

Taking the Lord at his Word

Luke 5:4-5

One of the most important things that we will ever learn in this life is to take the Lord at His word. In other words, to hear what he says through Scripture, and then to make sure that we internalize that and then put it into practice. You remember Jesus said on one occasion, blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it.

Sometimes, theoretically, we have this idea that we're hearing and doing what the Lord said when in a fact we're really not. So what does it mean to take the Lord at His Word? In other words, what does it mean for me as a member of the human family, to hear what the Lord has to say in Scripture and then to honor that?

Let me just begin by calling attention to various text in the Bible, and then we're going to make some application. So first examination of various texts and then secondly, an application of these various text. Let's go back and look for a moment in the book of Genesis in chapter six. You remember the Bible tells us that every imagination of the thought of man's heart was only evil continually.

And as a result of that, God decreed in the long ago that he would destroy the world by means of a flood. Now Genesis six verse eight, the Bible says that Noah found grace, and they are so the Lord. Noah was a man that stood and had head and shoulders above others in the human family. And so, having said that, he would destroy all flesh.

God said to let Patriarch in days gone by. Noah, I want you to build an ark of gopher wood. That ark was to be 450ft long, 75ft wide, 45ft high. The ark was to have three decks. There was to be a window in the ark and a door. It was to be covered with pitch from without to within.

So here's the question. Did Noah take God at his word? Well, the Bible says in Genesis chapter six, thus did Noah, according to all that God commanded him. So he did. In Hebrews chapter 11, we have a commentary on this very thing. The Hebrew writer said many years ago, by faith, Noah being warned of God, of things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

So here was a man that took God at His Word in the book of numbers. In chapter 21. You remember the account the children of Israel were journeying from Mount Hor by way of the Red sea, around the land of Edam. And the Bible says, on that occasion they became discouraged and began to speak against the Lord and Moses.

And they asked the question, why have you brought us out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? Their response was, there's no food nor water, and our souls loathe or detest this worthless brand. Well, the Bible says that God sent fiery serpents among them, and many of the people of Israel were bitten and died. The children of Israel then said to Moses, we have sinned.

We've spoken against the Lord and against you. And so they pleaded with Moses to pray on their behalf for the removal of the serpents. And the Bible says that Moses prayed on their behalf. And God said to Moses in the long ago, he said, I want you to make a fiery serpent. Set it on a pole, and it shall be that whenever someone is bitten, when they look at it, he said, he'll live.

And so the record says that Noah made that serpent of brass put it on a pole. So it was when anyone was bitten, when he looked at it. That is when he looked at the serpent of brass. He lived. Now you think about that case. The children of Israel. They're dying. Multitudes are die. They cry out for help.

And God gives very specific instructions on how to be saved from being bitten by a fiery serpent. Did they have to learn to take the Lord at his word? Well, the answer would be yes. Then we come to the Book of Second Kings, chapter five. Here we have the account of a fellow by the name of Naaman. Naaman was a commander in Syria.

The Bible says he was a mighty man of valor, but he was a leper. There was a young Hebrew girl there, servant girl. And the Bible says that she said of the long ago, oh, that my master were with the prophet in Samaria, for he would heal him of his leprosy. Name. And then went to the king, told the king what the Hebrew girl had said.

He wrote a letter and sent it to the King of Israel. The king's response in Israel was, am I God to kill, to make a life? He said, and here this man sends a man to me to be healed of leprosy. Well, the Bible says that the prophet Elisha heard that the king had rent his clothes, and he said, please send him to me, and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel.

Well, the Bible says that Naaman came to the house of the prophet Elisha with his chariots and horses, and he stood at the door of his house, and Elisha then sent a messenger out, and he said, go and wash seven times in the Jordan. Your flesh will be restored to you, and you'll be healed. Well, that didn't go over so well with Naaman.

Naaman said in the long ago. Well, I thought, he said, behold, I thought that the prophet would come out, call on the name of the Lord his God, wave his hand over the place, and heal me of the leprosy, or heal the leprosy. And the Bible says, he was furious, and he asked the question, well, what about the rivers?

What about our barn and far pa the rivers in Damascus? He said, are they not better than all the rivers in Israel? Could I not wash and them and be clean? And it went away in a rage. And thankfully there was a servant who said, my father, if if the prophet had told you to go and do some great thing, would you not have done it?

So he says to you, wash and be clean. Now the record says that Naaman went and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God. And what happened? Well, the Bible says his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. Now, didn't Mammon have to listen to the divine instructions given by the prophet?

