

**Text:** Luke 6:39-49

**Title:** The Fruitful and Stable Life

**Truth:** In His sermon, Jesus teaches us how to respond to a sermon.

**Date/Location:** January 14, 2024 at FBC

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## **Introduction**

Our Lord Jesus uses humor along with serious teaching to direct us so that we will be clear-eyed, fruitful, and stable Christians.

### **I. Clear Sight, v. 39-42**

- A. The Lord's illustrations are memorable. The first is about a blind person trying to lead another blind person. He is not making fun of blind people! Far be it from the Lord to do that—Exodus 4:11 and John 9:3 combine to tell us that God decided to create people the way that they are, so that His works might be revealed in them. What Jesus is saying is that one person without the capacity to see (or perceive) is not going to be able to lead or teach or guide another person of the same sort. The spiritual teachers of Israel were like this. They were not suitable guides.
- B. Jesus moves from parable to plain teaching. If you have a teacher who practices well then you can learn much from him. If you have a teacher who does not know his material well, you will be like him and not know it very well. In such a case, only as you move to other teachers or self-study under God's Spirit, then you will advance farther than your teacher. You can get blind spots from self-study to be sure, but you can also get them from a teacher who has them. You need to pick your teachers carefully.
- C. The third thought the Lord brings in this paragraph is about removing sin from your own life before exposing it in others. You see the speck of a sin in his life and want to help him remove it. But if you have a plank in your own eye (!) it will be quite hard to effectively assist. You will be like the blind leading the blind, or a teacher who is less qualified than the student you are trying to teach! This is generally applicable to all people; it is specifically applicable to the blind teachers of Israel.

- D. Get yourself into a mode of clear sight. Take the time and make the effort to do that. Shine the spotlight on yourself rather than pointing it at everyone else. Make sure you are not presuming that you are better than you are. How can you do that? Look in the mirror of God’s word. Here is an example: Romans 2:17-24 talks about the same thing. Do that with your spouse and family especially; with other brothers or sisters as opportunity permits; with the church whenever the doors are open. Then you will be able to help others by guiding them.
- E. This text can be misused: “You have sin in your own life; what business do you have confronting me about sin in my life?!” If that were the case, no one could ever tell anyone else about a needed area of repentance. A pastor could not preach righteousness. A father could not lead his family members to repent of sins. Obviously, those are ridiculous misrepresentations of the text.
- F. The text is rightly used if you are a person who finds it easier to see faults in others than you see in yourself—and this text helps you to slow down that tendency. It is rightly applied in everyone’s life because it will help us to be more deliberate about confrontation, and it will help us to have mercy toward the person you are speaking to. Suppose it is your own child. Do you remember those specs, splinters, and boards you had in your own life at their age? Or the beams and logs you still have now?

## **II. Fruitfulness, v. 43-45**

- A. The illustration defining a tree by its fruit is simple, clear, and convicting. Simply put, you know a tree by its fruit—good or bad. All else being equal, you would not call a tree “good” if it is bearing bad fruit. (Of course, you might imagine a situation where you have a good tree, but a bug came along and ate holes in all the fruit, which is not a strike against the tree itself.)
- B. Examples of bad “trees” are thorns and bramble bushes. Those do not produce figs or grapes. Secular lives do not produce godly conduct. Fleshly means cannot create spiritual outcomes.
- C. In the same way people’s conduct is like fruit. A good man produces good, and an evil man produces evil. If the bad-fruit-man

insists that he is a good man, or others say he is a good man, he is still bad. The fruit produced invariably shows what is in the heart.

D. Yes, that stuff coming out of your mouth is *you*. Those bad thoughts running around in your head are *you*. That evil attitude is *you*. Your fault. God did not put those things in your mind. If you care, you will repent of the critical spirit, lustful thoughts, gossip, and the like. Repenting is what a good tree type of Christian does.

