



The Essentials: The Gospel of Luke

Session 2: Luke 6:36-49

Opening Collect

Together: Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Read: Luke 6:36-49

Opening Thought:

Like the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7), the Sermon on the Plain is one of the most central teachings of Jesus on how human beings should live. Though similar to the SOTM, this teaching from Luke has some distinctives—shorter length, greater attention to the materially poor, the specific audience (the disciples), and a few unique sections of content, such as vv. 37 and 38. While it is easy to couch these teachings as either 1) impossible to do and thus largely given to highlight our need for God's grace, or 2) legalistic demands that Christians must pursue in order to be saved, perhaps an additional way to think about these teachings is to couch them within the broader goals of the Gospel writers—namely to speak truthfully of who Jesus is. As the full expression of who God is and what it means to be fully human, Jesus *and* his teachings tell us how we might image God rightly to the rest of the world. The Sermon on the Plain tells us what kinds of behavior reflect God's character, and they give instruction on how we might most fully become who were always made to be.

Discussion:

1. Read the passage closely and describe the things that Jesus wants his followers to do.
2. How important is it to do the things that Jesus tells us to do? How does he describe the consequences of *not* doing his commandments?
3. Jesus seems more concerned about becoming particular kinds of people rather than simply knowing or saying particular things. Why do you think that is?
4. What do you think it looks like to be a merciful person? And what might it look like to produce "good fruit"?
5. Given the metaphors of growing fruit and building houses, what do you think it might look like to pursue becoming this kind of person?

Check in and Closing Prayer

Luke 6:36-49

³⁶ Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.

³⁷ “Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; ³⁸ give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”

³⁹ He also told them a parable: “Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit? ⁴⁰ A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher. ⁴¹ Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? ⁴² How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye.

⁴³ “For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, ⁴⁴ for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thornbushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. ⁴⁵ 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.

⁴⁶ “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you? ⁴⁷ Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: ⁴⁸ 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. ⁴⁹ But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.”