The prophet of God? Well, the answer is yes. If he wanted to be cleansed, he had to do exactly what the Lord said in the long ago. Let's move on. In the New Testament. In Luke chapter five, we have an account of the Apostle Peter, and James and John the sons of Zebedee. And the Bible tells us that they were they had been out fishing, and they were cleaning their nets.

The Lord Jesus comes on the scene and Jesus gets in Simon's boat, pushes out a little ways into the sea, sits down and teaches the people, teach us the multitudes. Well, the Bible says when he concluded his teaching, he then turned to Peter and said, Peter or Simon? He said, I want you to launch out into the deep.

Let down your net for a great catch or for a catch. Well, here's what Simon Peter said. Peter said, Lord, we have toiled all night and caught nothing. Nevertheless, at your word

I'll let down the net. Now let's just pause there for a moment and ask this question. When you look at the Lord Jesus Christ, what was his father?

Well, the Bible says a father was was a carpenter. Well, what did Jesus know about fishing? Was it not the case that Peter and James and John, they were experienced in their trade. They've been out fishing all night long. Haven't caught a single thing. And the Lord says, I want you to launch out into the deep, let down your net for a great catch or for a catch.

Did Peter need to listen to what the Lord said? Well, the answer is yes. So now let's just make some application from this text. I think it's important for us to learn the intended lesson when it comes to taking the Lord at His Word. Now, I would remind you in Romans chapter 15 and verse four, the Bible says that whatsoever things were written before time were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope.

So when we go back and look at Genesis chapter six, when God told Noah in the long ago that he was going to destroy the world by means of a flood, did Noah have some type of some type of past experience that would lead him to the conclusion? You know, I remember the last time that God flooded the world, or I remember hearing about a universal flood in days gone by.

You have that kind of knowledge. Was there that type of past experience that he could draw? No. Well, why then, did he do what the Lord said? Well, listen again. What the Hebrew writer said by faith. Noah being warned of God, of things not seen as yet. Listen. Time moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household.

So what are you saying? What the Bible is saying to us is that Noah was a man of faith, and Noah took the Lord at his word. When God said of that patriarch in the long ago, listen, I'm going to destroy the world by means of a flood. And if you want to save yourself and your family, here's exactly what you're going to do.

Well, no wonder Moses said Joseph 622. Thus did Noah, according to all that God commanded him, so he did. We again look at numbers chapter 21 and you think about the children of Israel, their being bitten by fiery serpents. Many of the people of Israel are dying, and they cry out for relief and so God tells Moses in the long ago, Moses, I want you to build a fiery serpent.

Make a fiery serpent, put it on a pole, standing on a pole, and it'll be whenever someone has been, when they look at it, they'll live. So what they do it built a bronze serpent, put it on a pole, and those who were bitten when they looked at it, what happened? They lived. So let me ask you, what kind of medical correlation can you think of between a bronze fiery serpent and being healed after having been bitten by a serpent?

Well, I can't think of any medicinal purpose and a brass. I can't think of any medicinal purpose in a brass serpent. But I know this. God said to those people long ago, if you want to be saved after you've been bitten by one of these fiery serpents, then you need to look at that bronze serpent, the sun on the pole.

And then, and only then will you live. Well, what about name? What about when they. A man was instructed to go into wash in the Jordan seven times, and he would be clean. His flesh would be restored. Well, could he have washed in one of the other rivers in Damascus? I mean, he asked that question. Here's where we get ourselves in trouble.

Naaman said, behold, I thought, look, I understand that we have cognitive ability and that we have to use we have to use the intellect that God has blessed us with. But the fact of

the matter is that Elisha had told him exactly what he needed to do for his leprosy to be cleansed. Now, was there any medicinal power in the River Jordan?

I mean, was there some type of medical benefit to that river exclusively? Well, other than the fact that God said, if you want to be cleansed, you're going to die? Not one time, not two time, not three times. You're going to dip seven times. And when you do that in the designated place, what's going to happen? Oh, you'll be cleansed.

And so he did it. Now again we go back and look at Luke five. Here's an experienced fisherman. He been out fishing all night long. And here's a carpenter, son. Now, what does a carpenter son know about fishing? And he tells Peter, I want you to launch out into the deep and let down your net. Now, you just imagine, Peter, when he said, Lord, we we've toiled all night and caught nothing.

We've been out on the water. He's had other days like this. There have been times in his fishing career, no doubt, when he hadn't called anything. Time to call it a night. Time to call it a day. Let's go back home cleaning the nets. And the Lord says, here's what I want you to do. I want you to launch out in the day, let down your net for a great catch.

