

Luke - Part 2

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes the radical teachings of Jesus on love, mercy, and the true nature of discipleship amidst persecution and societal pressures.

Duration: 56:18

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Luke 6:21-22, Luke 6:48, Luke 13:34, Luke 14:12-14, Luke 14:25-34

Topics: "Luke"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being disciples of Jesus rather than just evangelizing. He highlights the need for Christians to live in a way that glorifies God and builds His church. The preacher encourages pastors to feed God's flock with the word of God instead of flogging them. He also discusses Jesus' compassion for Jerusalem and the importance of showing compassion to others. Additionally, the preacher emphasizes the need for Christians to let Jesus train them day by day so that they can become like their teacher.

Transcript

Let's turn to God's Word. We turn now to Luke's Gospel. We can continue our study in the Gospel of Luke in Chapter 6. In Chapter 6 we have the Sermon on the Mount in sort of a condensed form in verses 20 to 49.

I'll just pick out a few verses. It speaks here about those who hunger for righteousness in verse 21. And those of us who are serving the Lord in difficult situations or who will be serving the Lord in the future in difficult situations where you are persecuted, misunderstood, criticized, harassed, please remember these words.

Those who live in comfortable circumstances may not need this, but verse 22, blessed are you when men hate you. Do you believe that? That you are blessed when men hate you? Blessed are you when men ostracize you. Ostracize you means they won't have anything to do with you.

It may be your relatives, it may be other Christians, it may be heathen people, it may be your neighbors, it may be anybody. They put you away because you're a Christian, because you're a disciple of Jesus and you stand for the whole counsel of God. Blessed are you when they cast insults at you.

How many of you believe that you're a blessed man, blessed woman, when people not just insult you but throw multitudes of insults at you? You're blessed when they spurn your name as evil. That means as soon as they hear your name, they say, oh, we don't have anything to do with that man. Are you one like that? You are a blessed man.

And if you are all these things combined, that means people hate you, put you away, cast insults at you and spurn your name as evil, you are indeed one of the most blessed men on the face of the earth. Because I believe what Jesus said. Why is it then Christians seek for popularity and honor and don't want to offend anybody, don't want to hurt anybody? That is another type of Christianity.

Was Jesus like that? If the bridegroom was not like that, if the bridegroom was hated, insulted, ostracized and his name was spurned as evil, why is the bride not being willing, not willing to align herself with the bridegroom? And look at the opposite. In that day, when these things happen, do you know what you should do? Don't go to your room depressed and gloomy. That's the day, it says in verse 23, you must leap for joy.

You know these churches where they dance in the spirit. You know the time to dance in the spirit? When people throw you out and insult you and cast out your name as evil, that's the time it says you must leap for joy. Because your reward is great in heaven, because that's exactly how they treated every single prophet in Old Testament times.

But, verse 26, if all people say nice things about you, then you are in a pathetic state, because that's exactly how they treated all the false prophets in the Old Testament. Do you believe the words of Jesus or you don't believe it? You believe things have changed in the 20th century? They have never changed in any century. In all the history of mankind, false prophets are always praised and accepted and true prophets are rejected.

Let that encourage you in the days to come, when you find problems from others. How should we treat these people? Verse 27, love them, do good to them. When somebody harms you, hurts you, insults you, you know what you should pray? This is what I always pray.

Lord, please give me an opportunity to serve them, to do good to them, to bless them, so that they know that for all the evil they have done to me, I don't hold anything in my heart against them. I want to serve them, I want to help them, even financially I'm willing to help them, so that I manifest that my kingdom does not belong to this world. I belong to another kingdom.

You cannot make me hate you, no matter what you try. I belong to another kingdom, which is a kingdom full of love, there's not an atom of hatred there. I can bless, verse 28, those who curse me.

That's why we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. You can't do it without being filled with the Spirit. You cannot love your enemies, you may love half of them, but you can't love all your enemies, if you're not filled with the Spirit.

To bless those who curse you and to pray for those who mistreat you. Is there somebody mistreating you? Did you pray for him? Then you have not obeyed scripture. How are you a disciple? People mistreat you and you just forgive them.

That's not enough. You forgive them, that's good. You've got to pray for them now.

They hit you on one cheek, you say, fine, I'm not going to fight with you over that. They take away your coat, you say, you can take my shirt too. It's a completely different principle of life.

