Matthew - Commentaries by Paul J. Pascoe

CareLines: Volume 7, Authority

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I am not worthy. . . . For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me.

Matthew 8:8-9

This centurion recognized that the Lord Jesus was a person in a position of authority. He did not feel that he was worthy to have Jesus in his home even though he commanded a platoon of soldiers. He also recognized that just for Jesus to speak was command enough. How is our level of confidence in the Lord? Always remember that when Jesus speaks, things happen.

CareLines: Volume 7, Life

Enter ye in at the strait gate. . . because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life.

Matthew 7:13-14

Men have always come up with various ways to get in favor with God and thus eventually, hopefully, be in heaven. But the Bible teaches plainly that the way to have eternal life in heaven and a full life on earth is through the strait gate, which is Christ. Without Him we cannot possibly get to heaven or find favor with God. Enter in at the strait gate and walk the happy path to heaven.

CareLines: Volume 7, Fasting

But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face.

Matthew 6:17

Once again the Lord is introducing a new practice for Christians. Instead of announcing to everyone that we are abstaining from a certain thing for a period of self-denial, we should do this in private between God and ourselves until our spiritual exercise before God is over. We must never do anything with a spiritual flavor and do it to get recognition or honor by those around. God, who sees in secret, will reward openly - later.

CareLines: Volume 7, Prayer

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray.

Matthew 6:6

Here is something else in a Christian’s life that is not done in the public eye. Prayer is a special, private time between me and God. I don’t need to broadcast to everyone else how pious I am. I don’t need to show (like the Moslems do at their designated prayer times) how devout or religious I am. God wants us to spend spontaneous, quality time alone with Him.

CareLines: Volume 7, Giving

Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

Matthew 6:1

If we do a work for the Lord so that we will get recognition from others, then we lose any reward that God may have given. We need to be very, very humble in what we do and have only two objects in mind - God’s glory and honor, and the blessing of others.

CareLines: Volume 3, Hypocrisy

JULY 11

When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are.

Matthew 6:5

What is a hypocrite? Someone who pretends to be something that they are not. Jesus condemned hypocrisy very strongly simply because the hypocrite put on a show for others to think that he was righteous when, in fact, his heart was not right with God. Are you the same every day of the week, or do you “behave” on Sundays? This is a very searching question and one that needs to be answered even by those of us who are not young any more.

CareLines: Volume 3, Treasure in Heaven

APRIL 9

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth . . . but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven . . . for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Matthew 6:19-21

The late Sonny Liston, ex-heavyweight boxing champion of the world, used to say: “Everyone wants to get to heaven; but nobody wants to die.” There are God-given attachments to loved ones which we are not expected to want to sever; and we are not expected to want to pass through the pains of death; however, Mr. Liston’s statement is a commentary on where people have their treasure and their heart. Would you like to have a greater longing for heaven? Transfer more of your treasure there.

CareLines: Volume 2, Treasures

MAT 6:21

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Matt. 6:21

If you read verses 19 and 21 you will see the foolishness and futility of storing up treasures on earth where everything will be destroyed. When we value something so highly that we think of it as a “treasure”, then all our love and affection is poured into that thing. And so our thoughts and energies and affections should all be centered in heaven, not on earth.

CareLines: Volume 2, He Knows

MAT 6:8

Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him.

Matt. 6:8

George Mueller, who cared for many orphans during the last century, assembled his “family” at breakfast one morning and thanked the Lord for their meal - knowing that there was not one bit of food anywhere in the house. Just as he finished praying a knock came at the door. A bakery wagon had broken down outside the home and the delivery man wanted to give all the food in it to George Mueller. “Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.” Isa. 65:24.

CareLines: Volume 2, Salt

MAT 5:13

Ye are the salt of the earth.

Matt. 5:13

Most of us have a tendency to want to do things that draw at least some attention away from others and towards ourselves. But we are supposed to be like salt. Salt works invisibly. Its value comes from being soluble, since it gives flavor only when it disappears! Remember that the more you “dissolve” as you try to serve the Lord, the more you will help others to enjoy the sweetness of His name.

CareLines: Volume 7, Replaced

Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, He departed into Galilee.

Matthew 4:12

Why didn't the Lord go and visit John, or try to plead his cause and get him out of prison? Because John's work was done. He had spoken the truth and was condemned because of it. He had performed the most significant work of any Old Testament prophet in that he had introduced the Lord to the Jewish nation. But for the most part they rejected his testimony. John then steps aside and lets Jesus have His place as the Saviour of the world. John was faithful unto death too, just as Jesus was. He was willing to be hidden while the Lord came into public view.

