

PP The Greatest Job on Earth-Love Makes Discipleship Work, Part 3!

Luke 6:43-49

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Illus I really enjoy cutting and splitting firewood, but not so much the stacking. Growing up, we cut and split nearly 60 cord a year. We didn't stack it too close to the house because it attracted mice, but there wasn't a lot of level ground around the house. So one year, my dad had us stack it on pallets between two trees which at first seemed a great idea. Except during storms, the swaying of the trees knocked those piles down. Storms can do this in life, unless we have been built up on a firm foundation.

Recall from last week that Jesus is preaching in a common Jewish style of *stringing beads*, moving from topic to topic but having a common thread that ties them together
That theme is discipleship and love is what makes it work

PP 1-We must have a *persuasive love*, a love for even our enemies

PP 2-We must have a *merciful love*, refusing to become judgmental willing to drop the charges

PP 3-We must have a *discerning love*, able to see our own sins more clearly than others'

Then our Lord moves to the next bead, but it is closely connected to a discerning love, it is...

PP 4-We must have a whole-hearted love

In order for discipleship to be effective, then love must proceed from a healthy heart

The way the heart is made healthy, is for the logs in our eyes to be removed! (6:42)

PP But Jeremiah 17:9 tells us we have a problem seeing them: ***"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?"***

Our hearts are difficult to see and accurately understand

In fact, the word Jeremiah uses for ***'deceitful'*** was very interesting and had two related uses

PP The first meaning was 'foot printed', and was used as a hunter tracked its prey but lost its foot prints amid a myriad of other footprints in the softened dirt or mud

You begin to search your heart and the fog of obscurity is too thick to see your own motives clearly

PP The second meaning was 'steep and hilly', and was used by those building roads who came to a mountain that they had to get over, so they designed switchbacks

At a switchback you can't see what is coming around the sharp curve of that narrow road

Both uses of ***'deceitful'*** have to do with the inability to see well, the logs are obstructing vision

So how do we see our hearts clearly in order to discern or judge what is good and evil in them?

Jesus gives the answer: ***"For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thornbushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush."*** **Luke 6:43-44**

He's about to make His point and it's this: just as you can tell the type and condition of a tree by the type and quality of its fruit, we can do the same with our spiritual heart especially in examining what is coming out of our mouths

Illus Martyn Lloyd Jones, behind Spurgeon was arguably England's greatest preacher and his wife related a story of a man from Wales whose speech was so filthy and foul-mouthed that no one could even stand to drink with him. After meeting with Christ he tried to stop swearing but could not do it, even one morning shouting to his wife, "I can't find my ____ socks! Where are the ____ things?" As his words echoed back, he fell on his bed crying out, "*O Lord, cleanse my*

tongue. Lord I can't even ask for a pair of socks without swearing. Please have mercy on me and give me a clean tongue." Something happened that day that everyone that knew him bore witness of...never again did any foul or blasphemous word come from his lips

For most believers, the problem is not so embarrassingly obvious or dramatically stopped
And it may not be swearing or crude language, but rather gossip, or a critical tongue, or slander,
or stretching the truth, or outright lying, or negativity or any number of other tongue sins
But the truth is, *if there is no outer change, there has been no inner change*
Whether it is slow and gradual, or immediate and drastic, and sometimes both, there will be
transformation in the life of every disciple

Now notice with me exactly how Jesus phrased this, as He carefully selected certain words
"The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks." 45

How many here have ever used a thesaurus before, a book of synonyms and antonyms?

PP It is fascinating to know that *thesaurus* is from a Greek word for *warehouse or treasury*, and it is this word ***'treasure'*** Christ uses here?

It's a noun, so think of the heart as a vault, into which are made deposits each and every day
And what is being deposited, or stored, is either ***'good'*** or ***'evil'***

When we speak, we are cashing checks that are either blessing or cursing, good or evil
There is no truer evidence of what is in our hearts than what we say and how we speak

PP ***"You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."*** **Matthew 12:34-37**

We often hear a public figure get caught making a hateful or sinful statement, and they usually say, *'That's not really who I am, that was out of character for me'*

PP What we say is always in character, for *"word problems reveal heart problems. The people and situations around us do not make us say what we say; they are only the occasion for our hearts to reveal themselves in words."* Paul Tripp in War of Words,

Disciples regularly get heart checkups by examining our speech toward others

How do Christians discern our own hearts, so we can see others clearly?

