

The Lord Continues His Discourse

Luke 6:39-49

Luke 6:39-49: And He spoke a parable to them: "Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? 40 A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher. 41 And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? 42 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother's eye. 43 "For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. 44 For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. 45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. 46 "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say? 47 Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: 48 He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. 49 But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great."

Background Notes

This last section of Luke 6 is the conclusion of the account of our Lord's sermon that began in verse 17. This may be an abbreviated account of the Lord's Sermon on the Mount that is given in Matthew. In any case, in both Gospels, the Lord was specifically addressing disciples, although many in the multitude that were present would have heard it as well.

Verses 17-20 indicate that the sermon was specifically addressed to the disciples: "*And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all. Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said...*" and then the sermon follows, directed at the disciples who followed Him.

Verse 17 says that there were a great number of disciples, not just twelve. The fact that the sermon was especially directed toward these many disciples (who already believed in Jesus as the Messiah) helps us in the interpretation of the sermon. It is a message about righteous living for believers - **not** a gospel message to unbelievers. Some believers are

not fully committed disciples, and the Lord here rebuked half-hearted disciples. Thus the woes (v24-26) and the rebuke in verse 46: *“But why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord’ and not do the things which I say?”*

It’s important to remember that this sermon was not addressed to unbelievers, but primarily to believers, especially to half-heart disciples who were not fully committed and not fully obedient. The Lord is looking for followers who are committed to the point of a change in life and lifestyle, and a change in personal character. He’s looking for followers who can lead others to follow Him.

Doctrinal Points

1. Godly leadership requires personal character.

In verse 38 the Lord taught that the amount of blessing that disciples receive is determined by the amount that they give of themselves: *“Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”* In verses 39-45, He taught that the extent to which believers can be a blessing to others is determined by their spiritual condition and personal character. You can’t lead people who are blind to spiritual truth if you yourself are blind to the deeper things of God! And you can’t open up the Word of God to teach and train others if you’re untaught and untrained yourself, because pupils cannot be more advanced than their teachers.

How can you see clearly to constructively critique and help your brothers or sisters get some specks of sawdust out of their eyes when you yourself are blinded by a huge chunk (like a 2x4!) in your own eye? And don’t expect fruit in the ministry if your heart is not right with the Lord, or if you’re involved in secret sin. You can’t share spiritual treasure out of your life to help others if your own heart is filled with the world’s gaudy tinsel or internet trash. Your spiritual condition determines the blessing you will be to others. Godly leadership requires personal character.

2. Godly character requires personal obedience.

We’ve seen that the extent of blessing you can be to others is determined by your spiritual condition and personal character. Do you want your personal character to be godly? Then the Number One requirement for godly character is **obedience**. Verse 26: *“Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord’ and not do the things which I said?”* Again, remember the context - this verse is not addressed to unbelievers but to believers. Do we call the Lord Jesus our “Lord” - and then practice only **partial** obedience?

And the following well-known parable of the builders and their houses is addressed to believers as well. It can be applied to salvation and the need for unbelievers to face their destiny on the Rock of Jesus Christ - but remember the *context!* This parable was addressed to disciples and thus it is *specifically addressed to believers* about *how believers should build their lives*.

A classic Old Testament example of two believers who built their lives, one on the rock, and one on the sand, is the account of Abraham and Lot. Both were believers. 2 Peter 2 makes that clear when it refers to Lot as “righteous.” But Lot was typical of the worldly believer who builds his life on a foundation of sand. Listen to what we read about Lot in Genesis 13. *“Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other. Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent even as far as Sodom. But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the LORD.”* At first, Lot only pitched his tents near the wicked city of Sodom. Then in Genesis 14, when the kings from the east attacked Sodom, we find that Lot had actually *moved into* Sodom. And Lot did not move into Sodom to be a missionary. Lot was a worldly believer who wanted to live in Sodom for what he could get out of it. He built his life on a foundation of sand.

What a contrast we have in Abraham, who built his life on the solid rock of the Word of God! Here’s what Hebrews 11:8-10 says about Abraham - *“By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”* No wonder Abraham was able to resist moving toward Sodom and the other worldly Cities of the Plain. Abraham was building his life on rock. Because Abraham was building on the rock of the promises of God, he was able to resist the offer of earthly treasure from the king of Sodom in Genesis 14. What a contrast between Abraham and Lot! Abraham built his life on the rock of God’s Word - Lot built his life on the sand of this world. He had no solid foundation, and when the storm of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah came, Lot lost everything.

What about us? Are we as believers building our lives on the foundation of obedience to the Word of God? Or do we just attend church and a few Christian functions, and maybe read or memorize a few verses? For all intent and purposes, do we live our lives by worldly standards? Is there any difference in our “foundation-building” habits than the “nice unbelievers” around us? This is the situation in the lives of many believers today.

In the parable, the houses may have looked the same, but the foundations were completely different. One foundation was on solid rock and the other foundation was on shifting sand. The difference was seen when the floods and storms came - and so it is in the believer’s life. When the storms of life arrive, such as great pressure to sin or a great test of faith, godly character built on the foundation of God’s Word is what counts. The foundation makes the difference! And consistent godly character is based on a lifetime of knowing and obeying God’s Word. As the Lord Jesus said in John 15, if we are to abide in Him, we must let His Word abide in us. Godly character requires personal obedience.

Practical Application

Pick your teachers carefully.

In verse 40, the Lord said, *“a disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.”* This biblical truth has serious implications. A pupil will become like his teacher - so pick your teachers carefully!

We naturally make careful choices when it comes to our secular education, don't we? When we're considering universities, or graduate schools, or training in some field or trade, we put a great emphasis on finding the right program and the right teacher. Well, the same should be true in our Christian training and development. So whether it's the church you choose, or the website or radio or TV teachers you listen to, or the commentaries you use for personal Bible study, ***pick your teachers carefully!***