

Good and Lost

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- [0 : 0 0] That music, that is good stuff. If you have your Bibles, I want you to turn to Luke chapter 12. Luke chapter 12, I'm going to get there in just a few moments. I want to begin with a confession.
- I've got a confession to make, some of it from a long time ago. I had a youth minister that banned us from listening to secular music. And it was in the last days of vinyl.
- There's a revival of that now. And soon to be the last days of cassette tapes before the arrival of the CD. And young people, if you don't know what any of those things are, this is how we listen to music before the Internet.
- And I know that's a mind twister for you, that there was a day before the Internet. But anyway, I did what he told us to do. I got rid of my cassettes. I was going to purify myself by throwing them away.
- And one of my demented brothers said, hey, I'll take them instead. So I gave them to him. And so Hank Williams Jr. and Duran Duran and men at work were handed over, and he laughed at me.
- [1 : 0 4] In college, my neighbor blasted Hank, and I blasted the cathedrals. And however, before that music revival, I was exposed by my sorry brothers to the fine music of the mid-'80s.
- And my confession is that some time ago, I backslid into the secular. I adhered to country music with some 80s thrown in, along with southern gospel and worship music.
- And so now my streaming service has a Daniel station that I listen to. And that's a combo of country, Christian, southern gospel, and 80s.
- And I'll be honest, it's pretty good. But there are some songs that their algorithms are thrown off. They throw songs in there that I don't like.
- And I skip through those songs. My wife said, you're like your daughter. You skip through those songs. But some of them don't apply. And one came up the other day, and I was going to hit the button, but I was curious.
- [2 : 0 3] And I was in it before I meant to be. And I listened to it, and I just shook my head. Now, before I read these lyrics, I want you to understand something. I want you to keep in mind, there are a lot of people that get some of their theology from country music.
- And the reason why I know that is because I do funerals. And I know what they play at the gravesides. And so they get a lot of their theology from country music. And I want you to listen to the lyrics of this song.
- Daddy's been a back row Baptist with his share of front row sin. With Saturday night still on his breath every Sunday when he walks in. He never led the benediction.
- He never sang in the choir. But he's an angel with no halo and one wing in the fire. He goes on to say, I'd trade a thousand prayers if just one prayer would come true, Lord.
- But please believe in him like I believe in you. Now, I've got some things to say about that. Particularly four things. One is, we don't trade prayers in God's economy.

- [3 : 15] Okay? Number two, it's not about God believing in us. It's about us believing in God. That's what it comes back to. Number three, don't get your theology from a country song. And number four, I just want to tell you what daddy's problem was. Daddy's problem was, he was lost. Daddy is lost.
- There's no wings. There's no halo. He's lost. And I know that daddy followed mama to church to get her off his back.
- And I also know it had no impact on his life. And when Christ enters people's lives, Christ changes lives. So if there's no fruit there, you've got to check the vine.
- You've got to see what it's hooked to. And if it's not hooked to Christ, it's not bearing fruit. If it is hooked to Christ, it's bearing fruit.
- [4 : 17] And a man's half-hearted attendance will not help him. As a matter of fact, in his own mind, it may sanctify him by just being in attendance.
- It is sadly a lost opportunity. And it made me reflect on other lost opportunities that I see that Jesus points out to us.
- Some in relationships and one in a story that he told. He shows us three good kinds of people that can easily be lost.
- And what I mean by lost is this, folks. We are born into a world of sin. And then by choice, we each sin against God. We do things that displease God.
- We do things that separate us from God. And Scripture, I didn't make it up. Scripture says that man is lost without Christ. Hopeless, separated from Christ.
- [5 : 17] Hopeless unless he comes to Christ. But Christ came to the cross and died for our sins so that we could be forgiven and could be made right with the Lord.
- And when that happens, we're saved and changed. And if we've never submitted our life to Christ, never surrendered our life to Christ, then, friend, we're lost.
- No matter who's been in our family, no matter how many times we've darkened the doors of the church, even if we're there on Father's Day, if we haven't given our heart and life to the Lord, we're in a lost condition.
- Three good kinds of people that can easily be lost. One is a person with good money. A person with good money. Luke chapter 12, 16 through 21.
- Jesus says, And he told them a parable, saying, The land of a rich man produced plentiful. And he thought to himself, What shall I do? For I have nowhere to store my crops.
- [6 : 20] And he said, I'll do this. I'll tear down my barns and build larger ones. And there I'll store all my grain and my goods. And I'll say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years.
- Relax, eat, drink, be merry. But God said to him, Fool, this night your soul is required of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?
- So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God. I want to be clear about something. There's nothing wrong with having money. The problem is when money has you.
- When the insatiable desire for just a little bit more. John D. Rockefeller was worth \$1.4 billion in 1934.
- That at the time was 1.5% of the gross domestic product of the United States. And it was the equivalent of today. And these equivalents sometimes go nuts.
- [7 : 20] But the equivalent, what I read, was \$24 billion. Some estimate up to \$400 billion. And he was asked one day, How much is enough?