### III. Spiritual Stability, v. 46-49

- A. I could also title this section “spiritual steadfastness,” or “a strong spiritual foundation.” It is a fitting conclusion to the sermon, with its stern warning as to what happens if you ignore what He says, and a blessing if you pay good attention.
- B. If you want to be sure about your spiritual life...if you want a strong and stable base upon which to build...if you want confidence in judgment, then you need to be a hearer *and* doer of the word. James says the same in 1:22-25. Even the under Law of Moses, believers observed the same thing: it is not the hearers of the law that are just in the sight of God, but the doers (Romans 2:13). (Need I add the usual disclaimer? No one is empowered to “do” God’s will unless he or she is born from above. This prevents us from thinking we can justify ourselves.)
- C. Jesus talks about two kinds of people: there is the person who comes to Jesus, hears His sayings, and does them. Then there is the person who hears and does nothing. There are other types of people as well:

	<b>Comes</b>	<b>Hears</b>	<b>Does</b>	<b>Note</b>
1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Genuine Christian; strong foundation
2	Yes	Yes	No	Professing Christian; no foundation
3	Yes	No	No	Unsaved; no foundation
4	No	No	No	Unsaved; no foundation
5	No	No	Yes	Romans 2:26 type person; unsaved; no foundation

The “Lord, Lord” type is #2. He professes to call Jesus Lord but is not busy about doing what the Lord asks of him. He honors the Lord with his mouth, but his heart is not with Jesus (Matt. 15:8).

There are other people who do not have any substantial connection to God—maybe just a traditional or historical one—and who do decent things. They are not doing them because they have heard the Lord or read Him; they are doing so because in their human nature God has placed some goodness and that goodness has not been totally stamped out by a poor upbringing, bad friends, degraded society, failed education, and the like.

- D. This imagery becomes especially instructive when harsh weather comes—a house on a good foundation versus one without a proper foundation. During the easy times, both houses seem fine. They are livable and keep you warm and dry. But when a storm comes and brings wind and floods with it, then the structure will be tested, and the real character of the foundation will become evident.
- E. Likewise, if your life has been full of hearing God’s word, but not *doing* it, you will fall and be ruined. Ruination will come when you stand before God. You do know that you will appear before God after you die like a person stands before a judge, right? Both small and great will stand before God and be judged (Rev. 20:12). Search deep inside your mind, or heart, or whatever you want to call it, and see if you too can sense that you are not ultimate; you and this earth and its inhabitants and the cosmos are not all that is. It took Someone to design you, and to build and kickstart the universe. This is just like a running motorcycle proves that there is a person who designed and built the bike, and a person who put gas in and started it. You too must face your Maker.
- F. On the other hand, the person who has heard the Word and trusted in God through Jesus and made decent effort to be obedient to the Lord will not be shaken. The judgment will go well for that person.
- G. The Lord probably taught this same message on many occasions. In Matthew 7:24-27 He called person #1 wise, and person #2 foolish.

- H. Theologians can be foolish. Some spend a lot of time reading and studying the Bible or reading and studying what others have said about the Bible. But then they take no care to figure out how to obey what they have learned, to apply what they have read. That is a real danger in theological education. Christians can be foolish. We can pass our eyes over text in Scripture, or not read the Bible at all, hear a little bit at church, or kind of pay attention in church because we are supposed to do that, but a couple of hours later things are about like they were before! Pastors can be foolish too. Maybe the pastor does not spend a lot of time in the Bible; or maybe focuses on other material or downloads his sermons from a website. He can be nothing more than a speechwriter or counselor, but not a serious follower of the Lord.
- K. But of course, there are wise Christians and pastors and theologians who take very seriously what the Lord is saying and put it to practice.

## Conclusion

A fruitful, strongly rooted tree is a good picture of what the Christian life should be like. A wild fig tree in South Africa had a tap root that was 400 feet deep. One winter rye grass patch had nearly 387 miles of roots. If you hear and do the words of God, you will be like such a tree, planted by a river, with strong roots, well-watered, leafy, fruitful, very vibrant. Whatever you set your hand to will prosper (Psalm 1:1-3). Part of the reason for that is that you will set your hands to the right kinds of things!

If you want this kind of life, the only way is to (a) follow the right teacher—the Lord Jesus; (b) bear good fruit in your life; (c) hear and obey the Divine Teacher.

In response to His sermon then, or any sermon, do not presume to fix everyone else's problems—rather you carefully consider your own ways and the ways of your family. You ask yourself if you are bearing good fruit or not. And you consider whether you are hearing and doing, or just hearing.