

## Lesson 4: Will Christians Be “Cut-off” for Disobedience or Lack of Good Works?

In this lesson we will address multiple verses that have been used in times past to motivate believers through guilt and fear to obey and do good works. Before we begin, let us first gain a proper perspective of what it is God expects from us as believers in this area.

### SECTION ONE: Foundational Truths<sup>1</sup>

#### I. We are made righteous by Jesus’ obedience.

**Romans 5:19**

*For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.*

#### II. “Obedience” most commonly refers to believing in Jesus and the truth of the gospel.

**Romans 10:16**

*But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our report?”*

**Romans 1:5**

*Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name*

**Romans 16:25-26**

*Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began <sup>26</sup> but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith—*

**Hebrews 3:19; 4:1-11**

*So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.*

<sup>4:1</sup> *Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it...<sup>11</sup> Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.*

**Acts 5:32**

*And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him.<sup>2</sup>*

**Galatians 3:2**

*This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*

**Romans 6:17**

*But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.*

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise stated, main text scriptures are in the NASB Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation.

<sup>2</sup> “Those who obey Him” here is not referring to individual acts of obedience, but rather to obeying God in believing in Jesus.

**III. Believers WANT to obey God and to please Him, and He works in us to help us do so.**  
***Philippians 2:12-13***

*Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; <sup>13</sup> for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.*

**IV. Believers are created for good works.**

***Ephesians 2:8-10***

*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

**V. It is our new nature as believers to bear good fruit.**

***Matthew 7:17***

*Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.*

***Galatians 5:22-24***

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. <sup>24</sup> And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

***James 3:17***

*But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.*

***Colossians 1:9-10***

*For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; <sup>10</sup> that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God*

**A. Sinners sin. It's their fallen nature to sin.**

***Ephesians 2:1-4***

*And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, <sup>3</sup> among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.*

**B. The righteous live righteously. It's our new nature. We no longer have a "sinful nature"!!!<sup>3</sup>**

***2 Corinthians 5:27 AMPLIFIED***

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

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<sup>3</sup> Sarx means flesh. Flesh is used in Scripture to refer to the lusts of the flesh, of our natural weaknesses and strengths, and to trying to become righteous by our own religious effort—works and obedience to the law. The NIV falsely translates the word flesh (sarx) as "sinful nature" inconsistently.

**VI. What does God want from us?**

**A. Jesus taught faith in Him as a work.**

*John 6:28-29*

*Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"*

*<sup>29</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."*

**B. Jesus commanded us to love one another.**

*John 15:12*

*This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.*

**C. The Holy Spirit through the apostle John combined the two into one.**

*1 John 3:23*

*And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.*

**VII. How does the work of believing in Him manifest itself in our lives?**

**A. Believing in Him brings salvation.**

*Romans 10:8-10*

*But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): <sup>9</sup> that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

**B. Believing we are forgiven.**

*Hebrews 10:12-17*

*But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, <sup>13</sup> from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. <sup>14</sup> For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.*

*<sup>15</sup> But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before,*

*<sup>16</sup> "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them," <sup>17</sup> then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." <sup>18</sup> Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.*

**C. Believing that we shall be resurrected.**

*1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*

*But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.*

*<sup>15</sup> For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore comfort one another with these words.*

**D. Believing we are who He says we are.**

*Colossians 2:8-10*

*Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. <sup>9</sup> For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; <sup>10</sup> and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.*

**E. Believing that He will do what He says He will do.**

**2 Corinthians 1:20**

*For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.*

**Romans 4:19-22**

*And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. <sup>20</sup> He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, <sup>21</sup> and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. <sup>22</sup> And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness."*

**F. Believing in Him through the storms of life.**

**Mark 4:37-40**

*And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. <sup>38</sup> But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"*

*<sup>39</sup> Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. <sup>40</sup> But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?"*

**G. Believing that He loves and accepts us.**

**1 John 4:10**

*In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

**VIII. How does loving one another manifest itself in our lives?**

**A. Kindly Affection, Brotherly Love, Honor, and Preference**

**Romans 12:10**

*Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another*

**B. Kindness, Tenderheartedness, Forgiveness**

**Ephesians 4:32**

*And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.*

**C. Helping Each Other in Time of Need**

**Galatians 6:10**

*Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.*

**2 Corinthians 9:1, 6-14**

*Now concerning the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you...*

*<sup>6</sup> But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. <sup>7</sup> So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. <sup>8</sup> And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. <sup>9</sup> As it is written:*

*"He has dispersed abroad,*

***He has given to the poor;***

*His righteousness endures forever."*

*<sup>10</sup> Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, <sup>11</sup> while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God. <sup>12</sup> For the*

*administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God,<sup>13</sup> while, through the proof of this ministry, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal sharing with them and all men,<sup>14</sup> and by their prayer for you, who long for you because of the exceeding grace of God in you.*

