

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Message Two

The Highest Standard of Morality

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:31-32, 35, 68-69, 75, 78-79; 2:40, 52

I. We need to understand clearly what is meant by *the highest standard of morality*:

- A. The highest standard of morality is the standard of life required by God—a life in which the divine attributes are expressed in the human virtues—Matt. 5:48.
- B. The highest standard of morality is the living of the One—the Lord Jesus Christ as the Man-Savior—whose life was a composition of God with the divine attributes and man with the human virtues—Luke 1:35.
- C. A living where the human life is filled with the divine life and the human virtues are strengthened and enriched by the divine attributes is what we call the highest standard of morality—6:35; 7:36-50:
 - 1. God is expressed in the living that is according to the highest standard of morality—5:12-16.
 - 2. If we understand this matter, we will understand the basic and crucial principle followed by Luke in writing his Gospel—8:39.

II. In the Gospel of Luke we see the kind of man that God intended to have in Genesis 1 and 2—Luke 8:39; Gen. 1:26-27; 2:7, 9:

- A. God's intention was to have a God-man—Luke 1:68-69, 78-79:
 - 1. The man in Genesis 1 was merely a God-created man, not yet a God-man—vv. 26-27.
 - 2. God's intention was that the man created by Him would receive Him, as signified by the tree of life, and thereby become a God-man—2:7, 9.
- B. One day God Himself became a man named Jesus, conceived of the divine essence and born of the human essence—Matt. 1:20-21; Luke 1:31-32:
 - 1. The Lord Jesus, the God-man, is a composition of the divine essence with all the divine attributes and the human essence with all the human virtues—vv. 35, 75; 2:40, 52.
 - 2. When He was on earth, the Man-Savior lived a life that was the mingling of the divine attributes and the human virtues; this is the highest standard of morality—vv. 40, 52.

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III. The subject of the Gospel of Luke is the Man-Savior and His salvation in the highest standard of morality—1:31-32, 35, 68-69, 78-79:

- A. The Gospel of Luke reveals that in the Man-Savior we have the mingling of the divine attributes with the human virtues to produce the highest standard of morality—v. 35:
 - 1. The Man-Savior and His salvation are both in the highest standard of morality—2:52; 7:11-17.
 - 2. According to the Gospel of Luke, our Savior lives, behaves, and works in the highest standard of morality, and His salvation is carried out in the highest standard of morality—10:25-37.
- B. The record in the Gospel of Luke has a particular characteristic—to reveal in the Man-Savior the mingling of the divine attributes with the human virtues to produce the highest standard of morality for the New Testament jubilee—1:31-32, 35, 42, 68-69, 75, 78-79; 4:16-19.

IV. The Gospel of Luke portrays the Lord Jesus as a God-man, the Man-Savior, with the highest standard of morality—9:51-56; 13:10-17; 19:1-10:

- A. In the Gospel of Luke three categories of things reveal that the Lord Jesus, the Man-Savior, lived in the highest standard of morality, with the human virtues strengthened and enriched by the divine attributes:
 - 1. Gospel messages—4:16-21; 7:41-43; 12:14-21; 13:2-5.
 - 2. Gospel parables—10:30-37; 14:16-24; 15:3-32; 18:9-14.
 - 3. Gospel cases—7:36-50; 13:10-17; 16:19-31; 19:1-10; 23:39-43.
- B. When the Lord Jesus went into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil, He was the highest kind of man—a God-man in the highest standard of morality—4:1-13:
 - 1. The Lord Jesus stood as such a man before the devil—vv. 2-4.
 - 2. In the Gospel of Luke the temptation to worship the devil in exchange for the kingdoms of the earth is given in detail; this also indicates the highest standard of morality—vv. 5-8.
 - 3. The Man-Savior, the One who lived in the highest

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standard of morality, could not be seduced or moved by anything—vv. 9-13.

4. Only a life in the highest standard of morality—that is, a life in which the divine attributes are expressed in the human virtues—can withstand such a temptation.
- C. In 22:47—23:25 the Lord Jesus is portrayed as the true God and a real man:
1. The God-man was arrested, mocked, blasphemed, despised, and judged, but as He passed through all this, He is fully portrayed as having the highest standard of morality, as possessing the human virtues with the divine attributes and with the all-surpassing divine splendor.
 2. As the true God and a real and proper man, He was fully qualified to be the Substitute for the sinners for whom He intended to die—23:34, 43.

V. The Lord's teaching in 6:17-49 gives us a clear view of the highest standard of morality:

- A. The Man-Savior has the kind of life described in verses 17 through 49.
- B. Actually, Christ Himself is the highest standard of morality, for He is the man created by God in Genesis 1:26 plus the tree of life mentioned in Genesis 2:9.
- C. The highest standard of morality is now a person living in us and making it possible for us to live Christ—Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:20-21a.
- D. The Man-Savior's teaching concerning the highest standard of morality is based on the divine life with its expression, the divine word—Luke 6:35, 47-48:
 1. The living that is according to the highest standard of morality issues from the divine life with which we have been born of the Most High—v. 35.
 2. The Lord's word in verses 43 and 44 reveals life as the source and living as the issue; His disciples are the good trees with the divine life, and out from this life issues a living that is the expression of God.
 3. The Lord's word is the foundation of our being, behavior, and work—vv. 47-48.
 4. We can have the highest standard of morality by the divine life and through the divine word—John 6:63.