

The Gospel of the Kingdom: What Jesus Is Really About
Matthew 11:25-12:21

3 Marks of True Christianity

- Jesus is about grace instead of accomplishment. (11:25-27)

God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” (James 4:6)

For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are. (1 Corinthians 1:26-28)

- Salvation is impossible to achieve but simple to receive.

Here [at the cross] the bottom falls out of all merit, all powers and abilities of reason or the free will that men dream of. And it all counts as nothing before God. Christ must do and must give everything. (Martin Luther)

- God alone is the author of our salvation.

One weeknight when I was sitting in the house of God, I was not thinking much about the preacher's sermon, for I did not believe it. The thought struck me, "How did you come to be a Christian?" I sought the Lord. "But how did you come to seek the Lord?" The truth flashed across my mind in a moment—I should not have sought him unless there had been some previous influence in my mind to make me seek him. "I prayed," thought I, but then I asked myself, "How came I to pray?" I was induced to pray by reading the Scriptures. "How came I to read the Scriptures?" I did read them, but what led me to do so? Then, in a moment, I saw that God was at the bottom of it all, and that he was the Author of my faith, and so the whole doctrine of grace opened up to me, and from that doctrine I have not departed to this day, and I desire to make this my constant confession, "I ascribe my change wholly to God." (Charles Spurgeon)

And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. ¹¹ To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 5:10-11)

- Jesus is about rest instead of labor. (11:28-12:14)

- Find eternal rest for your soul in Jesus.

Mark what a simple request Jesus makes to the laboring and heavy-laden ones. "Come to me—take my yoke upon you, learn from me." He interposes no hard conditions. He speaks nothing of works to be done first, and deservingness of His gifts to be established. He only asks us to come to Him just as we are, with

all our sins, and to submit ourselves like little children to His teaching. "Go not," He seems to say, "To man for relief. Wait not for help to arise from any other quarter. Just as you are, this very day, come to me." (J.C. Ryle)

Shall our sins discourage us, when he appears there only for sinners? Are you bruised? Be of good comfort, he calls you. Conceal not your wounds, open all before him and take not Satan's counsel. Go to Christ, although trembling, as the poor woman who said, 'If I may but touch his garment' (Matt. 9:21). We shall be healed and have a gracious answer. Go boldly to God in our flesh; he is flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone for this reason, that we might go boldly to him. Never fear to go to God, since we have such a Mediator with him, who is not only our friend but our brother and husband. (Richard Sibbes)

- Find daily rest for your soul through Jesus.

He ran thus till he came to a place somewhat ascending; and upon that place stood a cross, and little below in the bottom, a sepulchre. So I saw in my dream, that just as Christian came up with the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back; and began to tumble, and so continued to do so until it came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in, and I saw it no more. (Pilgrim in Pilgrim's Progress)

- Repent of all supposed goodness in yourself and find all true goodness in Jesus.

*My faith has found a resting place,
Not in device nor creed;
I trust the Ever-living One,
His wounds for me shall plead.*

*I need no other argument,
I need no other plea;
It is enough that Jesus died,
And that He died for me.*

("My Faith Has Found a Resting Place" by Eliza Hewitt)

- Jesus is about gentleness instead of severity. (12:15-21)

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood ⁶ and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (Revelation 1:4-6)