

Summer Sermon Series: It's Worth Repeating

“Lord, Lord”

(Matthew 7:21-22; 25:11; Luke 6:46)

Introduction

➤ This summer, for our “summer sermon series”, we are looking at consecutively repeated words in Scripture. Such repetition is intentional (similar to our putting words in bold or all-caps), and it serves to it calls special attention to the occasion or to the person – to the importance of what is about to happen and/or what is about to be stated. Such an emphasis is actually quite rare in the Bible – occurring only about 15 times throughout Scripture [not counting the 25 “Truly, Truly” statements from Jesus recorded in John’s Gospel].

So far, in this series, we have preached sermons on the repeated words of “*Abraham, Abraham!*” (Gen.22:11), “*Holy, Holy, Holy*” (Is.6:3), “*Moses, Moses!*” (Ex.3:4), and “*Absalom, Absalom*” (2Sam.18:33). For this morning, we are going to study the few times in Scripture (in the New Testament) where the word “Lord” is repeated.

- The Greek word *kyrios*, most often translated “Lord”, is found over 700 times in the New Testament. It was used as a term of politeness (i.e., sir), but more often as a term of respect or even reverence (i.e., master, owner, lord). In the Bible, this word is most often used as a title of God, and specifically of the Son of God (i.e., Lord). In fact, *kyrios* occurs over 9,000 times in the Septuagint (or LXX; the Greek translation of the Old Testament, in 3 B.C.), 6,000 of which replace the Hebrew proper name for God, Yahweh.
- To call Jesus “Lord” is to declare Him to be your master, your authority, your God. This profession is to be a statement of faith – the confession that you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the incarnate Son of God, and that you have received Him as your Lord and Savior. To believe that Jesus is the one and only Son of God, and the one and only Savior from God, is the very heart of a Christian’s faith. For a person is saved by God’s grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

Rom 10:9-13 ~ “... if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. ¹¹For the Scripture says, ‘Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame. ¹²For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. ¹³For ‘everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’” [cited from Joel 2:32; cf. Acts 2:21]

Joel 2:32 ~ “And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the LORD has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls.”

Rom 5:1 ~ “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

- This is a clear indication that Jesus is God, the Son of God. This also clearly instructs us that we must put our faith in Jesus Christ as Lord in order to be saved. It is not enough simply to receive Jesus as your Savior, you must also respond to Him as your Lord. In other words, we must believe in Jesus – who He truly is, and what He has truly done – and not some modified or manufactured (i.e., “politically correct”, “socially acceptable”, tolerant, inoffensive) version of Jesus.
- One of the more ominous and sobering warnings in all Scripture appears in Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount:

Matt 7:21 ~ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven ...”

➤ Again, as we have throughout this summer series, we see the intentional use of repetition. The expression “*Lord, Lord*” (vs.21, 22) is meant to convey deep sincerity and close intimacy. The person who is making such a declaration is portraying him/herself as being a true follower of Christ. But as Jesus made clear, not everyone who makes such a profession is actually telling the truth – a person can (earnestly) profess Christ and not (truly) possess Christ.

In other words, there is such a thing as a false believer – someone who claims to be a Christian (or even Christian teacher) but is actually a non-Christian. The Bible reveals to us that there are false prophets, false priests, false teachers, false gospels, false shepherds, false christ, false apostles, and false believers/Christians.

Today we have terms such as “Carnal Christians”, “non-practicing Christians”, “virtual Christians”, “liberal Christians”, and “inclusive Christians” – people who are essentially Christians in name only. The Bible simply describes such people as unbelievers or false Christians. God is neither fooled nor amused by a false profession of faith.

➤ Christianity is often accused of being exclusive and intolerant; and it is true. This does not mean that Christians are to practice bigotry or do things out of hatred. It means Christianity affirms the truth from God’s Word that only those who receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior will be saved – that all roads do not lead to God and not every moral, religious, or spiritual person will be saved.

*One of the biggest – most repeated, most believed, most cherished – lies in America today is:
“It does not matter what you believe, as long as you are sincere.”*

➤ Jesus often spoke in absolute terms, and with rigid requirements. His message was repeatedly and intentionally narrow, exclusive, and uncompromising. While always loving and gracious, His sermons were polarizing and provocative. He spoke in stark contrasts of life and death, good and evil, light and darkness, heaven and hell, truth and error, belief and unbelief, love and hate, salvation, and condemnation, and that you are either child of God or a child of the Devil. In His teaching Jesus revealed that there are only two options with regard to God and His saving grace; no third option, no middle-road, no neutral ground. Jesus explicitly declared, “*Whoever is not with me is against me...*” (Matt.12:30).

