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**“TEACHERS, TREES, FOUNDATIONS”**

Luke 6:39-40, 43-49

● **“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust”** (the tiniest perceivable foreign object) **“in someone else’s eye and pay no attention to the plank”** (the massive girder or I beam) **“in your own eye? How can you say, ‘Friend, let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from the other person’s eye”** (Luke 6:41-42).

? When we fall into sin or error it is essential that we discern it, repent of it, and correct it, that we “get it out of our eye.” But, as they say, **“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”** Once we have removed a plank, *how can we avoid getting another in our eyes?*

□ Please turn to Luke 6:39-40.

■ In v. 39 Lord Jesus tells a mini-parable: **“Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into a pit?”**

☑ Imagine you are one of a group of sightless tourists teetering on the rim of the Grand Canyon, blissfully unaware that you are standing a mere six inches from the edge of the 6,000 foot precipice. None of you brought your guide dog. No one is carrying a white cane.

A sighted man comes to your side, announces his presence, informs you that you are one step away from disaster, and offers to lead you to safety.

But the leader of your group takes umbrage: “Ignore him!” he huffs. “We don’t need his eyes. Everyone, follow me. I will feel my way along the rim.”

Take your fellow blind man as your **“teacher”** and you **“will be like”** him. When he plunges into the precipice, so will you.

Take the sighted man as your **“teacher”** and you **“will be like”** him. When he moves to a safe place away from the edge, so will you.

■ In verse 40 the Lord concludes his parable by stating the principle: **“Students are not above their teacher, but all who are fully trained will be like their teacher.”**

We Christ Followers have the Risen Lord as our greatest Teacher. He enlightens, instructs and guides us by his Holy Spirit and written Word.

We are also influenced by other “teachers”: our pastor, Sunday school teachers, Bible study leaders, and TV preachers; our school teachers; the commentators we hear on the radio; the bands that perform the songs we listen to; the people who make the movies and TV shows we watch; the authors of the books and blogs that we read; and so on.

Some teachers are helpful. They guide us away from the edge and clarify our vision.

Some teachers are unhelpful. They lead us closer to the edge and cloud our vision.

? The question to ask is, *“Who am I following as my teacher?”*

□ On to Luke 6:43-45.

■ In verses 43-44 the Lord Jesus tells another brief parable: **“No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars.”**

So it is with us: what we “grow” on the outside is a reflection of who we are on the inside. Our speech and actions are like windows onto our souls.

■ And so in verse 45 the Lord Jesus states the principle: **“Good people bring good things out of the good stored up in their heart, and evil people bring evil things out of the evil stored up in their heart. For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.”**

○ **“Good people”** store up things that are {Php 4:8-9} **“true...noble...right...pure...lovely...admirable...excellent”** and **“praiseworthy,”** things they **“have learned...received [and] heard from...or seen in [the Messiah].”** Their deeds and words reveal his {Gal 5:22-23} **“love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control”** – not entirely, but with increasing consistency.

As for **“evil people”** ... well, not so much.

Allow me to make three observations.

✎ First, the focus here is on self-assessment. We are called to give close attention to *our* fruit.

● It is possible (and sometimes necessary) to draw conclusions about others based on their **“fruit.”** Still, we must avoid even the slightest degree of critical, fault-finding judgmentalism. Messiah has just said: **“Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you**

**will not be condemned, Forgive, and you will be forgiven”** (Luke 6:17).

✎ Second, it is imperative that we bear good fruit. Good fruit is the goal, the evidence, and the earthly substance of our salvation. Although we are *not* saved *by* it, we are saved for it.

○ As the Apostle Paul writes in Ephesians {2:8-10} **“It is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast. We are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”**

✎ Third, the key to bearing good fruit is not moral effort. It is not trying harder. It is keeping fellowship with Jesus. He gives us good things to store up in our hearts.

○ He himself declares {Jn 15:5-6, 8}:

**“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned... This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples”**

☑ The Savior is not presenting {Daniel Bock} **“some ethic that we can follow independent of**

**relationship to him. Having a relationship with him is at the base of fruitfulness...**"

? The question to ask is, *"Am I keeping fellowship with Jesus and storing up good things in my heart?"*

□ Finally, Luke 6:46-49.

■ In verse 46 the Lord Jesus asks a sharply pointed question: **"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"** Remember his warning {Mt 7:21}: **"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only those who do the will of my Father who is in heaven."**

■ Then, in verses 47-49 he tells a third parable. Many of us know it as a song. Please sing it with me:

**The wise man built his house upon the  
rock, x 3**

**And the rains came tumbling down**

**The rains came down and the floods  
came up, x 3**

**And the house on the rock stood firm**

**The foolish man built his house upon  
the sand, x 3**

**And the rains came tumbling down**

**The rains came down and the floods  
came up, x 3**

**And the house on the sand went SPLAT!**

**So build your house on the Lord Jesus  
Christ, x 3**

**And the blessings will come down**

**The blessings come down as the prayers  
go up, x 3**

**So build your house on the Lord**

The wise man stands for **"Those who come to [Jesus] and hear [his] words and put them into practice"** (verse 47). Meanwhile, the foolish man signifies **"those who hear [Christ's] words and do not put them into practice"** (verse 49).

A massive storm blows into both their lives, the same storm, pummeling each with equal ferocity. This is the hardship, pain and grief of living in a fallen world. Someday, it will be the test that Holy God will administer to each and every human being on Judgment Day.

Each person is tested in the same way, yet the outcomes are radically different. The life of the one who puts Christ's words **"into practice"** will withstand the torrent, for **"it [is] well built."** The life of the one who does **"not put them into practice"** will collapse, **"and its destruction [will be] complete."**

? The question to ask is, *"Am I, or am I not, putting into practice the words of Jesus?"*

Who am I following as my teacher? Christ Jesus is inviting us to evaluate who we are following.

Am I keeping fellowship with Jesus and storing up good things in my heart? Christ Jesus is inviting us to evaluate ourselves.

Am I, or am I not, putting into practice the words of Jesus? Christ Jesus is inviting us to evaluate what we are building.

Luke 6:39-40 and 43-49 is like a mirror. Is it showing us a speck in our eye, or even a plank? The time to remove it is now!

And, with ongoing self-evaluation, we will be equipped to follow good teachers, grow good fruit, and build rock-solid homes.