

Luke 6:39-49

Spiritual Diagnostics

Good morning, if you can please open your Bibles to Luke chapter 6, we will be picking up our study in verse 39.

If you do not have a Bible, please use one of ours, there in front of you, and make it your own.

Let us pray before we get into our study...

This week was a tough one for Pastor Joe, his faithful Jeep Renegade on Wednesday night started giving him some problems.

He came to a stop, and hit the accelerator, and the car began to wobble and shake.

Isn't it such a sinking feeling when our cars begin to do something like that?

Well, Pastor Joe of course got that worried feeling, as he knew something was off and not right.

So as men, we began to instinctively perform a diagnostic test to find out the problem.

He got home and found some things that might be the problem.

But it was inconclusive.

On Thursday, the check engine light finally came on...

Now Pastor Josh, has a code reader, and was able to let Pastor Joe use that thing, and you know, the code reader identified the problem, is in piston #1.

So now, Pastor Joe knows the issue and now he can get to work fixing his beloved Jeep Renegade, or the dealer can, because it is under warranty.

But, understand without that code reader, Pastor Joe was in the dark about what the issue really was.

Now this may be a poor segue, but I am going with it.

This morning, in our text, Jesus gives the spiritual tests, the code reader to hold up a disciple of Christ too.

We can hold our lives, and other people's lives up to this spiritual diagnostic test that Jesus gives, and it will help us separate true disciples from false disciples.

Jesus will now turn from using direct language, and He will now use the listener's imagination to get His point across, He will speak multiple parables now.

Now, for context sake, remember Jesus is teaching His Newly appointed Twelve Apostles, His many disciples, and really us today through this teaching.

Jesus will point out that a true disciple and follower will have certain markers and that the disciple must live on the highest plain possible.

So far, in this sermon, Jesus has explained that His followers will be the opposite of what this world defines as being successful.

Last week, He defined the love and mercy that His disciples would be known for, a love even for our enemies.

Now as we finish this sermon this morning, we will find a true disciple will also be a producer of other disciples and a leader.

So let us read now, in verses 39 and 40 as Jesus begins using parabolic language in this new section.

6:39 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.

So Jesus starts off with two illustrations, the first picture is that of a blind man, leading others who are blindly falling into a ditch.

As Jesus has been laying out the truth of a genuine disciple, He now contrasts that with the blindness of the teachers of the day.

These scribes are blind teachers, in fact Jesus calls them out in Matthew 23:24 where He calls them **Matt 23:24 Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!**

And now, His uneducated, untrained disciples will be the teachers of the True Way.

Jesus is implying that the teachers of the day were leading the people to peril, and none can see the truth of what is ahead.

It is only those who experience Grace who will be able to lead others to the light of Grace.

Then Jesus uses the second parable, that of a disciple and a teacher.

The Apostles and disciples there that day must remain humble students of the Greatest Teacher in history.

Now, this is shocking to consider, that Jesus is declaring that the scribes and Pharisees will be replaced by Jesus' students, who were tradesmen.

The scribes and Pharisees spent their whole lives training for religious service, and yet Jesus calls them blind guides.

You see the level of the Religious Leaders compared to the disciples was too great a chasm to even be compared to each other.

Yet it was the unschooled and untrained Galileans that Jesus chose for this special work.

Now, consider that the disciples were so outranked by the religious leaders of the day, yet understand the distance between them and Jesus was even further.

And Jesus is making these men aware of the gap between Teacher and disciple.

They will never be able to outrank Jesus, or even come close to His Supremacy in the Christian Church.

Yet through His special training and teaching, they will become like their Teacher, but will never surpass Him.

These men will one day be the extension of Jesus' ministry here on earth once He ascends into heaven.

And today, we now are this extension.

We are now to be perfectly trained to bear His image to the world.

Our Trainer is the Holy Spirit, Jesus explained further in... **John 16:13-14** However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.

Now, in Jesus' day a person's teacher was so important.

Understand there was not the local library available to the public like today.

There was no internet to research or encyclopedias.

A person's teacher was the only source of information, and for a student to claim he is above his teacher would be the height of arrogance.

But Jesus says here that when His disciples are properly trained they will be like their Teacher.

And we are to model this training to others who in turn they too should model the same spirituality others.

This means the disciple must be authentic in his own life, and must maintain a genuine virtue for those who are being influenced by him so they too can blossom as followers as well.

Would you agree, that right up there with God's Word, that an authentic Christian is one of the greatest influences in our own walks for Christ.

