“***Everything Secret Will Become Known***” by S. Finlan, for The First Church

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**Matt 10:25b–33, 39**

25b“If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

26 “So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. 27What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. 28Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body. 29Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. 30And even the hairs of your head are all counted. 31So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

32 “Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; 33but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

. . . 39“Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”

The religious authorities were grossly unfair to Jesus. Here he is warning his followers that they will be unfair to them, as well. If they flung the name of a demon at Jesus, how much more will they malign Jesus’ followers? But don’t worry, he is saying. “Nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered” (Matt 10:26).

The truth will come out. Jesus offers comfort to those who are mistreated now but who have spiritual goodness within. He assures them that they are valuable and that they are thoroughly *known*. This is good news for people with a clear conscience. We are happy to know that we are completely known, through and through. In fact, we offer ourselves to God, without hiding. We have learned not to be afraid. We have come to trust God’s judgment.

Worldly status and reputation are often directly the opposite of one’s standing in the eyes of God, and in the afterlife. Some people live a lie and seem to get away with it in this lifetime. A lot of people are very good at P.R., at cultivating their image and reputation in a way that gains approval. But all of their secret dealings, all of their backroom agreements, all of their unholy alliances will be made known, in the next life, if not in this one. When we read the promise that everything hidden will be revealed, we have to include the afterlife, because that is our *next* step.

All lies will be exposed. All phony P.R. will blow away like chaff, and the facts will be revealed. Some who seem strong here will be seen for the feeble and wispy characters that they really are, while some who seem insignificant by this world’s standards will be revealed to be substantial and significant by spiritual standards. It is interesting to think about this even on this earth, where appearances are deceiving. If you are spiritually insightful, you can discern when someone is wise, and is a person of substance. You might also perceive that someone else is full of bluster and ego, but is really quite empty. Your perceptions are probably accurate, for “many who are first will be last, and the last will be first” (Matt 19:30; Mark 10:31). As Isaiah put it, “The haughty eyes of people shall be brought low, and the pride of everyone shall be humbled; and the Lord alone will be exalted on that day” (2:11).

One’s wealth and status in this world are completely irrelevant to one’s spiritual standing. But even one’s public reputation as dignified and holy might be completely false. At one point, Jesus says to the chief priests and elders, “the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you” (Matt 21:31), because they claimed to be doing God’s will, but were not. So we should not follow the world’s ranking of people. Don’t be led astray by the shallow judgment of the world. We are *in* the world, but not *of* the world (John 17:16, 18).

We learn not to lose hope or confidence if we are unfairly maligned; they also maligned our Master. We can learn to develop a sense of self that is less subject to the opinion of others, and less shaped by painful experiences of the past. We learn that who we *were* is nothing compared to who we are *becoming*.

It is God’s judgment that matters. As it says in Colossians (3:3), you can trust that “your life is hidden with Christ in God.” What does that mean? First, it means our destiny is in Christ’s safe-keeping, and thus, entrusted to God. The author goes on to say “When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory” (3:4). We are being told that Christ is our pioneer and leader, and we follow him into glory. If we are attached to him, we will be brought into eternal life by him. That is the inheritance of faith. We experience a life transformation through faith in Jesus. We are grateful to him for opening the way for us, and we express our loyalty and gratitude to him.

What about the last saying in our Matthew passage? It is one of the hard sayings, or perhaps it’s just a paradoxical one. “Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it” (Matt 10:39). Among other things, it is saying that, even if we are killed, our souls are in his care. We will be awakened and “found” anew, although we will still be “ourselves.” The saying has to do with the willingness to surrender and trust. The one who finds his life only to lose it, is the one who clings to his worldly ego and defends it at all costs. The one who loses his life but then finds it is the one who thoroughly trusts Jesus, and who can let go of ego. Thus, it is a timeless saying and concerns not only our testimony to Jesus, but our whole stance in life. It ties in with the previous lesson that learning to depend on Jesus can transform your life.

The story of Lynn Elwell, who works for the American Bible Society, can illustrate this saying. She had a mentally ill mother, and she grew up with low self esteem her whole life. She tried to fill the void with boyfriends and with drugs, but she still found herself miserable, and started contemplating suicide. Then a friend introduced her to Christ, and she found answers in the Bible. She had a do-over in life when she decided to develop a relationship with God and rely on the Bible. She says two verses that greatly comfort her are “for God, everything is possible” (Matt 19:26), and “Anyone who belongs to Christ is a new person” (2 Cor 5:17) (<https://blog.bible/bible-blog/entry/4-bible-verses-for-restoring-your-self-esteem>).

All her efforts to find herself through pleasure just contributed to her decline. It is only when she lost herself and decided to trust Jesus that she found herself. She found that her life was hid with Christ, and she accepted that. *Acceptance* and *transcendence* are key ingredients in today’s lesson. Accept that certain parts of your life are meant to fall away and be lost. Even if it feels that you are falling apart, accept that God is helping you cast off and transcend the old life, and to start growing into your new self, a person dedicated to goodness. Losing your old life, you gain the new, divine life of light and mercy.

The truth about all things hidden being revealed also involves acceptance and transcendence—acceptance that some things are unfair down here, but recognizing that this will be transcended when everything is made known. Truth will reign. And you transcend the world here and now whenever truth reigns in your heart. Truth overcomes the world.