And John D. said, Just a little bit more. Just a little bit more. We can become so caught up in our money, are so caught up in the lack of it, that it becomes a God to us.

I mean, it gets us up in the morning. We slave ourselves in the day to make it grow. And it puts us to bed every night. And Jesus met a rich man one time who wanted to know how to have eternal life.

And Jesus told him to sell all that he had and give it to the poor. And he left and went away very sad because he had a lot of money. Now I want to be clear about something. We never see anywhere else in Scripture where Jesus tells somebody to do that.

Tells somebody to sell everything they got and give it to the poor. He never says that in any other point of Scripture. The reason he said that to that man is because he knew that that man's money meant too much to him.

[8 : 22] It wasn't that the man had money. It was the money had the man. There was an older man that lived in a previous community that I lived in. His family was filled with carnal, hard-hearted children.

And maybe some of them were without the Lord. I don't know them. I had a burden for him. His dear wife had been a member of my church and she was horribly struggling with dementia.

And I went to see them. And he told me how he had made his money. He told me how good he was at business and told me how hard that he worked.

And then he took me out to his workshop and he showed me his tools. He showed me how he meticulously aligned those tools along the wall.

Wrenches from huge three-foot-long ones to little bitty ones all in a core. He showed me the boxes, dovetailed boxes that he had made to hold screws and bolts and nuts and nails.

[9 : 28] Classic tools that have been replaced now by modern gadgets. But he then told me that he never had time to go to church because he was too busy working and told me how hard he worked.

And I asked him if he knew the Lord. And he told me God knew how hard he worked. And I told him he could never work hard enough to earn his way to heaven.

I never witnessed any fruit in that man's life that showed salvation. I never did. I'm not a judge of his soul. I just call it as I see it.

They auctioned off all his treasures for a dime on the dollar and his kids fought over what was left. Mark 8 verse 36 says, For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?

I'm afraid he's in hell today. But I hope I'm wrong. Matthew 6 24 says, No one can serve two masters.

[10 : 46] Jesus said it. No one can serve two masters for either he'll hate the one and love the other or he'll be devoted to the one and despise the other. You can't serve God and money.

There's a lot of good lost men with good money. There can also be lost people with good morals.

A person with good morals. It's natural for us to assume that somebody must be Christian when they're so nice or because he does so much for the community.

I mean, upstanding people. People people think the world of. But I want to be clear about something. You can glad hand and smile your way all the way to an eternity without Christ if you're not careful.

That rich man that came to Jesus and left sad because he had a lot of money was a mighty good guy. I want you to listen to the first part of the conversation that he had with Jesus. It's in Mark chapter 10 verse 17 and it says this.

[11 : 44] As he was setting out on his journey a man ran up and knelt before Christ and asked him, Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said, Why do you call me good? And Jesus, and he said, Why do you call me good?

And no one is good except God alone. You know the commandments. Do not murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not bear witness. Do not defraud. Honor your father and mother. And he said, Teacher, listen to this.

All these I have kept from my youth. The man had never lied. The man had never defrauded. The man had never taken anything.

He didn't sleep around. He didn't do anything. He's a good guy. You could trust him. He was good to his mom and daddy. He had good morals. But even with all of that, it wasn't good enough.

So let me be honest with you. It will never be good enough. We'll never be good enough. If you've got your idea that there in eternity, there's a scale of eternity where you weigh the good in your life versus the bad in your life, I got news for you.