CareLines: Volume 2, Worship: MAT 2:2

MAT 2:2

Where is He? . . . For we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him.

Matt. 2:2

Some wise men from an eastern country had seen a very unique star in the sky. They must have studied and puzzled over it for some time and then figured out that this star meant that the King of the Jews had been born. They went to Israel to find Him. And they did find Him - in a stable of an inn. They fell down and worshipped the One for whom they had travelled so far. We can worship that same One today. We worship Him as our God and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. We worship Him as a glorified, exalted Man in heaven. We worship Him because He died to save us.

CareLines: Volume 2, Worship

MAT 2:11

And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child . . . and fell down, and worshipped Him.

Matt. 2:11

Seeing Jesus was enough to make the wise men fall before Him in worship. I know there are a lot of distractions when we meet around the Lord for worship. But try something. Try to see the Lord in your mind as He hung on Calvary, as He suffered for your sin, as He cried out to His God, as He gave up His life. If you can be there - right at Calvary and see it all happen, it really helps you to appreciate what He did. Worship will come automatically.

CareLines: Volume 7, Resurrection

Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

Matthew 28:6

Evidence of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus was found in the empty tomb. Mary Magdalene and another woman also called Mary, who had been standing by the cross of the Lord as He died, now stand at the mouth of His empty tomb. A message of hope and joy is given to them by an angel who sees them there. "Go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead." What a message! The One who had raised several dead people to life now has been raised by the power of the Father and is going to Galilee to meet His closest friends. Our faith is centered on the resurrection.

CareLines: Volume 7, Witness

Truly this was the Son of God.

Matthew 27:54

One man at the crucifixion was convinced of who Jesus was. That was the centurion. He had witnessed the mocking, the beating, the nailing, the three hours of darkness, the last loud cry, and the earthquake, and he witnesses here that he considered that Jesus was the Son of God. Whether or not he actually believed in the Lord Jesus as his own Saviour we won't know until we get to heaven. But there is no doubt that Jesus was who He said He was. He is indeed the only Son of God.

CareLines: Volume 3, Cross, The

MARCH 29

Joseph . . . went to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus.

Matt. 27:57,58

Also Nicodemus . . . brought . . . myrrh and aloes.

John 19:39

Two loving friends of the Lord took His body down from the cross and buried Him in a new tomb. Normally one who died as a criminal received a criminal's grave. God saw to it that Jesus was buried in a rich man's tomb. After this the world never saw Jesus again. The next time they do, it will be in judgment. Woe to those who condemned Jesus and never repented of it - their eternal future will be in the lake of fire.

CareLines: Volume 3, Cross, The

MARCH 22

And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

Matthew 27:51

One of the effects of the death of the Lord Jesus on the cross was the tearing of the veil in the temple. God tore it - from the top to the bottom. This showed that the Lord's work was done and accepted and the way for us to go into the holy presence of God was now open. Happy day. Blessed privilege.

The veil is rent, our souls draw near,Unto a throne of grace.The merits of the Lord appear; They fill the holy place.

CareLines: Volume 3, Cross, The

MAT 27:50

Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

Matt. 27:50

Three of the gospels record that just before He died Jesus cried with a loud voice. Only John records what He said. "It is finished!" Imagine those three words ringing from Calvary's hill in the ears of all. The work was done. Jesus had taken the punishment for sin. And then He gave up His life. What a infinite price was paid to redeem us. Nothing can compare to it. But it was all done. There's nothing more to do - just believe.

CareLines: Volume 3, Cross, The

MAT 27:46

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice.

Matt. 27:46

Jesus, the Creator of the universe, had been hanging on the cross for about six hours, the last three in total darkness. No one knows or will know the suffering of those three hours - only God. He punished His own Son for our sins during that time. Is it any wonder that Jesus cried out? He cried in a loud voice - He was still in control of His life. What was the cry? Perhaps the most awful cry ever to leave the lips of a man: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" There was no answer. We know it though - because of our sin. What a cost! Let's thank Him again today.

CareLines: Volume 3, Cross, The

MAT 27:45

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.

Matt. 27:45

Three hours of darkness - in the middle of the day. From noon until 3 p.m. God shut out the view of the cross. No one could see the suffering that Jesus went through on account of sin. There was no more mocking or scornful looks. Absolutely alone, forsaken by man and God, Jesus was punished for our sins. We will never know the depth of all His intense suffering. We will never need to know, because Jesus suffered in our place. Let's praise and thank Him very specially today as we remember His death on the cross.