**Acts 9:36-41**

*At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did.<sup>37</sup> But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room.<sup>38</sup> And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them.<sup>39</sup> Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them.<sup>40</sup> But Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up.<sup>41</sup> Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive.*

**Matthew 25:37-40**

*"Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink?<sup>38</sup> When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You?<sup>39</sup> Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'<sup>40</sup> And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'"*

**D. Laying Down Our Lives for Each Other**

**John 15:12-13**

*This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.<sup>13</sup> Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.*

**Philippians 2:25-30**

*Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need;<sup>26</sup> since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.<sup>27</sup> For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.<sup>28</sup> Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful.<sup>29</sup> Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem;<sup>30</sup> because for the work of Christ he came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me.*

**Acts 20:32-35**

*"So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.<sup>33</sup> I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel.<sup>34</sup> Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me.<sup>35</sup> I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"*

**E. Using Our Spiritual Gifts and Callings to Edify the Body of Christ**

**Romans 12:6-8**

*Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;<sup>7</sup> or ministry, let us use it in our*

## Toward a Better Understanding of Judgment and Discipline

*ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;*<sup>8</sup> *he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

#### F. Feed and Tend My Sheep

*John 21:15-17*

*So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?"*

*He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."*

*He said to him, "Feed My lambs."*

*16 ... "Tend My sheep."*

*17 ... "Feed My sheep."*

### SECTION TWO: Manipulation, Guilt, and Terror vs. the Truth that Sets Free

Sadly, over the centuries, certain passages have been used to manipulate, guilt, and terrorize believers into obedience and good works. Instead of being used to encourage us, these verses have been used as weapons against us. In this section, we easily disarm the misuse of these verses in light of the New Covenant.

- I. Will believers be separated into two groups, one that did good works and one that did not? Will those who did good works go to heaven, and those who didn't do good works go to everlasting punishment and fire?

*Matthew 25:41-46*

*"Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: <sup>42</sup> for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; <sup>43</sup> I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'*

*<sup>44</sup> "Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' <sup>45</sup> Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'<sup>46</sup> And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."*

- A. **CONTEXT IS EVERYTHING** when understanding this passage. This is only half of the story. Let's read the verses that precede it.

*Matthew 25:31-40*

*"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. <sup>32</sup> All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. <sup>33</sup> And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. <sup>34</sup> Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: <sup>35</sup> for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; <sup>36</sup> I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'*

*<sup>37</sup> "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? <sup>38</sup> When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? <sup>39</sup> Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' <sup>40</sup> And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'*

1. Jesus will separate the NATIONS (all people).

2. He will separate the sheep to His right side and the goats to the left.
3. In v 37, the sheep are called “the righteous”. “The righteous” is a common term for believers in Jesus Christ.
4. The separation is between believers and non-believers.
  - a. Some have commented that this passage represents the two judgments: the Judgment Seat of Christ which is only for believers where they will be rewarded or suffer loss of reward, and the Great White Throne Judgment which will be for non-believers. This is a reasonable conclusion. The believers will first be separated from the non-believers, and then later the non-believers will be judged.
5. The righteous inherit the kingdom and are the blessed of the Father.
6. Believers take care of each other.
7. Notice that here he is not speaking to individuals, but to the sheep. While it might not be possible for each of us to do everything he mentions, together we can.
8. Notice that in verse 46 that goats “go away into everlasting punishment, but “the righteous”, the sheep, go into eternal life.

II. Did Jesus warn believers that, “Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire,” as a warning to us to make sure we bear good fruit—obey the law—do good works?

A. The explanation to this verse is so simple, it needs almost no explanation. We need only read it in context.

*Matthew 7:15-20*

*“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. <sup>16</sup> You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup> Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup> A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. <sup>19</sup> Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup> Therefore by their fruits you will know them.*

1. False prophets and ravenous wolves come in sheep’s clothing to hide the fact that THEY ARE NOT SHEEP!!!
  2. Christians are considered God’s sheep.
  3. Believers are good trees which produce good fruit.
    - a. Good trees cannot bear bad fruit.
  4. False prophets and ravenous wolves are the bad trees that bear bad fruit.
    - a. Bad trees cannot bear good fruit.
  5. Only the bad trees are cut down and thrown into the fire.
- B. A similar passage is this one, also used against believers. Notice the intended audience.

*Matthew 3:7-10*

*But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup> Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, <sup>9</sup> and do not think to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. <sup>10</sup> And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.*

**III. Will Jesus say to believers, “Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness,”?**

**Matthew 7:21-23**

*“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. <sup>22</sup> Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ <sup>23</sup> And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’*

**A. It has been taught that these people are Christians because they are calling Jesus, “Lord”. We are told that even though they operated in spiritual gifts, they lived sinful lives.**

1. However, Jesus will say to them, “I never knew you.”
2. “Never” is *oudepote* and means “not even at any time, that is, never at all”.
3. Jesus NEVER knew these individuals.
4. These people thought that because they had prophesied in His name, cast demons out in His name, and done many wonders in His name, that they would enter the kingdom. We might consider these “good” works, but the works were not the point. Doing the will of the Father was the point.
5. These had not “done the will of the Father”.
6. What is the will of the Father? It is to BELIEVE on the One whom He sent, and thus “know” Him.
7. NEVER AT ANY TIME, NOT AT ALL did Jesus know them. They were not believers in Jesus.
8. Notice also that this passage is a continuation of what he said about false prophets—ravenous wolves.
  - a. Those whom Jesus “never” knew and who were doing miracles in his name are false prophets and ravenous wolves.