I know, for me growing up in the church, there were many hypocrites and phonies, but for me, in my own rebellion, there was always one man who I could never call a fake Christian.

My father, he was a man who walked what he talked.

And no matter how far I ran from Christ, no matter how much I mocked and accused the church, I could never in my right mind accuse my father of a false faith.

In the end, his authenticity was one of the leading factors that led me to finally surrender my life over to Christ.

A disciple of Christ must be authentic or we have no true ministry.

You know there are many today with head knowledge, they have their doctrine down pat, they have elegant words, but when you hold their life up to this test

Christ is putting forth here, there is something off with them.

They know religion in word only, and their deeds do not come close to their own doctrine.

It is essential that our lives line up with the that of Christ's.

Remember, the Apostle Paul, when he called the Thessalonians to remember his own ministry, he called both his message and his life to the witness stand.

1 Thess. 1:5 For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

Our lives must be aligned with our message.

Now, the standard of our witness is laid out in God's Word... Notice Jesus explains when the disciple is perfectly trained, he will be like his Teacher.

This demands that the disciple be disciplined in his training.

A disciple cannot be lazy in his duty.

Now of course our training and standard comes from God's Word, Paul says to young Timothy in

2 Tim 3:16-17 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the

man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

The authentic disciple will be trained in Truth, diligent in his studies, and live his life according to what is revealed in God's Word.

Now, as the disciple is trained in the Word, unlike the Blind guides of Jesus' day, the disciple was first to examine himself according to the standard set forth in scripture before he was ever to instruct others.

So now, Jesus calls the disciple to this self-examination next...

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.

Now when we see Jesus depicted in movies or pictures, He always seems so pious and somber.

Church, understand this morning, Jesus was using humor here to get His point across.

You can almost see Him teaching this warning with a grin.

It puts an image as humorous as this in the listener's minds.

Log Eye Picture

Jesus asks how can you with the plank in your own eye, not deal with your own plank first, that way, when you minister to others it will be from a place of humility and Grace.

Remember a true disciple will abundantly give out grace, because we are aware the same measure we use, will be used against us.

Grab the timber from pulpit

Imagine this thing, actually the imagery given by Jesus is even more drastic.

It would be a piece of wood used for the rafter, or a floor joist.

Now, in all of us, if we are honest, we are indignant, judgmental hypocrites, if we are honest.

Notice, Jesus straight calls His disciples here emphatically hypocrites.

Now, when the hypocrite in me rises up, and I am face to face with an offender of some kind.

You know, when someone who has just hurt me, my family, someone who has let me down, and caused unnecessary pain in my life.

My first instinct is anger, and believe me, there are times I do not want to forgive, and I want to just let a person know the evil they have committed is treasonous and treacherous.

I want to lay into them, but it is interesting, the Holy Spirit brings to mind this beam, that has been so graciously removed by God's hand of Mercy.

Understand the kind of precision it would take for this to be removed out of one's eye, the depth of the surgery, the pain of it all, the healing process would be timely and cumbersome.

It would be memorable, you would not forget the day, that log was removed from your eye!

I remember one day, having a young man come into the office on a day I was busy of course.

The young man came in with a desperate spirit about him.

He was in a bad place, he began to open up to me, and talked about how he was recently kicked out, and was now homeless, he was hungry, and living in his car.

Now, I know drug users when I see them, so I with an indignant tone asked him, "What are you on man."

His dry and cracked lips, his rubber jaw, and smell gave it away, it was obvious he was spun out on meth.

However he did not try to hide it from me, and he said I am on speed.

Now, in that moment the prideful hypocrite rose up in me, as I thought, “what did you expect bro, you are reaping what you have sown.”

I began to have the most heartless thoughts and even anger in my heart toward him, and I shamefully admit to you, I wanted to release him quickly and get on with “Real Ministry.”

But then, as I look back, the Holy Spirt spoke through that man that was enslaved to his addiction.

The man, began to weep, and he said, “I want to quit so bad, but I don’t think I could ever quit.”

Now, that hit me hard, and his words were an instant Divine reminder of my own beam.

You see at that time, it was maybe only 6 years earlier, that I cried those very same words.

I used to even pray to God, “God, I will never be able to quit this drug,” Meth has such a stronghold on my life, “please, somehow God, let me be able to function as a normal citizen in society with this addiction.”

And in that moment, with this young man, I was so convicted that I had forgotten the pain of addiction, you see God heard my desperate prayer, and He did not answer the way I had hoped for, instead, in a mighty display of His power, He broke the chains of my addiction.

