

09. Luke 6:39 - 8:21



Luke 6:39-40

He also told them a parable:

“Can a blind person guide a blind person?

Will not both fall into a pit? (= Matthew 15:14)

A disciple is not above the teacher, (= Matthew 10:24)

but everyone who is fully qualified will be like the teacher.

Luke 6:41-42 (Matthew 7:3-5)

Why do you see the speck in your neighbour's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? Or how can you say to your neighbour, 'Friend, let me take out the speck in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbour's eye.

Jesus' disciples are called to love. If we are willing to suffer the purification necessary to become instruments of God's judgment — a judgment that is concerned to save, not to condemn — then, and only then, may we attempt to guide, or teach, or take the splinter out of another's eye. Without this love we are acting blindly, out of touch with reality and acting on appearances. Furthermore we ourselves will stand condemned for our blindness, pride and hardness of heart.

James and Paul have the same teaching:

'Judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy' (James 2:13).

'You have no excuse, whoever you are, when you judge others; for in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself' (Romans 2:1).

Luke 6:43-45 (Matthew 7:16-20; 12:33-35)

“No good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit; for each tree is known by its own fruit. Figs are not gathered from thorns, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush.

The good person out of the good treasure of the heart produces good.
The evil person out of evil treasure produces evil;
for it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks.

Paul lists some of the key qualities of a Christ-filled heart:

‘The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control’ (Galatians 5:22-23).

Luke 6:46-49 (Matthew 7:21, 24-27)

“Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I tell you?

I will show you what someone is like who comes to me, hears my words, and acts on them. That one is like a man building a house, who dug deeply and laid the foundation on rock; when a flood arose, the river burst against that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built.

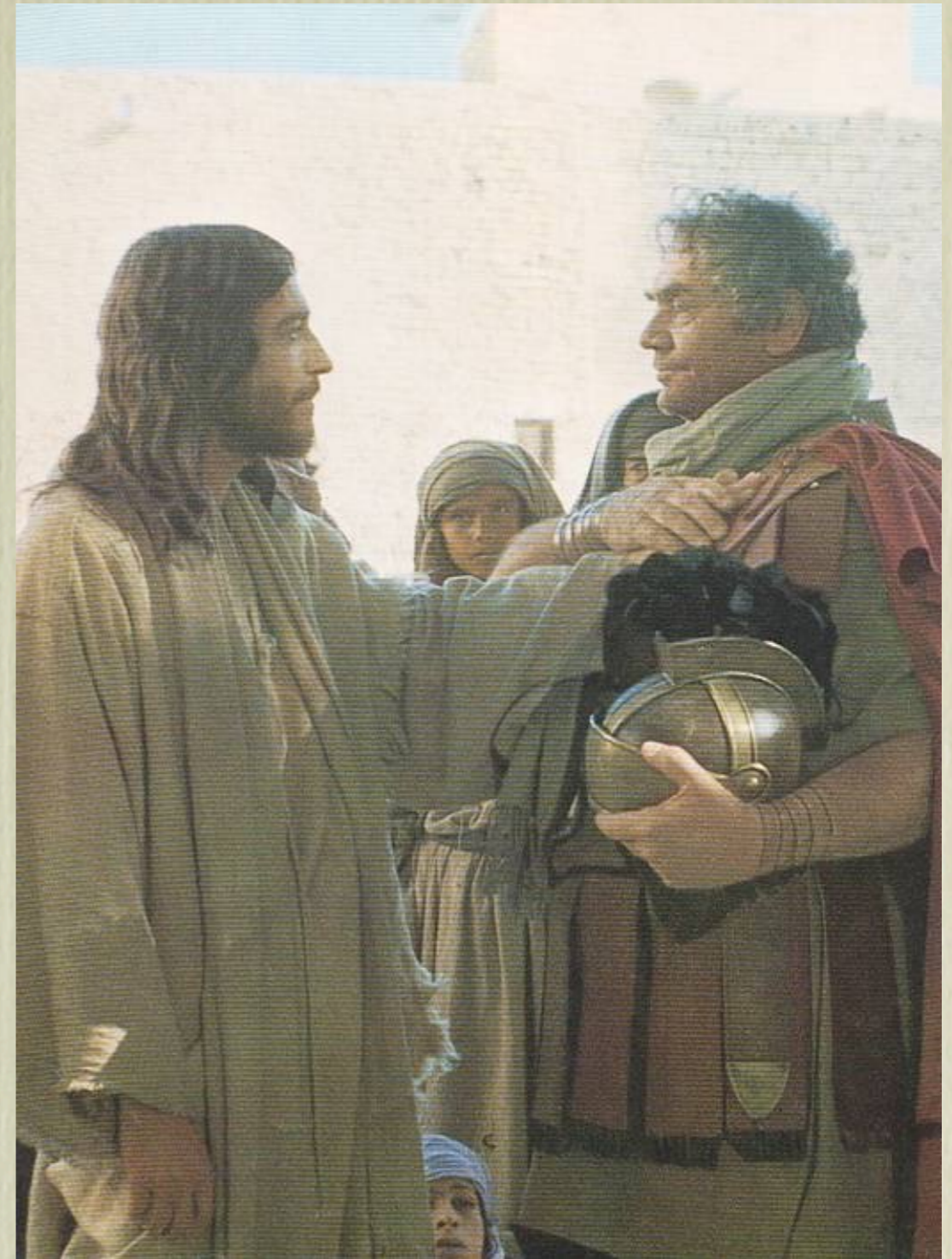
But the one who hears and does not act is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the river burst against it, immediately it fell, and great was the ruin of that house.”