From the way of this world where everybody's in a rat race to push the other fellow down, to grab and to climb on top of people and here we are proclaiming another way of life. If you want to build the body of Jesus Christ, teach these words to your disciples, to the people in your church. Teach them to do everything that Jesus commanded.

And if you do good, verse 33, only to those who are good to you, there's no, you don't get any marks for that, you just get zero. If you give a gift to somebody who has given you a gift, you get zero from God for that. You do good to somebody who has been good to you, you get zero.

But if you do good to somebody who has been evil to you, then you get marks. Another thing, verse 31, exactly in the way you want people to treat you, treat them also in the same way. Let me ask you a simple question.

How many of you like other people gossiping about you behind your back? You don't like it? Then don't gossip about other people behind their back. Simple. How many of you like people who are jealous of you and scheming against you to make life difficult for you? You don't like it? Don't do it to other people.

It's a wonderful law that can solve many, many problems in your life. Just as you want other people to treat you, treat them in the same way. Do you want people to be merciful to you when you made a mistake and blundered and done something stupid? Sure.

We all do stupid things. Then when you see somebody else doing something stupid, be merciful to him. Okay.

Yeah, many other things like that. There's one area where we are told to be exactly like our Heavenly Father, verse 36, and that is in mercy. It's the only area where we can be like God here on this earth.

We cannot be as holy as God on this earth. We cannot be as loving as God on this earth. We cannot be as wise as God or as powerful as God.

But there's one thing we can be like God on this earth that is merciful. That means if God has got ten enemies, He forgives all ten. If you got ten enemies, forgive all ten, not nine of them.

Be merciful as your Heavenly Father is merciful. It's one of the most important requirements in a servant of God, an attitude of mercy and forgiveness and goodness to people who are evil towards Him. And don't be tight-fisted.

Give, verse 38, 37, don't judge others. Leave them. God is able to judge them without your help.

Okay. Verse 40, a disciple is not above his teacher, but if you allow the teacher to train you fully, one day you'll be like your teacher. Praise God for that wonderful promise.

If you allow the teacher to train you day by day by day by day by day, one day you'll be completely like your teacher. That's my goal. I hope it's your goal too.

Chapter 7, I'd like you to look at verse 13. Just this little expression, when the Lord saw this widow who had lost her son, the only son, He felt compassion for her. You find this expression coming many many

times.

When He saw sick people, He had compassion. I remember once when I was visiting another country, somebody came up to me at the end of the meeting and said, Brother Zack, I feel that God is calling me to have a gift of healing. A lot of people would like to get the gift of healing.

And I said, well, he was a young fellow and I knew he was just looking for the gift which everybody looks for. I said, before you get the gift of healing, I would ask you, go and ask the Lord to give you compassion for people. Otherwise you'll ruin yourself with whatever gift you have.

Compassion was the thing that moved Jesus to teach, to heal the sick. Every ministry in the church must flow out of the compassionate heart of Jesus. That's what we need to have some fellowship with.

Ask God to give you compassion in your heart for suffering humanity. Think much of the people around you who are suffering, deceived and led astray by the devil and allow God to move your heart with compassion. And from that compassion, go out and serve and preach and teach and pray for them.

Okay, we move on to verse 32, sorry, 36 onwards. It says one of the Pharisees invited Jesus for a meal and he went. Jesus wasn't so proud that he would not go to the house of Pharisees.

He'd go anywhere because he could bless people. He didn't go only to the houses of sinners. He went to the houses of Pharisees too.

And there we read of this sinful woman who came and anointed his feet. And Simon the Pharisee thought, well, if this man was a prophet, he should know who's touching him. And then Jesus told this parable of the man who had forgiven somebody 500 denarii, 741, and another person he forgave 50 denarii.

Both could not repay and he forgave both of them. Which one will love him more? And Simon said, naturally, the one who was forgiven more. And Jesus said, you have judged correctly.

You see this woman, when I came to your house, you gave me no water to wash my dirty feet. This woman, from the time I have come here, she has been wiping my feet with her tears. You did not embrace me when I came in.

This woman has kissed my feet from the time I came here. You did not anoint my head with oil. She has anointed my feet.

Why? Because she recognizes how much she has been forgiven. You don't. So what is Jesus saying here? The one who is forgiven much, verse 47, loves much.

The one who is forgiven little, loves little. Now I want to apply that verse to us. You know, all of us have got that false humility, which says, oh, I am such a terrible sinner.

