TITLE: ALWAYS and NEVER

TEXT: Duet. 12:28; Ps. 119:132, 5:3, 9:10; Heb. 13:5-6;

Mt. 28:19-20; Ps. 109:15; Hosea 7:2; Heb. 3:18-19, 10-11;

Mt. 7:21-23; Rom. 10:11; Rev. 3:5

INTRODUCTION: This morning I want to talk about two of the most amazing words in our English vocabulary.

 Those two words are: Always and Never.

 They can be of the most wonderful of words or the most devastating of words, depending on the context in which they are used.

 One thing that comes to mind where these two words, Always and Never, can be of the most wonderful, yet have a tendency to become the most devastating in our world, is in the covenant of marriage.

 Many times, within the marriage vows these two words are either used or implied.

“I Take you, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness or in health till death do us part”.…

 Or,” I will always be there for you and will never leave you…..We will be together always or until death do us part.”

 In this context these two words are wonderful….

 However, statistically, in our nation today around 33% of those who will be married will end up divorced.

 I think the percentage used to be higher than that and I wish that was good news, but the fact is, more and more people are choosing to just live together without getting married so when they may split up they are not counted in this number.

 In things like divorce these two words, always and never, can be very devastating words can’t they?

 I never want to see you again! We will always be apart from this time on!

 Even if not spoken this is what is implied…

 Always and never are two words that offer us a great deal of hope and we would like to think that we could always be happy and always have successful marriages that would never end and that we would never have a care in the world.

 But the reality of the situation, in living in a world that has fallen to sin, is that we won’t always be happy and there will be times that we fail in life and sometimes may feel like our life will never be good again.

 But one place that we can find that these two words are always wonderful ones is in the promises of God to His children. And that is what I want to focus on this morning.

 One such promise we find in the book of:

**Deuteronomy 12:28(NIV)**  **28Be careful to obey all these regulations I am giving you, so that it may always go well with you and your children after you, because you will be doing what is good and right in the eyes of the LORD your God.**

 **Be careful to obey all these regulations I am giving you, so that it may always go well with you and your children after you…**

The Hebrew word for Always used here is:

***o-lawm'***

 **Generally time *out* *of* *mind* (past or future), that is, *eternity*; *always*, continuance, eternal, ever lasting, perpetual, (+ without end).**

 When we are careful to live our lives in obedience to Gods Word, doing what is right in His eyes, the promise is that it may always go well with us and our children after us.

 I believe that the promise, as it pertains to our children, is that they have a tendency to model in their lives what they have learned at home from their parents…

 If a parent lives their life in obedience to Gods word the child is more likely to do the same when they get older, and if they do, the promise becomes a reality for them also.

**Psalms 119:132(NIV)**  **132 Turn to me and have mercy on me, as you always do to those who love your name.**

 God will always have mercy on those who love His name…

 Unfortunately the opposite can be true also.

 If we live our life in disobedience to God, especially as a Christian, “always” may take a negative connotation.

 After Kind David’s sin with Bathsheba and before his repentance for that sin David says this in:
**Psalms 51:3(NIV)**  **3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.**

David was pretty successful in covering up his sin—which was a pretty great sin to cover…

 First, he had committed adultery with the wife of one of the men in his army who was out fighting David’s battles.

 She becomes pregnant and sends word to the king of her condition---She is pregnant, and her husband has been gone for months now so it is evident he is not the father but King David is.

 The urgency of Bathsheba’s note to the king was in that adultery was punishable by death by stoning according to the Law of Moses. She nor the King were exempt from that law.

 So, in David’s attempt to cover up “the crime”, if you will, he sends for Bathsheba’s husband, Uriah, to come back from the battlefield with a report on how the battle is going.

 After Uriah gives the King his report David urges him to go home to see his wife, knowing that Uriah would want to sleep with her after being away from home for so long, and then when the child was born he would think that the child was his but just came a little early.

 When David gets up the next morning and steps out of the palace, he finds Uriah there asleep with his servants.

 He asked Uriah why he didn’t go home to take pleasure with his wife and Uriah responds: *“Far be it from me to do such a wicked thing and go home to take pleasure with my wife when my men are lying in the open field”.*

 David tried the same thing the next night but first has a personal party with Uriah getting him drunk thinking that in a drunken state Uriah would surely go home to his hot wife.

 The next morning Uriah is once again found sleeping with the Kings savants on the palace steps…

 So, feeling he has no other options David sends a sealed letter back with Uriah to give to his commander Joab that reads: “*place Uriah in the heat of the battle where the fighting is the fiercest and then withdraw from him so he is struck down and dies”.*

 And that is exactly what happens….

David waits till Bathsheba’s time of mourning is over then takes her to be one of his wives…

 Cover-up complete! No one will ever know!

Not quite true—God knew and most importantly David, a man after Gods own heart, knew.

 **For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.**

 The good news is that David sincerely repents, God forgives, and David is restored in relationship with his God…

 Which leads David to speak of the other great word we will talk about and that is never.

**Psalms 9:10(NIV)
10 Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you.**

**You, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you.**

The Apostle Paul speaks of this in:

**Hebrews 13:5-6(NIV)
5Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.”£
6So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?”**

**God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you**

The Greek word for Never is:

***oo* *may***

***not* *at* *all*:—any more, at all, by (no) means, never, in no case, (not at all, in any wise).**

**God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you**

 Charles Spurgeon once used this illustration:

 “There is a young girl in heaven now, once a member of this church. I went with one of my beloved deacons to see her when she was very near her departure. She was in the last stage of tuberculosis.