Luke 7:1-5 (Matthew 8:5)

After Jesus had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum.

A centurion there had a slave whom he valued highly, and who was ill and close to death. When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave.

When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying, “He is worthy of having you do this for him, for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us.”



Compare Cornelius: Acts 10-11

Luke 7:6-10 (Matthew 8:7-13)

Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him,

“Lord, do not trouble yourself,

for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof;

therefore I did not presume to come to you.

But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed.

For I also am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me;

and I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my slave, ‘Do this,’ and the slave does it.”

When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said, “I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such **faith**.”

When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

Luke is also stressing the fact that healing does not take place by some magical power unrelated to the condition of the one making the request. It is effective only where there is **faith**.

Faith is something that Zechariah lacked: 'You did not believe my words' (Luke 1:20).

It is something of which Mary has already been presented as the model: 'Blessed and happy is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord' (Luke 1:45).

- To believe is to listen to God's word, trusting that God is revealing himself to us.
 - To believe is to heed what God reveals, trusting that God is faithful and so accepting his word as true with all our hearts and minds and soul and strength.
 - To believe is to act in accordance with God's will, trusting that God is our wise and loving Father-Mother.
 - To believe is to respond in love to God, trusting that God is love, and choosing to put ourselves in this love
- The English word 'be-lieve' nicely expresses this aspect.
- To believe is to live in communion with Jesus, sharing his faith.

Luke 7:11-17

Soon afterwards he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town.

When the Lord saw her, he had **compassion** for her and said to her, "Do not weep." Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, **rise!**"

The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother.



Zechariah concluded his hymn of praise with the following words: 'By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace' (Luke 1:78-19).

We have been watching Jesus healing and liberating. In this scene he is moved by 'compassion' (see also Luke 10:33; 15:20), that is to say, by the tenderness of God's mercy. He confronts the ultimate darkness of death. His word, the powerful word of God, penetrates beyond the gates of death and he, the 'Lord', the giver of life, raises this young man to life.

The point of this story is surely not to raise hopes in the readers that when their time to die comes they will be restored to this life by God.

Luke wishes to point to Jesus as having the power to raise a dead person to the life that is beyond death, the life of eternal communion with God.

He wants to demonstrate that physical death cannot of itself separate a person from God, and so cannot separate a person from true life.

Here, and in the story of the daughter of Jairus (Luke 8:40-56), as well as that of Tabitha (Acts 9:36-43), and of Eutyches (Acts 20:7-12), Luke demonstrates the truth of Paul's words:

'I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Romans 8:38-39).

'**Blessed and happy are you who weep now for you will laugh**' (Luke 6:21).

'God will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away' (Revelation 21:4; see also 7:17).

Luke 7:16

Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, “A great prophet has risen among us! God has looked favourably on his people!”

The reaction of the people echos the response to the great miracle-worker Elisha, who restored to life the son of a widow from Shunam, a town just over the hill from Nain (2Kings 4:8-37; See also 1Kings 17:17-24, re Elijah).

Luke 7:17

This word about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

The crowd recognise in Jesus' miracle God's redeeming activity. Luke expresses the same idea in Acts where Peter speaks of Jesus as: 'a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you' (Acts 2:22).

'God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him' (Acts 10:38).

Luke 7:18-20 (Matthew 11:2-3)

The disciples of John reported all these things to him.
So John summoned two of his disciples
and sent them to the Lord to ask,

“Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?”

When the men had come to him, they said, “John the Baptist
has sent us to you to ask, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or
are we to wait for another?’”

Some of John’s disciples were still hesitating at the time Luke
was writing (see Acts 19:1-7).

Luke 7:21-23 (Matthew 11:4-6)

Luke's answer is to invite them to observe 'what you have seen and heard'. He has already carefully laid the ground for Jesus' reply.

Jesus had just then cured many people of diseases, plagues, and evil spirits, and had given sight to many who were blind. And he answered them, 'Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.'

‘Say to those who are of a fearful heart, ‘Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God. He will come ... and save you’.

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy’ (Isaiah 35:4-6).

