

11-2017

Key Dialogues Conducted by Jesus Christ

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Recommended Citation

Willmington, Harold, "Key Dialogues Conducted by Jesus Christ" (2017). *The Second Person File*. 75.
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KEY DIALOGUES CONDUCTED BY JESUS CHRIST

With Andrew and Peter

"Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God. And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye?, They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day for it was about the tenth hour One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peters brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ And he brought him to Jesus And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone." (Jn. 1:35-42)

1. Andrew called Jesus "Messias" [Messiah] (Jn. 1:41). This title is found only three other times in the entire Bible.

- a. As used (twice) by the angel Gabriel (Dan. 9:25-26)
- b. As used by the Samaritan woman (Jn. 4:25)

2. Jesus calls Peter "Cephas," which is translated, "a stone." God's purpose is to change people's names (and character). (See Rev. 3:12.)

- a. He changed Abram to Abraham (Gen. 17:5).
- b. He changed Sarai to Sarah (Gen. 17:15).
- c. He changed Jacob to Israel (Gen. 32:28).
- d. He changed Saul to Paul (Acts 13:9).

Note, however, that Peter at this point was anything but a rock. He was, in fact, in a practical sense, *"tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine"* (Eph. 4:14). Actually, Jesus' description of Peter here can be compared to the one he once gave the timid Gideon in the Old Testament, referring to him as *"thou mighty man of valour"* (Judg. 6:12). But for Peter, all this would change after Pentecost.

3. Without realizing it, Andrew answered Job's perplexing question:

- a. Job: *"Oh that I knew where I might find him!"* (23:3).
- b. Andrew (to Peter): *"We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ"* (Jn. 1:41).

With Philip and Nathanael

"The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Phillip, and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Phillip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed,

in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Phillip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." (Jn. 1:43-51)

1. We note that Philip, a new convert, did not have a full understanding of the virgin birth, but he was still an effective witness. (He refers to Jesus as *"the son of Joseph."*) Nathanael was bothered by Philip's "Jesus of Nazareth" title. He doubtless realized that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. In addition, he probably had a low view of Galileans. Nazareth was the town which housed the Roman garrison for the northern regions of Galilee. In light of this, most Jews would have little to do with that city. In fact, those who lived there were looked down upon as compromisers. Thus, to call one a "Nazarene" was to use a term of utter contempt.
2. Philip wisely refused to argue, but invited him to "come and see." His approach was the one suggested in the Psalms: *"O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him."* (Psa. 34:8)
3. Nathanael was amazed that Jesus knew he had been sitting under a fig tree when Philip talked to him. The Savior always dealt with people on their own level.
 - a. He dealt with Nathanael *under* a fig tree (Jn. 1:48).
 - b. He dealt with Zacchaeus *up* a sycamore tree (Lk. 19:4-5).
 - c. He dealt with a dying thief *on* a cruel tree (Lk. 23:39-43).
4. Nathanael was promised he would someday see heaven open and the angels ascending and descending upon Christ. This happened at the ascension (see Acts 1:9-11).
5. Although Nathanael addressed Him as the Son of God and King of Israel (1:49), our Lord referred to Himself as the Son of man (1:51). This was by far His favorite title for Himself. He used it more times than any other name. Nathanael and Philip are the first to hear it.
6. Note: It is thrilling to observe that our Lord's first recorded prediction was not concerning His suffering, death, or even resurrection, but the promise that He would someday ascend. As Isaiah once declared of God: *"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."* (46:9-10)

With Nicodemus

"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mothers womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (Jn. 3:1-16)

- Note the character of this man:
 1. He was a Jewish religious leader (Jn. 3:1).
 2. He was a member of the Pharisees (Jn. 3:1).
 3. He was a well-known teacher (Jn. 3:10).
 4. He was, however, lost!
- Why did he come by night? We do not know, and it is unfair to brand him a coward. Perhaps the heavy schedules of both men required this.
- What did Nicodemus know about Jesus? He knew He was from God because of His supernatural miracles. (Compare Jn. 3:2 with 20:30-31.)
- Nicodemus was told he had to be born again. This is the first of but three occasions on which the term *"born again"* is found in the Word of God (see Jn. 3:3, 7; 1 Pet. 1:23). However, John often uses the phrase *"born of God"* (see Jn. 1:31; 1 Jn. 3:9; 4:7; 5:18).
- What did Jesus mean by His expression, *"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God"* (Jn. 3:5)? Here five main views have been offered:
 1. He was referring to baptismal regeneration. This, of course, is totally refuted by other biblical passages (see Eph. 2:8-9; 1 Cor. 1:17; Rom. 5:1).
 2. He was referring to that watery sac, the placenta, which accompanies physical birth. Thus He contrasted physical birth with spiritual birth.
 3. He was saying that the one requirement to live on this earth is to have had a physical birthday; and likewise, the one requirement to someday live in heaven is to have a

spiritual birthday. Those who hold this view point to 3:6 where they feel Jesus clarifies His position.