He freed me, He very carefully, and meticulously removed this great mote from my life.

And here I was only six or so years from that moment, with people calling me pastor, and my in my heart lived the greatest hypocrite I have ever known.

Who did I think I was, and when that man's tears began to fall, this pastor had no words for him, I could do nothing but embrace that man and cry with him.

In that moment, I remembered the pain and hopelessness.

My demeanor completely changed from the proud pastor, to a humiliated human, but you see it was from that place of humiliation, I was able to articulate what Christ had done in my own life.

It was from that place of remembering, that I could more clearly explain the hope we have in Jesus Christ.

And this is what Jesus is saying here, when that log in your eye is correctly dealt with, hypocrisy has no place in the heart of the true disciple.

It is when we honestly assess ourselves and the beam protruding out of our own eye, that we can see clearly the speck in our brother's eye.

Jesus is declaring here, that unlike the Blind Guides of His day, His leaders will be humble and honest with themselves.

A true disciple will search his or her inner life before ministering to others.

We will first pray as the Psalmist did in **Ps 139:23-24**

Search me, O God, and know my heart;

Try me, and know my anxieties;

24 And see if there is any wicked way in me,

And lead me in the way everlasting.

Church do not ever forget that mote that Christ removed from your life, clearly see your own heart, and know what Christ has done in your life, and freely give that same Grace to others.

So we see here one test of the authenticity of a disciple is humility and next Jesus will give us more insight to life of a genuine disciple.

A Tree Is Known by Its Fruit

(Matt 7:15-20)

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.

Jesus now turns to horticulture to bring an illustration on how to tell who is a true disciple or a Blind Guide.

We can clearly understand when we have a healthy apple tree, it is cultivated, watered, fertilized, and branches and leaves are green and healthy, we know that good fruit can be picked from that tree.

However, you don't have to study horticulture to understand, that if a tree sits neglected of nutrients, has little or no water, and is not properly pruned, and is sickly, that the fruit will be undesirable.

The fruit produced reveals the kind of tree it is.

Jesus also explains that thorns cannot produce figs, and bramble bushes cannot produce grapes.

That is obvious even to a child, and now Jesus transfers this horticulture lesson over to the true disciple, and makes clear that the fruit of our lives will be an indicator of what kind of tree we are, or others are.

Remember the code reader that gave the proper diagnostic report to Pastor Joe, well, God's Word here, is the tester, and Jesus explains that a good man out of the good treasure of his heart will bring forth good, and the evil person will bring forth evil.

The inner disposition of the person is revealed by what is produced by their lives.

If they are selfish, and narcissistic, then it will be obvious in the actions and choices they make in life.

However if a person is others minded, loving, full of joy, longsuffering, kind, good, faithful, gentle, and self-controlled, then we can understand the fruit of their lives are that of the Spirit.

Now notice in this test Jesus puts forth, He ends by saying, "For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks."

You see a person can have an outward religion, or even a phony temperament, but if you listen carefully to a person's words that come out of their mouth and assess their deeds correctly, you will be able to identify the condition of their heart.

Jesus clearly links the words that a person uses as evidence to the state of a person's soul.

It surely is an evidence in our own lives that Christ changes our speech habits.

You know for me, on the job site, there was not a sentence that came from my mouth that did not have horrifying and appalling curse word in it.

My boss was always challenged me to change my language.

I was a womanizer and a foul-mouthed man.

And my mouth revealed the state of my heart prior to Christ.

And you know, Christ took many things right away when I surrendered to Him, He took my addictions, my

love for alcohol and cigarettes, He took my meth addiction.

But my mouth was such a struggle.

I had used such filthy language so much, so often, that I said those things without even thinking about it anymore.

Those blanketie blanks were the words that filled in the gaps between sentences.

Yet after Jesus came in, and took up residence in my life, all the sudden I was sickened by my own language.

And after every curse word or perverted saying that came from my mouth, my inside was just repulsed.

And it felt hopeless, I remember 2 years after Christ came into my life, I still struggled with this filthy talk, and one day, so ashamed and embarrassed as I just was defeated, I cried out to Jesus.

“Lord, I hate the words that are coming from my mouth, they ruin my witness immediately, I have tried and tried to clean my speech up, and I cannot do it, Jesus will you help me to stop talking this way?”

And you know, in those 2 years, I never asked Him, I just tried to do it in my own strength.

And that day Christ answered my prayer, and you know I never cussed foolishly again.