[12 : 49] Those scales don't exist. Without the blood of Christ and without our surrender to him, we are hopelessly in debt that we cannot pay back and hopelessly separate it from eternity with God.

It's not about whether you do more good than bad. Sometimes it's over an impression. Oh, boy, he's a good guy.

He's a good guy. It's amazing to me how everyone always speaks of heaven when a decent person dies. And they'll say something like you'll hear in a country song.

You know, he gained his wings. Or God needed another rose in his garden. Please don't tell me that stuff. Please don't. So and so was waiting on him.

I know that those who go on to be with the Lord are in heaven. And I know that when we get to heaven, there'll be a great reunion. But let me tell you what the greatness of heaven will be.

[13 : 53] Seeing the Lord Jesus Christ face to face. That's the greatness of heaven. Let me just be clear. The majority of people that die today die without the Lord.

And it's always been that way. Most of them won't go and follow the Lord. That's why Jesus said there's a wide road that many follow.

And there's a narrow road that only some follow. Good intentions. Many people lean on good intentions. Oh, he meant well. To quote another country song, I hear tell the road to hell is paved with good intentions.

Actually acknowledging the good in yourself and in somebody else can actually be, can have an adverse effect. Because you think you're good enough. It can make somebody think that there's no need for salvation.

But the reality is we're all sinners and that sin has separated us from God. So instead of assuming that your neighbor or your co-worker or your daddy or your granddaddy is saved, if you don't see any fruit in their life, you assume they're lost and then ask them if they're saved.

[15 : 14] If you ask somebody, how did you come to Christ and they're offended by that, that's a red flag. That's a red flag.

If they look at you and tell you, well, I was baptized at the First Baptist Church 30 years ago, that ain't the answer to the question you just asked them. I baptized these children a couple of weeks ago.

I told them before they got up there. I tell it every time. I said, when somebody talks to you about when you got saved or when you became a Christian, don't tell them about this baptism.

Don't talk about that. You talk about when you surrendered your life to the Lord Jesus. And I told them about it. There are two examples. How you got up in the middle of the night and gave your heart and life to the Lord Jesus. And after we'd had this conversation together, you went home and had that conversation with your parents and you gave your heart and life to the Lord Jesus Christ.

That's what you talk about. Then you can tell them. And then after I did that, I was baptized before my church and everybody saw what happened. But don't get those two mixed up, folks. Don't get them out of order and don't get them mixed up.

[16 : 21] You ask somebody, how did you come to Christ? That's not an offensive question. And if it is, they need Christ. I met a man on a doorstep one time and I asked him if he knew the Lord.

He was one of my heroes. I didn't even know him. He's one of my heroes because he's part of the greatest generation. He was a World War II veteran and had fought for our country. And he told me he committed his life.

I'll have to clean this up a little bit. I'm not going to tell you everything he said. But anyway, he said he committed his life to the Lord in a foxhole. He said, Lord, if you'll let me out of here alive, I'll live for you.

And I said, did you mean it? And he just said, I don't know, preacher. I was scared. I said, I appreciate your honesty. I asked him this and I asked you this.

If you were to stand before God today and he were to ask you, why should I let you into my heaven? What do you think you'd say? That old fellow looked at me and said, I think I'd say, please.

[17 : 33] I shared Christ with that man that day. I don't know if he really ever got saved, quite honestly. But a man with good money can easily be lost.

Jesus said in Matthew 23, excuse me, Matthew 19, verse 24, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

That sense of self-sufficiency will ruin a man for all of eternity. A man with good morals can easily remain lost because he thinks he's good enough, but he's not.

But there's also the person that has the good opportunity. A good opportunity but misses out. I've often been bewildered by some questions.

How can a man literally walk with Jesus for over three years and never surrender his life to the Lord? How can he do that? That's hard for me to grasp.

[18 : 38] And it also makes me wonder, and I want you to hear the passion of my heart this morning. It also makes me wonder about many men that I've known over the years that God's allowed me to pastor in every church that I've pastored that never really showed the fruit of being a child of God.

It wasn't that they wasn't in church. I saw them here. They burdened my heart. I prayed for them. But they never really appeared to be connected to the vine of the Lord.