Well, the Bible says that when he did that, what happened? Caught a great number of fish. So much so that the net began to break. So what then, is the intended lesson? Well, as I said a minute ago, we have to learn to take the Lord at His word. Think for a minute or two about what God says concerning salvation, obeying the gospel.

Now we can talk about obedience to the gospel and then the obligations of the gospel. But what about obeying the gospel? What's the Bible say? Are there not specific instructions given to us in the realm of salvation? Well, the answer would be yes. There is a clear cut pattern set forth in the Divine Word of God that I am to follow.

And if I follow what the Lord said, what? What will happen? Well, I'll be saved. You remember when Paul wrote to the saints, and in Rome he said that God be thanked, though you were the servants of sin. You're made from the heart, that form of doctrine delivered to you. In other words, you obey that pattern that had been delivered to you.

And being free from sin, he became the servants of righteousness. What, then, is the divine pattern? Well, number one, I've got to believe that Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus himself said, except you believe that I am, you'll die in your sins. John eight and the Bible says, I've got to be willing to repent. Paul said in acts chapter 17 at verse 30, recorded by Luke, that God commands all men everywhere to repent.

Pentecost day those who had put to death the Son of God. They were commanded to repent, and then to confess with my mouth what I believe in my heart. Well, what is that? That Jesus Christ is the Son of God, like the eunuch did. Recorded by Luke and Acts eight, verse 37, but we're not done. No, the Bible says that I need to be baptized into Christ.

Why would I need to be baptized into Christ? Well, Jesus said, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be condemned, but found it. Mark 16:16 on Pentecost day you have inspired apostles, but it is they have been endowed with the miraculous. They've received the baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit. Luke said they began to speak in other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance.

So these divinely appointed spokesmen, they were ambassadors of Christ, speaking on behalf of the Lord. When they were asked, or rather when they were asked on Pentecost day, man and brethren, what shall we do? Well, what did they say? You remember back in Matthew 16, in

verse 19, after Peter had confessed Jesus being the Christ, the son of the living God and the Lord, Jesus then pronounced a blessing on him, and he said, I'm going to build the church.

The gates of Hades will not prevail against it. In verse 19 he said, and I give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. A key signifying authority. On Pentecost day, the apostles took those keys and unlocked the doors into the Kingdom of God. So here then, were the divine instructions. They wanted to know men and brethren, what shall we do?

Peter said, repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins. What was that mean? It means exactly what it says, exactly what the Lord said to Peter and the other apostles. You need to repent and you need to be baptized. Somebody says, well, I just don't see a correlation between salvation and being buried with Christ in baptism.

I don't understand that. But you remember what Paul said over in Colossians two Paul said, buried with him in baptism, wherein you've been raised with him through faith of the operation or working of God. So what Paul is saying is simply this, that I have to have faith that the Lord will do exactly. He will do exactly what he said he will do.

If and only if I do it his way. So when I'm buried with Christ in baptism, is there any type of efficacy in that water? Well, the water is not what washes away my sins. Some blood of Christ. But I can't contact the blood of Jesus until I am buried with Christ in baptism. You say Jesus shed his blood and death.

John 19:33 and 34. And I can't take that blood when I'm baptized into Christ. And the Bible says that when I do that, that there is a spiritual or a surgical procedure that takes place, or what is that? Well, the Lord cuts away my sins. In other words, the Bible says that buried with him in baptism, when you've been raised with him through faith in the operation or working of God, God is at work cutting my sins away.

So the blood is what saves me. You see, Paul said in Ephesians one seven, In Him we have redemption through his blood. So forgiveness of sins. The Bible says in revelation chapter one at verse five. Unto him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. It's the blood that it's the blood that washes away our sins.

It's not the water. There's no efficacy in that water. But when we are buried with Christ in that watery grave, it is then that we contact that cleansing blood. And it's only then when Saul of Tarsus, you remember back in acts chapter nine, Paul or Saul at that time had received letters from the high priest to go to Damascus behind those who were followers of the way.

He's on his way. And the Bible says that the Lord appeared to him, and the Lord asked him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? And Saul said, who are you, Lord? What would you have me to do? The Lord said, I want you to go into the city, and it will be told you what you must do.

So now the Bible says that for three days Saul of Tarsus is doing what? He's praying, and he's fasting. The Lord then said to Ananias, Ananias. I want you to go to this praying man, and I want you to tell him that he's a chosen vessel of my, or that he has chosen a vessel of mine is going to bear my name before the Gentiles, before kings and the children of Israel.

And I'm going to show him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake. When Saul met

Ananias. Matter of fact, the record says that when Ananias last came on the scene, he said to Saul, Saul, Saul, what are you waiting on? Why terriest thou arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins. I'll spend the next 22, verse 16.