 Fair and sweetly beautiful she looked, and I think I never heard such syllables as those which fell from that girl’s lips.

 She had had disappointments, and trials, and troubles, but all these she had not a word to say about, except that she blessed God for them; they had brought her nearer to the Savior.

 And when we asked her whether she was not afraid of dying, ‘No,’ she said, ‘the only thing I fear is this, I am afraid of living, lest my patience should wear out. I have not said an impatient word yet, sir; I hope I shall not. It is sad to be so very weak, but I think if I had my choice, I would rather be here than be in good health, for it is very precious to me; I know that my Redeemer liveth, and I am waiting for the moment when he shall send his chariot of fire to take me up to him.’

 I put the question, ‘Have you not any doubts?’ ‘No, none, sir; why should I? I clasp my arms around the neck of Christ.’

 ‘And have not you any fear about your sins?’ ‘No, sir, they are all forgiven; I trust the Savior’s precious blood.’

 ‘And do you think that you will be as brave as this when you come actually to die?’ ‘Not if he leaves me, sir, but he will never leave me, for he said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee’”

 What a wonderful truth to come to know… That when we come to Christ for the forgiveness of our sins and ask Him into our heart to be the Lord and Savior of our life that those words become a reality in our life….

 **“Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.**

Jesus said much the same thing in:
**Matthew 28:19-20(NIV)**  **19Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,**  **20and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”**

**Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.**

Never and always can be very wonderful words when used in the context of our relationship with God can’t they?

 **Be careful to obey all these regulations I am giving you, so that it may always go well with you and your children after you…**

**Turn to me and have mercy on me, as you always do to those who love your name.**

**You, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you.**

**God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you**

**Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.**

Always and never, used in this context, are among the most wonderful and comforting of words we will ever hear.

 But apart from Christ they can be among the most devastating words we will ever hear…

When speaking of those who don’t know God as Lord and Savior David says this:
**Psalms 109:15(NIV)
15 May their sins always remain before the LORD, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth.**

**Hosea 7:2(NIV)**  **2 but they do not realize that I remember all their evil deeds. Their sins engulf them; they are always before me.**

 The fact of the matter is if our sins have not been forgiven through a personal relationship with Christ than our **sins always remain before the LORD.**

 Why should that be important to us? Because if our sin is always before the Lord than He must one day judge that sin. And the final judgment for that sin will be eternal death in the lake of fire, literal hell.

 Jesus often gave stern warning about not coming to believe in Him and having a personal, saving relationship with Himself whereby one’s sins could be forgiven and removed from the sight of God.

**Hebrews 3:18-19(NIV)**  **18And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed£?
19So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.**

**They were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.**

**Hebrews 3:10-11(NIV)**  **10 …. ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’**

**11 So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’**

Jesus says in:
**Luke 18:17(NIV)
17I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”**

I believe this speaks of the need of our coming to Christ with a simple childlike faith. The simple faith that an infant has in its mom or dad to take care of them.

 Change their diaper when dirty, feed them when hungry, and comfort them when they cry….

 A child doesn’t have to “reason things out” first but they simply have faith…

And then we come to, what I believe, is the most terrifying use of the word never that we find in the bible…

**Matthew 7:21-23(NIV)**  **21“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.**  **22Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’**  **23Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’**

What a horrifying through to hear Jesus speak these words to you on that final day….**‘I never knew you. Away from me….**

**21“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.**

What Jesus is saying is this: It is not those who say I am their Lord that are saved and will one day come to live with Me, but only those who live their lives as I were their Lord that will come to live in My glorious presence.

**21“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.**

You see**, only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven** is what defines Lordship.

To just know what God expects of us is not Lordship but doing what God expects of us shows lordship.

 That is why Jesus said:

**“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.
22Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’
23Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’**

 We can prophesy and speak in Jesus name and still not have made Him the Lord of our life….

 We may even be able to have driven out demons in His name and yet not have made Him the Lord of our life.

 We may even be used in performing miracles in His name but yet haven’t made Jesus our Lord.

 It is obvious from the text here that Jesus is not speaking to those who have never crossed the threshold of a Church door or the obvious lost of our world here, but He is speaking to those who consider themselves to be Christians by outside evidences only--

 What they perceive God has used them to do.

 Evan Balaam’s donkey was used by God to do the miraculous!

Jesus said that it is only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven that has truly made Him the Lord of their life and thus qualified to enter His Kingdom.

 This morning are the words “always” and “never”, when used in context of your relationship with the Lord Jesus, wonderful words to you or are they frightening words to you?

 What will determine which they are to us is Lordship…

 Have we truly given Jesus Lordship of our life or have we not?

**Romans 10:11(NIV)
11As the Scripture says, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.”**

The manifestation of our trust in the Lord is revealed only in giving Him Lordship, control of our life through surrender to Him.

When we do then we can claim the greatest of all of Gods promises to the Child of God as Jesus reveals to us in:

**Revelation 3:5(NIV)
5He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels.**

 **I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels.**

Is this your hope this morning? Have you allowed Jesus to be the Lord of your life?