away?
 1. “Neglecting so great a salvation...” (v.3)
 2. This salvation is not the doctrine of salvation, or simply information about salvation.
 3. It is the living of this salvation.
- E. v.2 = transgression and disobedience.

See Philippians 2:12

12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling;

1. And how is it neglected?
 - a) *By refusing to listen to the Word which was preached.*
 - (1) v.1 = “what we have heard”
 - (2) v. 2 = “the word..”
 - (3) v.3 = “it was first spoken...”
 - b) *The neglect of salvation, obeying its righteousness, its standards of holiness, its pleasure to the Father, begins with a simple shutting down of the ears to the spoken Word of God.*
 - (1) In the OT, it was Moses and the prophets.
 - (2) In the NT, it is Jesus and the apostles.

2. Once a person, for any reason, tunes out of listening to every Word in Scripture, he/she drifts away from God.

- a) *James 1:21 = the word is able to sanctify you at the soul level.*
- b) *But, notice that merely hearing it is not enough.*
- c) *This is done by putting away sins, anger, filthiness, wickedness, and being humble, receive the Word.*
 - (1) 1 Timothy 4:6-11
 - (2) The effect of studying the Word for the one preaching is immense sanctification.
 - (3) The effect of that preaching of the Word is presenting the same Word to the church so they might also be nourished and built up.

1 John 2:3–6

3 By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.

4 The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;

5 but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:

6 the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

1 John 2:23–24 *23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also. 24 As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.*

1 John 2:28 *28 Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.*

F. And, it must be pointed out in our day, this is not simply refusing to have your daily Bible time.

1. This process begins with refusing to hear the one preaching the Word.
2. This is why the reading of the Word, and the teaching of the Scripture must be given full attention.

G. The Lord said that His messengers, the apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor/teachers, must be listened to as they are the appointed speakers to the church.

Luke 10:16

16 "The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me."

1 John 4:4–6

4 You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.

5 They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them.

6 We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Luke 10:16

16 "The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me."

John 13:20

20 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.”

Matthew 10:40 40 “He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 13 For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

IV. v. 49 “Because I have spoken not out of Myself, but rather, the One having sent Me, the Father Himself, He has given a commandment to Me: what I have said and what I have spoken.”

A. Thus, Jesus is teaching the crowd that the reason it is important to receive His Words is that He is the Spokesman for the One True God-the Father.

1. He asserts that He is not speaking from Himself.
2. He is doing this because the rabbi’s always, and only, spoke from themselves.
 - a) *They would often compare their teaching with one another’s.*
 - b) *They would regularly simply sit down and compare notes about a passage without ever really concluding the correct interpretation.*

Matthew 7:28–29

28 When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching; 29 for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

2 Corinthians 10:11–12 11 Let such a person consider this, that what we are in word by letters when absent, such persons we are also in deed when present. 12 For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves; but when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.

2 Corinthians 10:17–18 17 But he who boasts is to boast in the Lord. 18 For it is not he who commends himself that is approved, but he whom the Lord commends.

B. Therefore, the people would do well, eternally so, to listen to Him.

1. The simple act of listening is so hard.
2. It is so easy to ignore.
3. It is so easy to sweep aside words and communication.

C. In our day with sights accompanied by sounds, like children, it is almost as if the world needs picture-books to everything.

1. Practice listening.
2. Practice thinking as one is speaking.
3. A disciplined mind that hears is a precious thing.

Proverbs 2:2

*2 Make your ear attentive to wisdom,
Incline your heart to understanding;*

Proverbs 22:17

*17 Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise,
And apply your mind to my knowledge;*

4. Train your mind to break communication down into words.
5. Then listen to those words to conclude the speaker's meaning.
6. Then, figure out the best response in order to edify the speaker in that conversation.

a) *Had the Jews done this, they would have gained eternal life!*

D. **“The Words I use and how I speak them.”**

1. See Matthew 7:24ff.
2. Jesus says that these words are not simply grammatical.
 - a) *He says:*
 - (1) These words are from the Father.
 - (2) These words are commandment.
 - (3) These words are eternal life.
 - b) *Notice what He calls these words from the Father.*

V. v. 50 “And, I know that His commandment is eternal life/age-life. The things I speak, just as the Father has spoken to me, so also I speak.”

A. Notice in v. 49 towards the end, and v. 50, Jesus uses the word “commandment.”

1. What does He mean?

“The alert biblical reader should hardly miss the force of the designation “commandment,” not as a basis for legalism but in the best sense of Torah (command) as a principle for life (cf. Deut 32:46–47).”¹

a) This words means a command as in do something as spoken from a person of rank.

b) But, it is also a word that can mean “instruction” as in the expectation of wisdom with serious consequence, and not simple demand.

2. It is right for a son to speak like his father.

B. It is right for children to believe as their parents.

1. In fact, the pattern we have here is just that, and it is a pattern for us as well.
2. Jesus said that He “speaks” what He “has heard.”

C. This is interesting since the verbs here are Perfect.

1. That means that what the Father spoke was spoken in the past in reference to Jesus Christ.
2. That is, Jesus is saying that the Father spoke to Him at some point in the past, whether before He came to heart, or a few minutes prior.
3. However, since the other verbs are present (durative), ti only makes sense that the entire ministry was presented to Christ beforehand, and Jesus is now simply repeating His Father’s commands.

D. What does it mean to say that His commandments are “eternal life”?

1. Jesus said it of His own speaking (John 6:63).
2. Now you know why His words are eternal life-He was imply relating the Father’s Words.
3. Jesus never spoke on His own initiative.

¹ Gerald L. Borchert, *John 12–21*, vol. 25B, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2002), 70.

John 5:19

19 Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

John 5:24

24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

John 5:43–44

43 "I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. 44 "How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?"

4. Thus, since the Father has the power of eternal life, the very words He has given the Son are the source of life.

E. What is eternal life?

1 John 5:11–12

11 And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

F. One of the most definitive statements about eternal life is found in Matthew 25:46

1. At the same point in time that the wicked go away into judgment, the righteous go away into eternal life.
2. This is the time when Jesus judges all nations, including Israel, and fulfills Abraham's promise-blessing to this world.
3. That particular time, known as the Millennium, is the entrance into eternal life.
4. Only the righteous enter this time.

G. In the OT and the NT it is only for those who listen to, and believe God's Words.

1. It is during this time that most of the OT promises of eternal life and dwelling in the presence of God is completed.
2. However, that is not to say that that is all that it is!
 - a) *Revelation 21:22-27*
 - b) *Revelation 22:3-5*

VI. Conclusion

A. Colossians 3:12-17