You can easily follow your spouse or your family to church to keep peace at home or to just endure the hour or to leave after years of faithfulness as lost as you've ever been.

And if you're one of those people, men, I want you to know I preached this message on Father's Day for you today so God will wake you up and help you realize that you need to make the greatest decision you've ever made in your life and you're going to have to drop your pride to do that.

You've got to leave it at the door and truly surrender your life to the Lord Jesus Christ. The best way you can be a great father is to commit your life to Christ. The only way a father is great is if he's leading his family to Christ and you can't do that without Christ.

[20 : 03] Judas walked with Christ. He heard sermons of Christ. He watched people get saved. He watched people get healed. He watched people come back to life and the whole time he was stealing from the money bag of the Lord.

John 12, 6 tells us that. The whole time. And as lost as a dime dropped in the depths of the ocean. You say, well how do you know he was never saved?

I know he was never saved because Jesus said in Matthew 26, 24 it would have been better had he never been born.

And that's true for the man that dies without Christ. A lost man would be better to have never been born and that's what Jesus died.

That's why Jesus died to save you. A life committed to Christ is far better than good money. It's far better than good morals. Hey, you can have all that by the way. And a world of difference from play acting in church while missing the greatest opportunities in Christ.

[21 : 26] So I ask you today, do you know the Lord Jesus? Has there ever been a time in your life when you surrender your life to the Lord Jesus Christ and give him control of your life? I want you to know if that's never been the case that today's the day of salvation.

That Christ will save you today. He'll meet you where you are. He'll change your life. He'll empower you with the spirit of God and allow you the strength to live in a way that pleases him even if you're sitting there thinking there ain't no way in the world I could live up to that.

You're right. You couldn't. Neither can I. Neither can any of us. But thank God in Christ with the power of the Holy Spirit of God living within us he enables us to live a life of faithfulness for him.

Maybe you're here and you have accepted the Lord. You know you're a Christian today but the reality is the reality is you know you've got people around you that need Jesus.

Isn't it interesting and I want you to think about this. isn't it interesting that we will not dare have a conversation about the Lord with a friend because we don't want to lose our friendship.

[22 : 42] Ain't that fascinating? I mean think about that and if you really think about it you'll understand that that is actually a satanic strategy.

that actually Satan will convince us to make sure that we don't have gospel conversations with folks because we might offend them and if nobody has a gospel conversation with them they'll never know the gospel.

So will you commit today Christian? Lord will you lay somebody on my heart that needs you that I just need to ask has there ever been a time in your life when you've come to the Lord Jesus?

God will you help me to have the strength to do that very thing? Will you lead that conversation? And I'm just going to tell you having had many of those conversations over the years I promise you that if you'll step out and start the conversation God will take over and take care of it.

You'll be saying stuff you don't even know where it came from. I'll tell you where it came from. It didn't come from you. It came from the Holy Spirit of God leading you. Now listen if you don't know the Lord today we're going to stand and we're going to sing in just a moment you come down and say preacher I need to give my life to Christ.

[24 : 04] I'd love to guide you in that. Maybe you do know the Lord today but you ain't bearing enough fruit in your life. I mean the reality is you're not bearing fruit in your life. There's not evidence in your life. There may be some people in this building wondering if you even know the Lord.

Today will you commit your life to follow God more faithfully? Lord I want to make a difference for you in a world of compromise in a nation that's slippery down a slope of sinfulness and need men of God to stand up to live it out to speak it to be bold what are you afraid of?

You got God on your side you're always a majority you can rest in that. I just want you to walk through the doors God opens and I want you to be sensitive to see Him.

If that means God's leading you to be a part of this church then you come I'd love to guide you in that process. If you've acknowledged Christ in your heart but you've never made that public through baptism you come you do that.

I don't know what God's saying to you I know what He said to me but I just want you to be obedient today as He speaks to your heart and life. Let's pray together. Lord Jesus I love you and I thank you Lord for your word.

[25 : 28] Thank you Lord for the examples that you give us to learn from and I pray dear God that it will make a difference in our lives. Lead us right now I pray. Give us boldness beyond ourselves in Jesus name.

Amen.