My co-workers took notice, and you know, I always swung a big ol’ 32oz. Vaughn Hammer, and there

would be days I would just smash my thumb trying to nail something up high, and I had no urge to cuss.

I had self-control, and they would just marvel, my thumb just popped open like a tomato, but I stayed calm.

Now that was not because of any new age trick on my part, no meditation practices, or calming techniques, it was out of a desperate prayer from a filthy man, that Jesus gave me strength.

Jesus cleaned my heart up, and I began filling it up with God's Word.

Understand this morning if your speech is filthy, it is only revealing the type of tree you are.

And out of the abundance of the heart your mouth speaks.

Coming to Christ honestly about the condition of your heart, is the only way to clean that heart up.

A true disciple is known by the fruit of their life, and by the words that come out of their mouth.

So, now Jesus will close out His Sermon on the Plain with a final parable.

This is the final diagnostic test Jesus puts forth to show a true disciple against that of a false one.

This test will be the most difficult and refining test.

Build on the Rock

(Matt 7:21-27)

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."

Jesus starts by once again challenging these disciples. He already called them hypocrites, in order that they address their inner heart.

Jesus now asks another searching question.

Maybe you this morning, call Jesus your Lord.

Jesus asks why do you call me "Lord, Lord, and not do the things I say?"

Jesus is pointing out that some have a dishonest heart.

While they are confessing that Jesus is their Lord, the things He is teaching them, and asking of them are not manifesting in their lives.

Understand Jesus is telling His followers that it is actually the doing of His will that matters.

The Bling Guides of the day studied God's Word tirelessly, they had incredible doctrinal battles, and endless ramblings, and teachings regarding God's Word.

The Commentaries were many, yet it was only knowledge they possessed.

The disregarded any responsibility to lift a finger to do anything.

Jesus is saying this cannot be with His disciples.

Obedience is the defining factor in His followers.

Now verse 47 Jesus goes on to describe the first step of becoming a disciple, by saying, "Whoever comes to Me,"

We must all come to Jesus first, and then hear His Word, and then do what He asks.

Jesus' own brother wrote in his own epistle....

James 2:18-26 But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe — and tremble! 20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? 23 And

the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.
24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

25 Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?

26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

We must come to Jesus, hear His Word, and do the things asked of us.

This will set you apart in this world.

Remember this sermon so far, Jesus has said that His disciples will be poor, hungry, sorrowful, persecuted, we are to accept these things in regards to our faith in Jesus.

We are willing to take up our cross, lay down our life, for His glory, and for our great reward in heaven.

Then Jesus taught that like Him, His True Disciples will love their enemies, we will be generous givers, and we will not be judgmental.

Then we will be sons and daughters of the Most High. Jesus explained that His True Disciples will be humble, and true in their self-examination.

Our lives will bear good fruit, Fruits of the Spirit.

When these things are heard and obeyed, it really does go against everything the natural man inside us wants to do.

And Jesus illustrates here through this obedience to His Word, that our lives will be strengthened and secure.

Jesus says at the end of verse 47, “I will show you what a man who comes to Me, hears Me, and Obeys me will be like...”

He is like a man 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.

This first builder in Jesus’ illustration is a man with vision.

He is a vigilant person, because he realizes that the calm sunny days will not last forever.

He knows that there are seasons in life, and that one day those dark rain clouds will oppress the land, and the rain will fall and the waters will rise.

So this man works, diligently, digging deeper and deeper until he hit the solid rock.

It was difficult and laborious to get to that foundation, but as he wipes the sweat from his brow, he can now confidently build his structure.

Jesus is likening this builder to any person who comes to the Savior, who hears Jesus' Words, and believes them, and obeys them.

It will be a difficult job to put Jesus' Commands into practice in this fallen world, but the man who has placed His trust in Christ, stands on the Solid Rock.

But you see when that day of testing arrives, when the dark clouds come rolling in, when the rain falls and the floods rise, when the torrents began to pound, and it comes beating and bashing against our lives, we find something out, that our structure is not shaken or moved.

The True Disciple of Christ will withstand the enormous force, as their structure is attached to Jesus the Solid Rock.

In my years of ministry, I have seen the stark contrast in a Believers life to that of an unbeliever in these seasons of storms.

Understand in Jesus' illustration, He truthfully explains that storms will come to all men.

Everyone will go through some kind of storm or storms in their life.

It is a lie going around today, that if I have enough positive thoughts and only think good things, that good things will only come.