4. He was referring to John's baptism of repentance in the Jordan, which baptism the Pharisees had rejected. (Compare Lk. 3:3 with 7:30.)
5. He was referring to the Word of God (the water) and the Spirit of God (Spirit), without which no man can ever be saved (see Jn. 16:8-11; Rom. 11:6-15).

Advocates of this position point out that water in the Bible is often the recognized symbol for the Word of God (see Psa. 119:9; Jn. 4:14; Eph. 5:25-26; Titus 3:5).

- Although this man was both a ruler and a religious leader, he needed the new birth. Note Jesus' question in 3:10, "*Art thou a master of Israel, and knoweth not these things?*" In the Greek the definite article is used, meaning, "*Are you the teacher in Israel?*" Nicodemus may have been the most famous teacher of his day.
- In John 3:12 Jesus connects earthly things with heavenly things, indicating that a right view of the second is based squarely on a right view of the first. This only serves to emphasize the supreme importance of accepting at face value the historical words of Moses concerning creation (Gen. 1-2), as one would do with Christ's words concerning redemption.
- Jesus illustrated His visitor's need by referring to Moses and the brazen serpent. (Compare John 3:14 with Num. 21:9.) On this occasion in the Old Testament account, God had sent poisonous serpents to punish rebellious Israel. The people repented and a cure was provided. A serpent of brass was placed atop a wooden pole where all could view it. Anyone bitten needed only to look upon the brass serpent to be healed.
To paraphrase, here is what Jesus told Nicodemus: "*Nicodemus, like those Old Testament Israelites, you have been bitten by a serpent—the serpent of sin. It is an incurable and fatal bite. But soon God is going to erect a crosslike pole just outside Jerusalem. And on that cross he will place a Savior.*"
- It may be said that one cannot fully grasp the most famous verse in the Bible, John 3:16, unless he has some understanding of its background, which is found in John 3:14. "*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.*"
- Did Nicodemus accept Jesus as Savior? Two later events strongly testify that he did indeed!

1. He defends Jesus before the Pharisees

"Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." (Jn. 7:50-52)

2. He helps in preparing the body of Jesus for burial

"And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the

place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand." (Jn. 19:39-42)

- If Jesus quoted the words in John 3:16, then Nicodemus had the supreme honor of being the very first person to hear both the most important and greatest verse in all the Bible!

1. It is the most important verse, because it contains the gospel in a nutshell.
2. It is the greatest verse, because it contains nine of the most profound truths ever recorded:

"For God"! – The greatest Person

"So loved the world" – The greatest truth

"That he gave" – The greatest act

"His only begotten Son" – The greatest gift

"That whosoever" – The greatest number

"Believeth in him" – The greatest invitation

"Should not perish" – The greatest promise

"But have" – The greatest certainty

"Everlasting life" – The greatest destiny

- The following features may be observed in summarizing Jesus' dealings with Nicodemus:

1. He was accessible. We are told (3:2) that Nicodemus came *"by night."* All too often a busy and successful Christian leader is anything but accessible to those who may desperately need godly counsel.
2. He was single-minded. The only issue Jesus wanted to discuss was the born again experience. He refused to be side-tracked by the opening flattery of Nicodemus. Note the first statement from each man:
Nicodemus: *"Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him"* (Jn. 3:2). Jesus: *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"* (John 3:3).
3. He was clear and concise. Realizing Nicodemus's confusion, Jesus related three helpful illustrations to explain the new birth.
 - a. A physical illustration— *"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit"* (Jn. 3:5-6).
 - b. A natural illustration— *"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit"* (Jn. 3:8).
 - c. A scriptural illustration— *"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up"* (Jn. 3:14).
4. He was well-informed. He knew the background of Nicodemus. *"Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?"* (Jn. 3:10)

5. He was impartial. Even though Nicodemus was no doubt well-known and successful in the political, financial, and religious world, our Lord dealt with him for what he was, a poor lost sinner.

With a Samaritan Woman

"When therefore the LORD knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee. And he must needs go through Samaria. Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well. and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then halt thou that flying water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband- in that saidst thou truly. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he. And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her? The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto him. In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that

whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours. And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did. So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days And many more believed because of his own word; And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.” (Jn. 4:1-42)