➤ At the end of His powerfully convicting “Sermon on the Mount” Jesus declared:

♦ There are only two gates/ways (vs.13-14) – The wide gate (which many find) leads to destruction, the narrow gate (which few find) leads to life.

Matt 7:13-14 ~ “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. ¹⁴For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”

♦ There are only two animals/prophets (vs.15) – The sheep (innocent faithful prophets), and the wolves (ravenous false prophets)

Matt 7:15 ~ “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.”

♦ There are only two trees/fruit (vs.16-20) – The good tree bears good fruit, and the bad tree bears bad fruit (and will be cut down and thrown into the fire).

Matt 7:16-20 ~ “You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.”

Luke 6:43-45 ~ “For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, ⁴⁴for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thornbushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. ⁴⁵The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”

- ♦ There are only two builders/foundations (vs.24-27) – The wise man built his house upon the rock (the house stood strong), and the foolish man built his house on the sand (the house fell with a great crash).

Matt 7:24-27 ~ “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

Luke 6:47-49 ~ “Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: ⁴⁸he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. ⁴⁹But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.”

Notice that builders are either “*wise*” or “*foolish*” based on the foundation upon which they built their house. The wise man “*built his house on the rock*” (vs.24), which the foolish man “*built his house on the sand*” (vs.26). Often, these foundations are interpreted as the rock being Christ and the sand being not-Christ. While there is truth in this understanding, that is not exactly what Christ is teaching here. As we look closely at the passage, we find that Jesus stated that the foundations are related to one’s obedience to the words of Christ:

Matt 7:24-27 ~ “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

John 14:15 ~ “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”

1 John 2:3 ~ “And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments.”

- The Christian’s assurance of salvation should not come from a mere profession of faith, or from a past experience, or but a present-day faith in, love for, and obedience to Christ. It is not enough to simply call yourself (or think of yourself as) a Christian. It is not enough to merely go to church or do religious things. It is not enough to look or sound like a Christian. A true Christian has truly received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and consequently seeks to be a faithful follower of Christ.
- It has been rightly stated that “A person is saved by faith alone, but that faith is never alone.” While no one is saved by good works, everyone who is truly saved is saved unto good works. The “good works” are not the means of our salvation, but the result of our salvation; not the root but the fruit.

Eph 2:8-10 ~ “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” (see 2Tim.1:9; Tit.3:5)

➤ There are many professing Christians today who have a minimalistic view of Christianity. They try to reduce salvation to the smallest and easiest of requirements: a mere profession of faith, attending church once or twice a year, responding to an invitation, getting baptized, going to S.S., having Christian parents or a Christian spouse, living in a “Christian nation”, reciting a “sinner’s prayer”, or a willingness to give someone the shirt of your back.

Such people are not fully devoted to Christ, but simply trying to acquire a “get-out-of-hell-free-card.” They are essentially asking, “What is the least I can do to be saved?” Which is like asking your spouse, “What’s the least I can do to keep you from divorcing me?”

Matt 7:21 ~ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven ...”

Luke 6:46 ~ “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you?”

➤ Admittedly, this can be a bit confusing. Because in the previous verses, those who declared, “Lord, Lord” stated that they did many things in the name of Christ:

Matt 7:22 ~ “On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’”

➤ In essence, they were giving to Jesus their religious resume: “We taught in Sunday School, we served as a deacon/deaconess, we attended church, we joined a bible study, we went on a mission trip, etc.”. But they had no true saving faith in, or love for, Jesus Christ. Their profession of “Lord, Lord” was mere lip-service.

While it may appear as though they were obeying Christ, it is evident in the context of these verses that they were not truly doing the will of the Father (vs.21). That is, they were either deceived or trying to deceive.

Clearly, if they were truly doing the will of the Father they would enter the kingdom of heaven (vs.21). Rather, Jesus declared to them: “*I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness*” (*ergazomai anomia*; vs.23). Apart from Christ, all their religious works were vain attempts at self-righteousness, which Jesus equated to being a worker of lawlessness (see Is.64:6; 1Jn.3:4).

Matt 7:21-23 ~ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²²On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ ²³And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’”

➤ The picture Jesus used to illustrate this point is horrific. Imagine standing before Christ at the judgment, thinking (for whatever reason) that you are about to enter His Kingdom, and hearing Him say, “I do not know who you are. You do not belong here, you cannot enter, you must leave now. I never knew you.”

Notice that the real question is not if you profess to know Jesus (or how earnestly you profess to know Jesus), but whether or not Jesus knows you. Now, we need to understand this to be anthropomorphic language (using human terms to describe that which is non-human). As God, the Son of God, Jesus is omniscient. He knows absolutely everything about everything. He is never ignorant, absentminded, or deceived. In saying, “*I never knew you*” Jesus is condemning them as false believers, as unrepentant sinners. He is saying, “You are not saved. You are not in Christ. You do not possess the Holy Spirit. You are not a child of God.”