CareLines: Volume 3, Pilate

MAT 27:19

Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him.

Matt. 27:19

Pilate’s wife sent a very clear message to her husband to leave Jesus alone - to not condemn Him. Pilate did not listen to his wife’s warning and history records that he soon lost his place of power and honor as well as his life - possibly by suicide. After death is the judgment. Pilate now waits righteous judgment by the very One he judged unrighteously. “What do you think of Christ?” is a question that Jesus asked a few days before His death. Pilate’s answer determined his destiny. Your eternal destiny also hangs on your answer to that question.

CareLines: Volume 3, Cross, The

MAT 27:40

If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

Matt. 27:40

Was Jesus the Son of God? Absolutely. No question about it. Could He have come down from the cross? Yes, He could have. Why didn’t He? Because His love for you and me was SO STRONG that it kept Him on the cross. If Jesus had come down from the cross there would be no heaven for us. The Lord Jesus didn’t need to prove who He was by coming down from the cross. No, He proved who He was and proved His great love by staying there, by dying, shedding His blood, and rising from the dead after three days. Hallelujah, what a Saviour!

CareLines: Volume 3, Cross, The

MAT 27:33-35

And when they were come to . . . a place of a skull, they gave Him vinegar to drink. . . . And they crucified Him.

Matt. 27:33-35

Last Lord’s Day we considered the Lord’s scourging. Today we come to a place of a skull. We’re at Calvary now. We see the soldiers giving Jesus vinegar to drink (which he rejected). Then we see them nail Him to the cross and drop the cross into a hole in the ground. He groans as the cross hits bottom. His bones are jolted out of joint. Man has done his worst to the Lord. But now He has to face God about the sin question. The worst is not over yet. The cost of our redemption was VERY high.

O Calvary! blest Calvary!’Twas there the Saviour died for me.

CareLines: Volume 3, Cross, The

MAT 27:26

Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified.

Matt. 27:26

I want you to know what scourging is. The victim was stripped and tied in a bending posture to a pillar, or stretched on a frame. The scourge was made of leather thongs, weighted with sharp pieces of bone or lead, which tore the flesh of both the back and the breast. People sometimes died as a result. Jesus endured a scourging. But the price for sin was paid in the three hours of darkness on the cross - far worse than the scourging. Think about that today when you remember the Lord in His death.

CareLines: Volume 7, Remember

Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples.

Matthew 26:26

Just before the Lord was taken and crucified, He wanted His disciples to be reminded of Him in His death for them. So He instituted a simple remembrance for that purpose. First He took a loaf of bread and, after breaking it, He gave it to them to eat as a reminder of His body given in death on the cross. After this they drank from a vessel of wine in remembrance of His blood shed on the cross. This is so simple, yet so full of meaning to those who are truly saved.

CareLines: Volume 2, Watching

MAT 26:40-41

What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?

Matt. 26:40, 41

The Lord Jesus was at the worst crisis of His life on earth - facing the forsaking of God while He was punished for sins that He did not commit - our sins. With the cross just hours away He asked His three closest disciples to pray with Him. They fell asleep. But He did not gripe at them. Instead He asks again for them to watch and pray. How easily we become distracted. As we remember Jesus in His death today, let's be careful to "watch and pray."

CareLines: Volume 2, Depression: 4

MAT 26:37

And [Jesus] took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and deeply depressed.

Matt. 26:37 J.N.D.

Wow! You mean Jesus, the Son of God, got depressed? He sure did. Perhaps in a different way from you and me, but nonetheless He felt deep depression because of what He was about to go through - to be forsaken of God and to be punished for our sins. So He asked for it to be taken away. Praise God, He went through with it, but for many reading this who get fits of depression, remember that Jesus understands loneliness and He sympathizes with you in a way that no one else ever could. Jesus prayed earnestly to God. You can, too.

CareLines: Volume 3, Service

NOVEMBER 2

Well done, thou good and faithful servant.

Matthew 25:21

Even faithfulness in small things will get this reward. The Lord is not concerned with how much you do for Him. But He is concerned that whatever you do is done for Him, because He told you to, and in genuine love for Him, without grumbling. Then, no matter how small the service may seem to you, He will say "Well done" when you meet Him.

CareLines: Volume 3, Ready

OCTOBER 20

And they that were ready went in with him.

Matthew 25:10

The Lord will reward readiness. To be not ready will mean being left behind - for judgment. Get ready NOW. If you have never taken Jesus as your Saviour, do so today. Tomorrow may never come for you.

CareLines: Volume 3, Reward

OCTOBER 10

For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance.