Luke 7:24-28 (Matthew 11:7-11)

When John's messengers had gone,
Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John:
“What did you go out into the wilderness to see?

A reed shaken by the wind?

What then did you go out to see?

Someone dressed in soft robes?

Those who put on fine clothing and live in luxury are in royal palaces.

What then did you go out to see?

A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’ (Exodus 23:20 & Malachi 3:1)

I tell you, among those born of women no one is greater than John;
yet the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”

‘Greater’ in relation to the reign of God

Luke 7:29-30

(And all the people who heard this, including the tax collectors, acknowledged the justice of God, because they had been baptised with John's baptism. But by refusing to be baptised by John, the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God's purpose for themselves.)

'I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the Lord' (Jeremiah 29:11-14).

Luke 7:31-34 (Matthew 11:16-19)

“To what then will I compare the people of this generation?
What are they like? They are like children sitting in the marketplace
and calling to one another,

‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;
we wailed, and you did not weep.’

For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine,
and you say, ‘He has a demon’;
the Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look,
a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’

Luke 7:35: **‘Wisdom is vindicated by all her children.’**

See the following from the Book of Proverbs 8:32 - 9:6, where wisdom addresses her children:

‘And now, my children, listen to me: happy are those who keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and do not neglect it. Happy is the one who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting beside my doors. For whoever finds me finds life and obtains favour from the Lord; but those who miss me injure themselves; all who hate me love death. Wisdom has built her house, she has hewn her seven pillars. She has slaughtered her animals, she has mixed her wine, she has also set her table. She has sent out her servant girls, she calls from the highest places in the town, ‘You that are simple, turn in here!’ To those without sense she says, ‘Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed. Lay aside immaturity, and live, and walk in the way of insight.’

Luke 7:36

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table.



Luke 7:37-38

A woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment.



Luke 7:39-40

Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him – that she is a sinner.”

Jesus spoke up and said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” “Teacher,” he replied, “Speak.”

Luke 7:41-43

“A certain creditor had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he graciously canceled the debts for both of them. Now which of them will love him more?” Simon answered, “I suppose the one for whom he cancelled the greater debt.” And Jesus said to him, “You have judged rightly.”

By using a parable, Jesus avoids directly embarrassing Simon. He also gently offers him an insight that could lead him to change his attitude. However, Jesus does not allow Simon or the others present to avoid having to make a choice. They must either accept or reject the truth so clearly expressed by Jesus. If they accept Jesus' word, they must recognise that it is the purist who is the real sinner, and that it is he and not the woman whose presence is defiling the banquet. They are also being challenged by Jesus to open their hearts and their social life to this repentant woman.

Luke 7:44-47

Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment.

Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little.”

Luke 7:48-50

Then he said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”

But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?”

And he said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”



Luke 8:1-3

Soon afterwards he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God.

The twelve were with him, as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities:

Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out,
(Luke 24:10) (see Mark Appendix 16:9)

Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, (also 24:10 - only in Luke)

Susanna, (only here in NT)

and many others, who provided for them (διακονεω)

see Peter's mother-in-law, , Luke 4:39)

out of their resources.

Luke 8:4-8 (Mark 4:1-9)

When a great crowd gathered and people from town after town came to him, he said in a **parable**:

“A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell on the path and was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up.

Some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered for lack of moisture. Some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew with it and choked it.

Some fell into good soil, and when it grew, it produced a hundredfold.”

As he said this, he called out, “Let anyone with ears to hear listen!”

“Let anyone with ears to hear listen!”

‘Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live ... my word that goes out from my mouth shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it’ (Isaiah 55:3,11).

Luke 8:9-10 (Mark 4:10-13)

Then his disciples asked him what this parable meant.

He said, “To you it has been given to know
the mysteries of the kingdom of God;

but to others I speak in parables, for (hina)

‘looking they may not perceive,

and listening they may not understand.’ (Isaiah 6:9)

Luke 8:11-15 Allegorical Application of the parable (Mark 4:14-20)

“Now the parable is this:

The seed is the word of God.

The ones on the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved.

The ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe only for a while and in a time of testing fall away.

As for what fell among the thorns, these are the ones who hear; but as they go on their way, they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature.

But as for that in the good soil, these are the ones who, when they hear the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit *with patient endurance*.

No one who has lit a lamp hides it under a jar (extinguish),
or puts it under a bed (cause a fire),
but puts it on a lamp stand,
so that those who enter may see the light. (radiance of the word)

For nothing is hidden that will not be disclosed, nor is anything
secret that will not become known and come to light.

Then pay attention to how you listen;
for to those who have, will be given;
and from those who do not have,
even what they think they have will be taken away.”

Luke 8:19-21

see Mark 3:31-35

Then his mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not meet with him because of the crowd. And he was told, “Your mother and your brothers are standing outside and want to see you.”

But he answered and said to them,
“My mother and my brothers are these,
who hear the word of God and do it.”