**IX. Does Jesus take away Christians that do not bear fruit and cast them out and gather them and throw them into the fire, and burn them?**

**John 15:2a, 6**

*Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away... <sup>6</sup> If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.*

**A. Are you IN HIM?**

**John 15:1-3**

*“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. <sup>2</sup> Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit.*

1. **“Takes away” airō; A primary verb; to lift; by implication to take up or away**

*“Takes away” has to do with lifting the branch to produce better growth-Nelson Study Bible Commentary at John 15:2.*

2. **If we are IN HIM, and don’t bear fruit, He lifts us up.**

*The branches that do not bear fruit, he does not “take away” in the sense we’ve thought of it, He lifts them up, as in a grape vine that is not bearing fruit because it is on the ground, the farmer will “lift up” the vine with supports to enable it to bear fruit. So too He will lift us up and support us to enable us to bear fruit.*

**B. Are you IN HIM and fruitful?**

**1. He will increase your fruitfulness.**

*“And every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit.*

a. *Kathairō (prune); from G2513; to cleanse, that is, (specifically) to prune; figuratively to expiate: - purge.*

**2. Verse 3 “You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.”**

a. *The word “clean” is katharos*

*Of uncertain affinity; clean (literally or figuratively): - clean, clear, pure.*

∞ **NOTICE: Kathairō (prune)**

*To cleanse, that is, (specifically) to prune; figuratively to expiate: - purge.*

**3. Jesus is making a play on words, He said they were already clean by the words He’d spoken to them, and if they bear fruit He will cleanse them more with His word so that they bear more fruit.**

**C. ABIDE (stay) in Him.**

*John 15:5-8*

*“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; speaking of believers—we are in Him and He is in us) for without Me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If anyone does not abide in Me, (those who are not in Him—unbelievers) he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.<sup>7</sup> If you abide in Me, (if you stay in Him) and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.<sup>8</sup> By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.*

**4. Bearing good fruit is connected with asking and receiving.**

**5. Jesus isn’t saying that IN ORDER to be his disciples, you must bear good fruit. He is saying that because you abide in Him, you do bear much fruit. Those who don’t bear fruit are not in Him. Then since this is connected to the illustration of the vine, if you aren’t bearing good fruit, He will lift you up off the ground so that you will bear fruit.**

**D. We ARE in Him.**

*1 Corinthians 1:30 NASB*

*But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption*

**Colossians 2:9-10**

*For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; <sup>10</sup> and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.*

**E. He abides in us.**

**1 John 3:22-24**

*And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. <sup>23</sup> And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment. <sup>24</sup> Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.*

**X. Did Jesus say that Christians who are unprofitable servants will be cast into outer darkness?**

**Matthew 25:30**

*“And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*

**A. It’s a Parable**

**Matthew 25:14**

*“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country...*

- 1. Jesus is painting a picture.*
- 2. Salvation is “given” to all, but not everyone receives it. The man who buried the talent he was given represents the one who has not availed himself of salvation.*

*Life For Today Study Bible Notes*

*However, this parable makes it very clear that that which was being taken away from this unprofitable servant was not his own but his lord's money that had been entrusted to him...Likewise, we did not save ourselves. Jesus purchased redemption for us and has given salvation to the whole human race as a gift. However, only those who take hold of His gift and use it in their lives are truly saved. There will be those who are like this unprofitable servant, who knew the truth of the gospel and never denied it but never did anything with it. These will have the grace that God had given them taken away and bestowed upon those who would receive it while they themselves will be cast into outer darkness where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.- Andrew Wommack's Living Commentary.*

**B. How Do You View God?**

**Matthew 25:24**

*“Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed.*

- 3. Obviously, this man didn’t really know the master.*

**Matthew 25:25**

*And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’*

4. *God hasn't given us a spirit of fear, but one that cries out "Abba, Father".*
- C. **We Welcome Your Pruning, Lord!**  
*Religion often gives us a view of God that causes us to return to fear which leads to unfruitfulness. But, because WE ARE HIS, WE ARE IN HIM, and HE IS IN US, He does not throw us away, or harshly "prune" us, AND He certainly DOES NOT throw us into outer darkness and the fire! Jesus does the total opposite with His children. He loves us and lifts us up to make us fruitful, and prunes-cleanses us with His word to make us more fruitful.*