➤ We need to be confronted with the reality that there is such a thing as a false profession of faith. That is, 1) we need to be warned there are people who will profess to be a Christian who are not so that we are not misled, and 2) we need to be warned against being a false believer ourselves.

2 Cor 13:5 ~ “Examine [*peirazō*] yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test [*dokimazō*] yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? – unless indeed you fail to meet the test [*adokimos*]!”

1 Cor 11:28 ~ “Let a person examine [*dokimazō*] himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup.” (see Ps.139:23-24; 1Cor.9:24; Gal.6:3-4)

➤ This admonition is further reinforced in the parable Jesus taught, known as “The parable of the ten virgins” (Matt.25:1-13). The parable is a solemn warning to all those who think they can fake it as a Christian, feign their way to heaven. For it is truly a foolish thing – the most foolish thing – to think that you can deceive God. God knows those who are truly His; He knows everything (including our hearts, minds, and motives). The parable of the ten virgins is the third of four consecutive parables, as recorded in Matthew’s Gospel [the homeowner and the thief (24:42-44), the good and wicked servants (24:45-51), the 10 virgins (25:1-13), and the talents (25:14-30)], exhorting us to examine ourselves to see if we are truly in Christ and to be ready for His Return.

Matt 25:1-13 ~ “Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. ³For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, ⁴but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. ⁵As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. ⁶But at midnight there was a cry, ‘Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ ⁷Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. ⁸And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ ⁹But the wise answered, saying, ‘Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.’ ¹⁰And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. ¹¹Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ ¹²But he answered, ‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ ¹³Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”

➤ R.C. Sproul, the late great American pastor and theologian of the 21st century (1939-2017), called this parable: “The scariest of all of the parables of Jesus.” The parable clearly depicts ten virgins who all were anticipating the coming of the bridegroom, which is an illustrative depiction of the second coming (return) of Christ. As such, it is right to conclude that all ten of these virgins represent professing believers (not pagans or unbelievers).

While all ten virgins went out to meet the bridegroom, and all ten virgins brought lamps for their journey, the main difference is that half of them (the “*wise*” [*phronimos*]; vs.2, 4, 8, 9) brought oil for their lamps and half (the “*foolish*” [*mōros*]; vs.2, 3, 8) did not. It seems as though the oil in this parable represents preparedness or faithfulness [keep in mind, unlike an allegory, a parable typically has one main point]. In general, it is meant to distinguish between those who merely profess Christ and those who also possess Christ.

The foolish virgins were not ready for the bridegroom’s coming. By the time they arrived at the place of the marriage feast, the door was already closed. The foolish virgins pleaded with the earnest expression, “*Lord, Lord*” (vs.11), asking the bridegroom to open the door for them. But he, representing the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, responded by saying: “*Truly, I say to you, I do not know you*” (vs.12). In other words, “Who are you? You do not belong to me. You are not saved. Your name is not writing in the Lamb’s book of life.”

Matt 7:23 ~ “And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’”

Jesus gave the lesson we should learn from this parable: “*Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour*” (vs.13). For once the door to the wedding feast is closed, it will not be opened.

Conclusion

➤ Fortunately, there is a way for us to know – for sure – if we are known by Jesus:

1 John 5:13 ~ “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.”

The true Christian’s salvation is absolutely and eternally secure in Christ (see Jn.10:27-30; Rom.8:1, 31-39; 2Tim.2:19; 1Pet.1:4-5; Jd.24-25).

➤ As a Christian, it is important to remember that while our love for Christ will not be perfect it must be sincere. The basis a Christian’s (true/saving) faith is a genuine, and supreme, love for Christ – not Christian-sounding words or Christian-looking acts.

➤ Perhaps the best illustration of this is the contrast between the lives of the apostles Peter and Judas.

Both, from outward appearances, appeared to be true disciples of Christ:

- ◆ Both were apostles
- ◆ Both followed Jesus
- ◆ Both were leaders for Jesus (Peter a spokesman, Judas the treasurer [Jn.12:6; 13:29])
- ◆ Both listened to Jesus’ teaching and preaching (both in private and public)
- ◆ Both were witnesses of Jesus’ miracles
- ◆ Both proclaimed a message of repentance (Mk.6:12)
- ◆ Both cast out demons and healed the sick in the name of Christ (Mk.6:13)
- ◆ And both committed heinous sins against Christ (Peter denied Christ, Judas betrayed Christ).

➤ There was nothing tangible that revealed Judas as a false believer, as the betrayer. In fact, the lives of Peter and Judas were so similar – so Christian looking and Christian sounding – that even the apostles had no idea Judas was the betrayer.