Matthew 25:29

Rewards will be given to those that have. Have what? you ask. Eternal life; treasure in heaven. And to those, and those only, will more be given. Those who don't have eternal life will lose everything that they have obtained in this life and will go into eternity absolutely destitute. Only their memories will remain. Are you going to get more? You will if you believe in Jesus.

CareLines: Volume 2, Service: MAT 25:21

MAT 25:21

Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things.

Matt. 25:21

No service done for the Lord will lose its reward. Here, in a story that the Lord told, a servant had been given five talents (pieces of money) which he had traded and doubled in value. His reward was to be ruler over many things. We too have been given something from the Lord to either discard, hide, or use. If we use what He has given in quiet service for Him, He will say to us, as in our verse today, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” It will be wonderful to hear His “Well done!” That will mean more than any reward we can get for things we do in this world. Serve - and wait for the Lord’s “Well done!”

CareLines: Volume 2, Service: MAT 25:40

MAT 25:40

Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.

Matt. 25:40

Any service, no matter how small, or toward whom the service is performed, no matter how unknown (in the eyes of the world) the recipient may be, the Lord makes a note of the service and will reward it in a coming day. It is wonderful to realize that the Lord forgets nothing, and everything done for Him will be recorded and rewarded. Keep up the work!

CareLines: Volume 7, Service

Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.

Matthew 25:40

We often hear the question, “But what can I do for the Lord?” Maybe you have asked that yourself. To serve other Christians is to serve the Lord. Is there another saint who needs help? Give it. Is there an older, lonely Christian whom nobody visits? Go visit them. Just sit and let them talk. They get lonely by themselves all day. There are so many areas where you can fill a need. And it doesn’t take any talent - just the giving of some of your time. Let’s try this year to serve the Lord by being a servant to His people.

CareLines: Volume 3, Service

OCTOBER 26

Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

Matthew 24:46

There is a future blessing for each believer when the Lord comes and He finds us doing the work He has given us to do. Often we become occupied with what everyone else is or isn’t doing, and we forget that we are responsible to the Lord for our own work for Him. But besides that, there is a present blessing to be busy in the Lord’s work. It brings great happiness and peace to your heart.

CareLines: Volume 2, Care: Part 1

MAT 20:32

Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you?

Matt. 20:32

Jesus cared for those who were in trouble. And when Someone as busy as Jesus “stood still” then you know that He cared. Those who were blind asked for their sight. He gave it. And they followed Him. Yes, Jesus will stand still for you. He cares and wants to help you.

CareLines: Volume 3, Forgiveness

APRIL 30

Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee?

Matthew 18:33

In this similitude of the kingdom the debtor who was forgiven the 10,000 talent debt would not forgive his fellow servant who owed him 100 pence. Our Lord does not say that you ought to forgive your brother because the offense which he has committed against you is insignificant;

a 100 pence debt was a very large debt in those days. You may be very deeply hurt by something that someone else has done to you; the Lord understands that. He only asks you to consider that which He has forgiven you.

CareLines: Volume 2, Forgiving Spirit, A

MAT 18:35

COL 3:13

Forgiving one another . . . even as Christ forgave you.

Col. 3:13

From your hearts forgive . . . every one his brother their trespasses.

Matt. 18:35

Think right now if you are guilty of having an unforgiving spirit against someone. Get down on your knees before the Lord and judge that right now. (Remember what the Lord Jesus has forgiven you.) If you have refused to forgive that person, then go to them, or telephone them, and confess it to them. What does this do? It stops a root of bitterness from growing that will adversely affect many others. One of the most effective herbicides that kills a root of bitterness is labeled “FORGIVING SPIRIT”. The application instructions say, “USE LIBERALLY - WHEN NEEDED!”

CareLines: Volume 3, Jesus Only

MAY 31

And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

Matthew 17:8

Three of the Lord’s disciples had just experienced one of the most spectacular events in their lives. But they didn’t realize just how important Jesus was in the eyes and thoughts of God until Peter, James and John saw Jesus only. Everything else, no matter how wonderful, was shut out. When we meet with the Lord to remember Him in His death, is He the only person we see? Quite often we are occupied with the happenings of yesterday or last week. Let’s really try on this special day to shut out everything else and see Jesus only.

Hello from the CareLines desk!

Not much to say this time except that we’re still expecting the Lord to come pretty soon. Are you all ready? We pray that not one of our readers will be left behind on the next, most momentous event that will take place in this world - the day all Christians everywhere will be snatched away without a second’s warning. You will get NO second chance. Make sure you’re ready - NOW.