This false teaching has even crept into the church through this positive confession doctrine, that anyone immersed in the Word of God would see to be false.

Trials will come, and know that God's Word assures dark stormy days for everyone.

It is not because you lack the faith that you are going through them.

But I have noticed the believer does stand out, not by bypassing these storms, but standing through them.

I just visited a brother in the hospital last week who was back in the emergency room, after years of struggles, with his wife even overcoming cancer, and him having his own fights with that terrible cancer.

He had just gotten a clean bill of health, and thought surely things were looking up, when out of nowhere he was hit again with another health issue.

Now, my heart broke for my brother and we had tearful conversation.

But at the same time, he had a calm, and even a humor about it all.

There was no panic in his outlook, he understood, even in His trial, God was with him, and was actually strengthening him and his wife.

And this has been the story for many believers, the storms of this life come...

Sometimes Death takes our loved ones, there are times we still lose our jobs, we still encounter sickness, our kids rebel, we get in car accidents, we encounter a miscarriage, sometimes many of these can happen at once, and through it all we can say as Job did when he lost everything in his own life...

Job 1:21... "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord."

Understand, for everyone, including the Genuine Disciple the test and crisis is coming.

But as far as the first builder is concerned, he is not put to shame, and he is given grace for each trial.

But Jesus ends His illustration with the careless and foolish builder.

He lived his life as though sunny days were here to stay.

He disregarded the foundation all together, and threw up his structure with no strength under its walls.

This unwise builder represents those who live their lives led by their own sinful promptings.

You all know these double-minded types, they are unstable in all their ways.

They go to and fro chasing new things, following their fleshly desires, and these types even sit among us, they hear God's Word, but they are unmoved and unchanged by it.

Although they like the way it all sounds they have no desire to follow it.

One of the commentators brilliantly assessed these hearers by likening them to that of the crowd on an airplane.

Have you ever noticed that when that self-conscious and uncomfortable flight attendant begins to give instructions on what to do if the plane begins to descend to its doom.

Now those are important and vital instructions, if that plane ever goes down, the wisdom she is giving is so very important.

But what happens as soon as the presentation begins, if you look around the plane, people are putting their headphones on, opening their books, sending that final email or text message or looking out the window.

The crowd is careless and unconcerned, and the presentation ends, and no one knows any different, as they wait now for that same attendant to bring them their drink and snack.

So many today, come to church with the same enthusiasm, they are dragged by their wife, or come so their kids can learn the Bible, but as they sit and the Word goes forth, their focus is on the game after church.

Where they will go to lunch, on the work week ahead, or the date they have next Friday, and the Word's from

the pulpit go whisking by with no concern or second thought.

These types leave church the same way they came in, and Jesus says the person who hears and does nothing and is unmoved, is a doomed man when the storms of this life come.

There is only ruin and destruction ahead, because the sunny days will not last, and that stream is about to be turned into a river's torrent, and that unstable man's life will be greatly ruined.

There was no foundation, if only they had done what Christ had asked of them, they would have had so much hope, but nothing but rubble now makes up their lives.

And the end of this great sermon is a stark warning to the unbeliever.

We are living still in this Day of Grace, and no matter where your life is this morning, no matter what condition you are in, this morning, you can come to Jesus, and hear His Word, and Obey Him.

Your life will never have meaning or purpose until this choice is made.

It is only when we come to Him, and lay down our lives and follow Him, that we will have everlasting peace and hope.

This hope is what carries us through the storms of life.

For the True Disciple, **Rom 5:3-5**

... we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; 4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

The storms of this life refine us, and strengthen us.

This is the final test to discern a True, Genuine, Authentic Disciple of Christ, and to separate them from the Blind Guides, the Hypocrites, and the phonies.

The Genuine will still be standing.

If you have never given your life to Jesus Christ, if your life is built on the ever-shifting sand of this world, and you are here this morning looking for something more stable.

Jesus can be your Rock and Foundation today, come to Him, during this last song, please make your way up to pray with one of the Elders and Pastors that will be up front here.

They can pray with you the prayer of salvation, and you can go into this New Year as a New Creation, with a fresh start, standing on firm ground.

Come to Jesus today.

Now for the rest of us, perhaps the storms are causing a vehement torrent that is beating against your life this morning.

You are going through trials and tribulation, maybe you simply need prayer this morning for strength, to be empowered by the Holy Spirit, come forward and get prayer.

This world is difficult and trying, what a Joy it is to know, that our foundation is secure in Jesus.

Amen?

Let's Pray.