So when we do what the Lord said, or what's what's the end result? Well, the ensuing blessings in this case, it's salvation. Now I have to learn to take the Lord at His word. Now somebody might say, well, I don't understand that. We'll go back again and read the record in Genesis chapter six, Knowing the Flood. Go back and read again the account of the children of Israel, those fiery serpents.

Go back again and read what the Bible has to say about Naaman and his cleansing, and how he had to comply with the will of God in order to be cleansed. Go back and look at Luke five again. When here's the apostle Peter saying, Lord, I've been out trawling all night. I've been fishing all night long, and call a thing nevertheless at your word.

And that's the key right there. Whenever God says to do something, then we need to do it. Think for a minute or two when we talk about some of the obligations that we have in the gospel. You know, the Bible tells us that we're to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, that we are to deny ungodliness and worldly lust.

You see the world and all the attendant lust of the world. Those things, those things will be destroyed one day. John said, love not the world, neither of the things which are in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the father is not in it. For all that's in the world. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes of life, not of the father, but of the world, and the world passes away.

So to understand that what the Lord wants me to do is live my life walking in his footsteps. Think for a moment or two about Matthew chapter six. You remember Matthew six and the great sermon on the Mount. Jesus asked this question on one occasion why do you worry three times in that context? Here's what the Lord said do not worry three times.

So here's my question. Why is it that we don't take the Lord at His word? When the Lord said, I don't want you to worry. Why do we worry? Paul said in nothing be anxious, but in everything with prayer and supplication and thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passes all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Sometimes we fail to listen to the Lord. We fail to take him at His word. Jesus said, don't worry. Sometimes we worry what we ought to do is have the attitude of Peter. Nevertheless, Lord, at your word, what about casting our cares on him? You know, there are people today that question whether or not the Lord loves them, interested in their plight here on planet Earth.

Worry about their circumstances and hardships in this life. Does God know about that? Yes he does. The Bible says the house of the Lord in every place, the holding the evil of the good. Neither is there any creature not made manifest in his sight. All things are naked open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Hebrews chapter four at verse 12 or verse 13. Rather so the Lord knows all, sees all. Well, here's what Peter said. Peter said, casting all your cares on him. Why, Peter? For he cares for you. Now again we go back and look at Matthew chapter six, when Jesus said, do not worry. And yet we worry. We have cares anxieties in this life, and yet what we really need to do is put our trust in him.

Think for a moment or two about life. You know, Job said many years ago, man born of woman is a few days and full of trouble. James said that life is like a vapor. It appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Now here's what the Bible says. This is the promise that he's promised us eternal life.

First John 2:25. Can I know that I have eternal life? Well, if I've done what the Lord said to do, if I emulate what they did on Pentecost day, demonstrating faith in the Lord. Repentance of sin. Confession. If I'm baptized into Christ, I'm a safe person. Based on what Jesus said. Mark 16:16 and I have the hope of life eternal.

What can I do? Can I take the Lord at His word? Well, let me ask you this as a child of God, he's been saved by the blood of Christ. Can you take the Lord at His word when he said, if you walk in the light and see in the light, you have fellowship with one another. The blood of His Son, Jesus Christ, cleanses you from all sin.

You ever wonder sometimes, has the Lord really forgiven me? Is it not the case sometimes that we live as if we haven't been forgiven? We continue to bear about in our mind our past. We can't put it out of our mind. We can't get away from what we've done in days gone by. Paul said he was the chief of sinners, but he knew something about the grace of the Lord and the fact that he'd been saved.

So to understand that the blood of Jesus will do exactly what God said it will do. Number one, it'll save us. Number two, it'll keep us safe. If we walk in the light, if we live in harmony with His word, which again leads back to circles, back to this hope of life eternal. When you come to the end of this world, and we're all coming to that, to that end, at some point when we come to the close of this life, do we not want to take the Lord at His word?

When Jesus was telling the apostles that he'd be leaving them, and you remember, Peter affirmed he'd be willing to die for him if the case were to arise. And Jesus said, look, you believe in God, believe also in me. In my father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. But I go and prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I'll come again and receive you to myself. That where I am, there you may be also. Are you saying there that I need to take the Lord at His word? When the Lord has promised me eternal life. But I have the hope of heaven. As Peter said, I have an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled.

For it's not a way. It's reserved in heaven for me. Can I believe that? Can I bank on it? Yes I can. Why? Because I'm willing to take the Lord at His word. The Bible says God. It's impossible for God to lie in hope of life eternal, which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began. We have to take the Lord at His word.

To be saved and to remain saved. Thank you for being with us today. God bless. See you back next week.