- After realizing that the Pharisees were pitting him against John in a baptismal contest, Jesus quickly left the Judean area. Our Lord did not come to compete with John, but rather to be crucified for him, along with all other sinners.
- Note the phrase, *“He must needs go through Samaria.”* H. A. Ironsides observed: "An orthodox Jew would cross the Jordan near Jericho and make his way up through Perea, and then cross back near the Sea of Galilee in the north. But the Lord Jesus Christ did not take that route. A stern legalist would not go through Samaria; but the Lord Jesus Christ took that direct road because of the very fact that He was anxious to meet these poor Samaritan sinners that He might reveal the truth to them. 'He must needs go through Samaria.' Long before the creation of the world it had been settled in the counsels of eternity that he was to meet a poor, sinful, Samaritan woman that day. He could not forego that appointment." (*Gospel of John*, John Loizeaux Brothers, N.Y., 1954, p. 138.)
- Our Lord's perfect humanity is clearly revealed through the following words in 4:6 – *“Jesus, therefore, being wearied with his journey...”*
He would later again experience this utter exhaustion in a boat during a storm (Mk. 4:35-38). In addition, Jesus knew extreme hunger (Mt. 4:2), and thirst (Jn. 19:38).
Jesus was thus as much God had He been not man, but also as much man had He not been God.
- During His conversation with the Samaritan woman, Jesus contrasted two things:
 1. Living water with liquid water (4:13-14).
 2. Real worship with ritual worship (4:20-24).
- The woman spoke of a mountain in 4:20 – The mountain referred to here was Mount Gerizim, especially sacred to the Samaritans.
 1. Abraham and Jacob had built altars in that general vicinity (Gen. 12:7; 33:20).
 2. The people of Israel had been blessed from this mountain (Deut. 11:29; 27:12).
 3. The Samaritans had built a temple on Mount Gerizim around 400 B.C., which had later been destroyed by the Jews.
- Jesus reveals an incredible fact about the Father at this time:
“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.” (Jn. 4:23)
The implications here are staggering indeed! We are told that the omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient, eternal, sovereign, and holy creation actually desires—indeed seeks—the worship of His finite and sinful creatures!

- It was at this time that Christ made the first recorded announcement that He indeed was the anticipated Messiah. This revelation was given to an immoral woman (Jn. 4:26). Later, the Savior would make the first resurrection appearance in his new body before another woman, who had been possessed of devils—Mary Magdalene (Jn. 20:11-18).
- Note the progressive revelation regarding the identity of Jesus as given by the Holy Spirit to this woman:
 1. "How is it that thou, being a Jew...?" (4:9)
 2. "Art thou greater than our father Jacob...?" (4:12)
 3. "I perceive that thou are a prophet." (4:19)
 4. "Is this not the Christ?" (4:29)
- The Samaritan woman will thus become one of the two greatest soul winners in the entire gospel account and both were former pagan Gentiles! Compare her tremendous testimony in Jn. 4:28-30, 39, with that of a former demon-possessed man from Gadara (Mk. 5:18-20).
- The title given to Jesus by the Samaritan man, "*Savior of the world*" (4:42) is found only here and in 1 John 4:14— "*And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.*" (1 John 4:14)
- This passage contains one of the greatest examples for soul winners in the entire Bible. Note a few of its practical points:
 1. Jesus refused to argue with the woman.
 2. He avoided getting entangled by various theological concepts.
 3. He never browbeat her, even though she was a great sinner.
 4. He repeatedly spoke of the living water, which was the real (and only) issue.
 5. He concluded by pointing her to Himself (4:26).
 6. The Christian has only to lift up his eyes to see the bountiful harvest of lost souls all around him.
 7. Christians sometimes sow seed that will be reaped by others, but they often reap seed planted by another. God alone gives the increase (see 1 Cor. 3:5-9).

With a Woman Taken in the Act of Adultery

"Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very Acts Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lilted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw

none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." (Jn. 8:1-11)

- The wicked Jewish leaders altered the Law somewhat as seen by their statement in verse five.
 1. The manner of execution was not prescribed unless the woman was a betrothed virgin (Deut. 22:23-24).
 2. The Law also required both parties to be killed (Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22).
- There is only one Old Testament instance in which this law was carried out (see Num. 25:7-8).
- This account is the only one in the gospel record where Jesus is described as writing something.
- What did he write? It has been suggested that he may have written down the names of those Pharisees standing there who had secretly committed adultery. Consider Paul's words at a later date: *"Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God... thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?"* (Rom. 2:17, 22)
- The reason of course why Jesus did not write or author a book while here on earth was that, in the ultimate sense He *was* a book! John begins his gospel account by referring to this:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (Jn. 1:1)

The Greek term *Logos* (here translated *word*) denotes a thought, a concept, an expression. In other words the very life of Jesus served to reveal both God's thoughts and work!
- In essence it can be seen that Jesus dealt with this poor sinful woman in three-fold fashion.
 1. He was accessible— *"And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them"* (Jn. 8:2). Note: In John 3, Nicodemus met Christ late at night. Here the woman taken in adultery would meet him "early in the morning."
 2. He did not condemn her, nor did he permit the self-righteous Pharisees to condemn her. Our Lord did not come to damn sinners, but rather to deliver them. *"A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory."* (Mt. 12:20)
 3. He both forgave and instructed her. *"Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."* (Jn. 8:11)

With Mary and Martha

"Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." (Lk. 10:38-42)

- We are all too often so busy in ministering for the Lord, that we neglect our ministering to the Lord. Note an event in the early days of the Antioch church: *"Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."* (Acts 13:1-2)
- Martha was simply too busy. She was allowing the good to become the enemy of the best. To rephrase this truth: Our worship of Christ is more important and must precede our work for Christ.