Matt 26:20-22 ~ “When it was evening, [Jesus] reclined at table with the twelve. ²¹And as they were eating, he said, ‘Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.’ ²²And they were very sorrowful and began to say to him one after another, ‘Is it I, Lord?’”

Matt 26:25 ~ “Judas, who would betray him, answered, ‘Is it I, Rabbi?’ He said to him, ‘You have said so.’”

John 13:21-29 ~ “After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.’ ²²The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke. ²³One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was reclining at table at Jesus’ side, ²⁴so Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. ²⁵So that disciple, leaning back against Jesus, said to him, ‘Lord, who is it?’ ²⁶Jesus answered, ‘It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it.’ So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. ²⁷Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, ‘What you are going to do, do quickly.’ ²⁸Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. ²⁹Some thought that, because Judas had the moneybag, Jesus was telling him, ‘Buy what we need for the feast,’ or that he should give something to the poor.” (see Jn.12:4-6)

➤ So, what differentiated Peter and Judas? How do we know that Judas was a false believer (an apostate), and Peter was a true and faithful believer? Simply put, Peter had a genuine love for and belief in Christ; and Judas did not. Peter’s genuine love for Christ was seen in his sincere obedience to Christ, and sincere repentance when he disobeyed Christ. Judas, on the other hand, was steeped in pride and hypocrisy. He portrayed himself as a follower of Christ, but lived a sinful and unrepentant life (stealing, lying, betraying).

Judas’ heart was cold and calloused toward Jesus Christ. His love for money clouded his judgment and corrupted his life. Consequently, Judas became the chosen vessel of Satan to inflict further pain, suffering and abandonment on Christ. It is no excuse to say, “The devil made me do it” for Satan had only entered a heart that had already turned against Christ – against God. In effect, when

Judas closed his heart to God he opened his heart to Satan. Judas' love for the world supplanted any love he had for God (see Jms.4:4; 1Jn.2:15-17).

- The truth is, you can be around godly people, even raised in a godly family, and be very far from God. You can affirm Christian doctrine/virtue, and not belong to Christ. You can be in a church sanctuary, and not be truly saved. Therefore, it is imperative for every Christian to examine their Christian life – not based solely on a past experience, but on a present-day love for and obedience to Jesus Christ. While we must never doubt the saving work and power of Christ, or the promises of God, we must regularly examine our lives to see if our faith in and love for Christ is real.

John 21:15-19 ~ “When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John, 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.’ ¹⁶He said to him a second time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me?’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ He said to him, ‘Tend my sheep.’ ¹⁷He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me?’ Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, ‘Do you love me?’ and he said to him, ‘Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed my sheep. ¹⁸Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.’ ¹⁹(This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, ‘Follow me.’”

Matt 22:37-38 ~ “And he said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸This is the great and first commandment.’” (see Deut.6:5)

- Judas is a dramatic example of a person who was religious, but not saved – someone who professes to know God but does not possess God. He was a flaming hypocrite. Playing the role of a Christ-follower in his life, without truly following Christ with his heart. Judas knew about Christ, but did not truly know Christ. Judas simply went through the motions of “Christianity.” Saying and doing the right things, without having a genuine love for and faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Judas typifies many professing Christians today (and throughout the years) – they attend church, listen to sermons, sing worship songs, serve in ministries, fellowship with other Christians, but in the end they only know about Christ – they have never truly surrendered their hearts and lives to Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. They have repeatedly heard the Gospel of Christ, but they have never truly received Him as their Savior; they have repeatedly heard the commands of Christ, but never truly received Him as their Lord.

✓ **Illust:** “The saddest road to hell is that which runs under the pulpit, past the Bible and through the midst of warnings and invitations” (J.C. Ryle, “Are You Asleep?”).

- A person can fake being a Christian, but no one can fool God. To be truly saved, a person must have a sincere faith in and supreme love for Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. The result of this salvation is an obedient life – one that produces the fruit that comes from being in Christ. Without a true saving faith in Christ, no amount of “works” can save anyone. Yet, good works are evidence of true saving faith. So the true Christian – the one who has truly received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior – has a genuine love for and faith in Christ, and a life that seeks to obey Him as Lord.

✓ **Illust:** The following verse is on an old slab in the cathedral of Lübeck, Germany:

“Thus speaketh Christ our Lord unto us, ye call Me Master and obey Me not, ye call Me Light and see Me not, ye call Me Way and walk Me not, ye call Me Life and desire Me not, ye call Me Wise and follow Me not, ye call Me Fair and love Me not, ye call Me Rich and ask Me not, ye call Me Eternal and seek Me not, ye call Me Gracious and trust Me not, ye call Me Noble and serve Me not, ye call Me Mighty and honor Me not, ye call Me Just and fear Me not; if I condemn you, blame Me not.”