PP a-Invite God to be our judge today

He will be gracious, and thorough

PP Invite Him to do that as David did, ***"Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!"*** **Psalms 139:23-24**

God, gather the evidence, try me, judge me, and help me get these logs of sins out of my life

PP b-Ask godly, trusted friends to speak into our lives

Take the initiative, and let the power of redemptive relationships work

And if you are asked to help someone, be gracious, be gentle, be loving and be careful

PP *“Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.” Gal. 6:1*

PP c-Appeal to the power of the Word of God

PP S for Scripture

Develop a regular time of reading God’s Word, expecting God to speak into your heart
 Staying on the surface of large sections is usually not as helpful as going deep in a few verses
 When we read God’s Word, God is speaking in a living way to us, not a static pre-written, one size fits all, which is what sets God’s Word apart from any other literature

PP O for Observation

But we don’t read God’s Word as if it is a magic book and repeating its words as a mantra
 We observe, we think, we deliberate with the text and study it more deeply following its connecting trails to other verses and passages
 We ask the Holy Spirit to teach and reveal Jesus to us

PP A for Application

We read God’s Word for us, not for someone we think of who really needs to change
 Supernaturally, God’s Word applies to each and every one of us in every single area of life
 Here we are speaking God’s Word that He has shown us into the thoughts of our hearts
 It may be encouragement, or revelation of a new promise, or correction or instruction
 Whatever it is, transformation occurs when the truth of God’s Word renews our minds and we act on it immediately

PP P for Prayer

Prayer is listening and speaking to God, and we will hear more clearly and speak more dearly after our hearts have been saturated with God’s Word
 The great George Muller learned to spend considerable time in scripture and let prayer naturally spring from a heart prepared to meet with God
 Prayer truly shaped by God’s Word will find agreement with the heart of God every time
 A transforming heart produces whole-hearted loving, and makes an effective disciple-maker

PP 5-We must have an obedient love

There were two groups that Jesus was preaching this sermon to according to verse 17

‘a great crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people’ verse 17

The great multitude of people came to Him to be saved from their hardships verse 18

They weren’t interested in faithful obedience to Him, just the thrill of being part of the crowd

The group ranged from the curious to the convinced, from the fascinated to the faithful, the doubters to the dedicated

He addressed them in His sermon: ***“Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you?” 6:46***

Repeating something was the Hebrew way of emphasizing, as it means ‘Dearest Master’

What He was about to say was of unparalleled importance!

PP *“The truth on which Jesus is insisting is that neither an intellectual knowledge of him nor a verbal profession, though both are essential in themselves, can ever be a substitute for obedience. The question is not whether we say nice, polite words, orthodox, enthusiastic things to or about Jesus; nor whether we hear his words, listening, studying, pondering and*

memorizing until our minds are stuffed with his teaching; but whether we do what we say and do what we know, in other words, whether the lordship of Jesus which we profess is one of our life's major realities" John Stott

Obedience is evidence that we have a new heart that is being powered by grace to ***'observe all that I have commanded you.'*** **Matthew 28:**

Not all that I have counseled, or suggested, but all that I have commanded!

To underscore this, Jesus shows through 3 verbs how to discern a true disciple of His

"Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like..." **6:47**

Each of these verbs is in a Greek tense that means present and continuous action

Everyone coming to Me, hearing My words, and doing them...

PP a-The True disciple

"Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built." **Luke 6:47-48**

A well-built house that laid the foundation on the rock is one who is obeying Christ's commands
This person can withstand the storms of life which bring their floods

Rivers and creeks in the land of the Jews commonly dried up during the long months between the spring (former) and fall (latter) rains

But when those rains came, the wadis filled, creek beds overflowed, the hard ground shed water, and floods often occurred, so how and where you built your house was critical

'Floods' are common to humanity, but the context of this sermon, again, is persecution

When we are faithfully trusting in Christ, hearing His Word, and obeying what He tells us, we will be able to stand the floods

The reason is because we have not built on sinking sand, but we have ***'dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock'***

Our hope is on the finished work of Christ, the gospel, seen in both Old Testament and New Friends, it is the gospel that is under attack today, and thankful I am that it will withstand any force that comes against it, but we must build our lives upon His Word and obey it

But there was another group of people hearing that sermon, who were not willing to obey Christ

PP b-The self-deceived disciple

"But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation." **6:49a**

To build without a foundation is simply to hear God's Words but not obey them

The true disciple comes, hears, and obeys, but the self-deceived hears but does not obey

This is the hypocrite of verse **42**, the blind man of verse **39**, the rich of **24**, the satisfied of **25** and the famous of **26**

You claim to be My disciples, but nothing will reveal the truth faster than a flood

Jesus was warning the groups following Him, ***“If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples”*** **John 8:31**

‘Abide’ means to come, hear and do what He commands, for His laws and His commands will bring life, satisfaction, and joy, giving evidence of a new heart full of new desires

“When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.”
6:49b

It didn’t stand strong for a while but immediately fell, such is our own strength without Christ

Our faith must produce obedience!

Friends, Christ must be the Lord, and we must, by His grace, learn to obey Him

Let’s close our time together by reviewing what Jesus just said to this great multitude

Do we have a persuasive love, choosing to love even those who have ill will against us?

Do we have a love full of mercy, refusing to judge others?

Do we have a discerning love that sees others accurately because we have seen our own sins and by grace gotten them out of our eyes?

Is our love whole-hearted, producing fruit of righteousness?

And is our love obedient, gladly submitting to Christ our Lord?

Plead for more grace, more of our Savior's help to grow in love, for love is what makes discipleship, the greatest job on earth, work!

Amen

Pray