With a Rich Young Ruler

Here we will allow both Matthew and Mark to record this meeting:

"And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God., but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up. what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Mt. 19:16-26)

"And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou

hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.” (Mk. 10:17-22)

- The rich young ruler was confused in regard to four things. Jesus corrects all four errors.
- First confusion and correction -
 1. The confusion: concerning the deity of Christ— *“There came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master...” (Mk. 10:17)*
 2. The correction— *“And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.” (Mk. 10:18)*

The rabbis had no room whatsoever in their theology for the idea that the promised Old Testament Messiah would actually be God Himself. Thus, Jesus may have been saying, *“In light of the fact that God alone is good, are you still willing to call me good Master?”*
- Second confusion and correction -
 1. The confusion: concerning the vanity of works— *“What good thing shall I do, that I might have eternal life?” (Mt. 19:16)*
 2. The correction— *“If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” (Mt. 19:17)*

(Note: Christ then lists five of the Ten Commandments.)

 - a. Honor thy father and mother (fifth).
 - b. Thou shalt do no murder (sixth).
 - c. Thou shalt not commit adultery (seventh).
 - d. Thou shalt not steal (eighth).
 - e. Thou shalt not bear false witness (ninth).

He does not, however, list the first commandment (Thou shalt have no other gods before me), nor the tenth (Thou shalt not covet), the very two already broken by the rich young ruler. Apparently Christ wanted him to come to this conclusion himself.
- Third confusion and correction -
 1. The confusion: concerning the depravity of man— *“The young man lath unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet” (Mt. 19:20)?* Had he really done this? A case could be made concerning the possibility of observing the first nine commandments, but only in an outward and external manner. However, no human could ever even remotely keep the Tenth Commandment, which is an inward law, dealing with the heart— *“Thou shalt not covet” (Exod. 20:17).*
 2. The correction— *“Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.” (Mt. 19:21)*
- Fourth confusion and correction -
 1. The confusion: concerning the captivity of riches— *“But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions” (Mt. 19:22)*

A rabbi once visited a miserly old man who was known far and wide for his greed. Pointing out the window, the rabbi asked him what he saw. "Well," he said, "I see

children playing and adults walking." The rabbi then placed a mirror in front of the old man. "Now," he asked, "what do you see?" "Oh," replied the man, "I see myself!" In a quiet tone, the rabbi observed: "I have just shown you two pieces of glass. Concerning the first, you saw people, but concerning the second, you saw only yourself. The reason you could not see human beings through the second was because it has been coated with a thin layer of silver."

2. The correction – *"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven, And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible."* (Mt. 19:23-26)
- In conclusion, five facts may be seen in regards to the rich young ruler:
 1. He asked the right question - "How can I receive eternal life?"
 2. He asked in the right way - He ran and knelt.
 3. He asked the right person - He addressed his concerns to Jesus.
 4. He asked at the right time - This may have been his first and only encounter with Jesus.
 5. He, however, tragically responded in the wrong way.

With Zacchaeus

- As seen from the perspective of the publican
 1. Zacchaeus the sinner – *"And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich."* (Lk. 19:1-2)
 2. Zacchaeus the seeker – This man wanted to meet Jesus but had a problem.
 - a. The source of his problem – *"And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature."* (Lk. 19:3)
 - b. The solution to his problem – *"And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way."* (Lk. 19:4)
 3. Zacchaeus the saved
 - a. The request of the Savior – *"And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house."* (Lk. 19:5)
 - b. The response of the publican – *"And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully."* (Lk. 19:6)
 - c. The reaction of the crowd – *"And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner."* (Lk. 19:7)
 4. Zacchaeus the Spirit-controlled

- a. As witnessed by his own testimony— *"And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and If I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold."* (Lk. 19:8)
 - b. As witnessed by Jesus' testimony— *"And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."* (Lk. 19:9-10)
- As seen from the perspective of the Savior
 1. Jesus saw Zacchaeus. *"And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him"* (Lk. 19:5a).
 2. Jesus knew Zacchaeus. *"And said unto him, Zacchaeus"* (Lk. 19:5b).
 3. Jesus loved Zacchaeus. *"Make haste, and comedown; for today I must abide at thy house"* (Lk. 19:5c).
 4. Jesus saved Zacchaeus. *"And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham"* (Lk. 19:6, 9).