



Hard Sayings of Jesus

Lesson 2 Does Jesus Contradict Himself?

Opening Prayer

Introduction

Consider the following proverbial statements in the first column. What is the wisdom in each one? Which of these contain good advice? What about the second column?

Good things come to those who wait.	Time and tide wait for no man.
The pen is mightier than the sword.	Actions speak louder than words.
Look before you leap.	Strike while the iron is hot.

If all these have some good advice what happens if you try to follow both sets of advice at the same time?

Studying God's Word

It's only natural that bits of human advice contradict one another. We're human! We're fallible! But we certainly have a higher expectation from God himself. His counsel and direction is sure and certain.

Yet sometimes Jesus says things that seem to contradict some of his other words. How do we properly understand those sayings?

Luke 22:36 [Jesus] said to [the apostles], "But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one."

1.) What clear words of Jesus does this passage seem to contradict?

2.) What is the context of Luke Chapter 22? When is Jesus saying this?

3.) In the previous verse Jesus asked them, "When I sent you without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything?" "Nothing," they answered. What time is Jesus contrasting this to?

Luke 22:37-38, 49-51 "It is written: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors'; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment." ³⁸ The disciples said, "See, Lord, here are two swords." "That is enough," he replied. ... ⁴⁹ When Jesus' followers saw what was going to happen, they said, "Lord, should we strike with our swords?" ⁵⁰ And one of them struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear. ⁵¹ But Jesus answered, "No more of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him.

4.) Does it seem that Jesus literally wants them to take up arms to defend themselves? Why or why not?

5.) Instead of telling them to use violence, Jesus tells them to change their expectations. Make a list of things we should expect as we live and work in this world as servants and followers of Jesus.

6.) What examples from the Scriptures, world history, and your own experience support this truth?

Luke 9:57-62 As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." ⁵⁸ Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." ⁵⁹ He said to another man, "Follow me." But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." ⁶⁰ Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God." ⁶¹ Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-bye to my family." ⁶² Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

7.) Jesus is calling people to follow him, and they're listening and willing to go! Yet what's so difficult about Jesus' response to their requests?

8.) What clear words and commandment of God do verses 59-62 seem to contradict?

9.) Look back at the contextual verses (57-58). As people followed Jesus, what did he want them to understand?

10.) Agree or disagree: Following Christ means that he always comes before our family obligations.

Matthew 5:20 "For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven."

11.) What does Jesus say is necessary in order for one to enter the kingdom of heaven?

12.) What are some clear words or teachings of Jesus that this would seem to contradict?

13.) This time, the immediate context will *help* us but won't give us the whole "solution." Read verses 17 and 18. Explain what Jesus wants the people to understand about the salvation he's bringing?

Matthew 5:17-18 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸ I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished."

14.) The Sermon on the Mount is a preaching of law. God's law shows us how to live—and as it points out our sins, it shows us our need for a Savior. When you keep that in mind, why does Jesus say what he does in verse 20?

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Key Points:

- When Jesus' words seem difficult or seem to contradict, slow down and pay attention to the context. Make sure you're not reading into the words something that isn't there.
- While we are to live peaceably in this world, we shouldn't forget: this world will regard us as enemies.
- While we are to love our families, we can only truly do so when we place God first.

Prayer