Thanks to Dan Hayhoe for help this issue.

CareLines: Volume 2, Worship: MAT 17:8

MAT 17:8

When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

Matt. 17:8

What a sight! Three scared men looked up and saw only Jesus there on the top of the mountain with themselves. If you get a view of Jesus only, young person, life will take on a different perspective. As the song says, “And the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace.” Jesus brightens the view of heaven and the things of this life seem less important. As you meet with others today in the worship of the Lord, let Him lift your eyes up so that you can see only Him. You’ll worship - you won’t be able to help it.

CareLines: Volume 7, Salvation

What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Matthew 16:26

Nothing! A man’s soul lives on even after his body dies. Our souls have infinite value. Nothing in this world can be exchanged for our souls, because nothing is worth that much. Jesus died to save us. His blood alone has enough value to redeem our souls from destruction. Man has devised countless ways to obtain salvation, but none has worked. Trust in Jesus as your Saviour and be assured that you have eternal life.

CareLines: Volume 3, Fear

MARCH 31

But when [Peter] saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid.

Matthew 14:30

It’s interesting that it wasn’t the waves, or the walking on the water that scared Peter, but the wind. Satan will “blow” on our faith too, to see if he can scare us. The winds of adversity put our faith to the test - and often we are afraid. Why? Because we’re watching the wind, not Jesus.

Just a little bit of faith and you can remove a mountain;A little faith and you’ll calm the troubled sea;And when the storms of life are pouring downupon you,Reach out your hand of faith - and trust in Me.

Dear CARELINES friends!

As I write this hello there are only 10 days left to 1991. Another year almost gone. And the Lord, in His infinite patience, is still waiting.

What a remarkable number of changes have occurred this year. The U.S.S.R. is no longer. Europe is becoming a united force in the world. Can the Lord’s coming be far away? I hardly think so. Keep looking up. He’s coming soon.

Thanks this issue to Paul Hadley for helping with many of the articles.

CareLines: Volume 2, Worship

MAT 14:33

Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped Him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

Matt. 14:33

Worship was the response of the disciples when they saw the power of the Lord Jesus. But they didn’t worship Him because He was powerful, but because He was the Son of God. They worshipped Him for who He was. You may worship the Lord because He was a good man, Someone who was kind, Someone who could perform miracles. But you should worship Him because He is God’s Son. Let’s worship Him in spirit and in truth today.

CareLines: Volume 2, Unfruitfulness

MAT 13:22

The deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

Matt. 13:22

Satan is very busy trying to stifle the words of the scriptures in your heart and mind. One of his tricks is to get you thinking about, and if possible obsessed with, money. The world has plenty to offer - plenty of ways to become totally occupied with money and being rich. The lottery is one technique the devil has developed. The Bible calls this “the deceitfulness of riches.” Beware, young Christian, that you don’t become an unfruitful worker for the Lord because of your occupation with money.

CareLines: Volume 3, Words

JULY 3

For by thy words thou shalt be justified.

Matthew 12:37

We need to watch our words. Our verse goes on to say, “And by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” God never forgets. If you have never confessed the Lord as Saviour, then you will be condemned by your words. God’s name is used in vain all around us. Some people use the Lord’s name as everyday vocabulary. By their words they will be condemned. Is the name of Jesus special to you? Do you speak His name with reverence? If you also believe in Him, then by your words you will be justified.

HELP

CareLines: Volume 3, Jonah

MAT 12:41

The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonah.

Matt. 12:41

Jonah so despised the Gentile city of Nineveh that he tried to escape from the Lord rather than preach there. The storm and the great fish were used by the Lord to make Jonah obey. But in his heart Jonah was angry with the Lord for not destroying the city. God used a gourd and a worm to speak to Jonah's heart and He appealed to Jonah for the many simple people and children who would have been destroyed if there was no mercy. History records that Jonah's tomb is in the city of Nineveh. It would seem that not only was Jonah's heart won to the people but that he lived out his life ministering to them.

CareLines: Volume 2, Witnessing: MAT 10:32

MAT 10:32

Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven.

Matt. 10:32

"How did Jack have such courage to speak of Jesus to everyone?" questioned a high-school boy to another as they were walking from the funeral for their fellow-student, Jack. Jack's uncle, walking just ahead of them, overheard that question. He turned and said, "I think we have the answer right here in this slip of paper found yesterday in Jack's Bible." It contained several verses on confession with the mouth, and not being ashamed of Jesus, and then this: "Dear God, please help me this day to own Jesus Christ as my Lord always, and everywhere, and to fear none but Thee. Amen."

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