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## The Parables of Jesus Christ: Two Sons

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# THE PARABLES OF JESUS CHRIST

## THIRTY-NINE: Two Sons: One Said "No," But Did, The Other "Yes," But Didn't (Mt. 2:28-32)

### SURVEY

A father instructed his two sons to go out and work in the vineyard:

- The first son initially refused but later changed his mind and obeyed.
- The second son initially agreed, but later changed his mind and disobeyed.

### SIGNIFICANCE

This is the final of two parables involving a father and son relationship. For the first, see parable 31.

### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Who are the true believers? Will the real sons of God please stand? The ultimate test of ownership is obedience. One's sonship is demonstrated by one's submission. Both Old Testament and New Testament Israel failed this test. Their words were correct, but their works were corrupt. They said, "I go, sir" and went not.

#### 1. Old Testament Israel

- a. Their words—*"And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord"* (Ex. 19:8).
- b. Their works—*"Wherefore the Lord said, forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men"* (Isa. 29:13).

#### 2. New Testament Israel

- a. Their words—*"We are Abraham's seed"* (Jn. 8:33). *"Abraham is our father"* (Jn. 8:39a).
- b. Their works—*"Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham"* (John 8:39b).

Later, when advising the disciples concerning the Pharisees, our Lord concluded sadly:

*"All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not"* (Mt. 23:3).

- Who then are the true believers? Upon being told that his mother and brothers were waiting to speak to him, Jesus once replied:

*"But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? And who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Mt. 12:48-50).*

- There is no single concept in the Christian life most important than that of obedience.

1. The earthly ministry of Jesus served as a perfect role model in matters of obedience.

*"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8). "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb. 5:8).*

2. The apostle Paul's amazing accomplishments and Christian testimony can be aptly summarized by that one word—obedience.

*"Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19).*