Are you? If you are such a terrible sinner, then you must love the Lord more than anybody else. He who is forgiven much, loves much. Don't just go around saying you are a terrible sinner.

If you feel you are the worst sinner, you should be manifesting more love than any other brother around you. This is false humility and hypocrisy that I have seen everywhere in Christendom. People say, oh, I am the chiefest of sinners.

It is a very nice word to use. But then, they should be serving like the Apostle Paul. But I find these fellows who say they are chiefest of sinners are living to make money and living for their own honor and are pretty proud.

I say, they don't believe they are the chiefest of sinners. That is all pious language, just to get a reputation for humility. Don't use that word again, unless you can serve like the Apostle Paul, unless you are willing to sacrifice everything.

If you are forgiven much, you must love much. If you love little and you serve little, that is because you believe deep down in your heart you have been forgiven little. I believe I have been forgiven much.

And that is why I want to spend all my life and energy showing my love for the Lord by living for Him. Whether I am sick or I am not sick, I want to serve the Lord. No silly excuse will prevent me from serving the Lord, because I have been forgiven much.

Do you know that you have been forgiven much? You don't realize it. That is why you don't love much and that is why you don't serve much. That is why you are so calculating in the way you live for God.

If you realize how much the Lord loved you and forgave you, you would say, Lord, I am willing to sacrifice everything, my life and everything I have, to love you, to serve you, to live for your purposes, no more my personal ambitions or purposes. It all depends on how much you know and realize you have been forgiven. Okay, we go to chapter eight, verse two and three.

Among those who went around with Jesus, he went from village to village, preaching and teaching, verse one. And the twelve disciples were with him. And do you know that in Jesus' team there were also certain women.

Now some people believe that women cannot serve the Lord. But here we read Jesus took them around. The Old Testament prophets did not.

You never find any Old Testament prophet taking women around with him. But Jesus did. Because he raised the level of women in that Jewish society to show that they were equal in God's eyes and they could serve as much as anybody else.

And it says about Mary Magdalene. Do you know that Mary Magdalene was the first woman to see Jesus after his resurrection? After Jesus rose from the dead, God gave that honor not only to a woman, but to the most sinful woman in Jesus' company who had been forgiven. He picked her.

Not even his mother got the opportunity. It wasn't Peter, it wasn't John. It was Mary Magdalene who got the honor to see the resurrected Jesus.

And she was there in that team, verse 2. And Joanna, the wife of Cusa, that means he had some very rich people. Can you imagine the palace, the king's palace manager's wife? Can you imagine what his salary was like? He must have been living in a palace almost as good as Herod's. That's where this woman lived, an extremely wealthy woman.

And this wealthy woman was a disciple of Jesus along with this prostitute type of Mary Magdalene. These are the type of people Jesus had. He was not against the rich people.

He said, rich or poor, you can be my disciples. And these wealthy women like Joanna, Susanna, they gave a lot of their money for the support of Jesus. Because till the age of 30, Jesus was a carpenter.

After that, how was he living? He was living by the gifts people gave. He never asked anybody for anything. He never promised his disciples a salary.

But he took care of their needs. And it was these wealthy women who gave and he took it. He used their gifts for supporting his disciples.

That's what we read in verse 3. That's a great encouragement for sisters. It's a great encouragement for rich people who can use their money for the support of God's work. And then further we read in verses 16 to 18 where the Lord talks about light.

He says, what is the purpose of light? When you put a lamp in your room, you don't cover it with a container. You don't put it under the bed. A lamp in a dark room is always put in a prominent place so that everybody who comes in can see the light.

If you are a Christian and the light of Jesus has come into your heart, your light must shine in such a way that everybody who comes in must see you are a Christian. You know, I have seen banks, government offices where people hang pictures of Hindu idols and gods. Have you seen a bank where a Christian officer will hang up a calendar with a Bible verse? There may be some.

I haven't seen one yet. The Christians are ashamed. The Christian officers are ashamed in their office to put - I saw one the other day of one Christian officer who put it there.

A lady. I was very happy to see it. When I went first to her office, it was not there.

I gave her a book of mine. Next time I went, it was there. I was very thankful to see that.

But it's very rare. The Hindus are not ashamed to put the picture of their idols on the wall. The Christians are ashamed to hang a verse there because it will affect their promotion prospects.

They have got a light and they hide it underneath because they are worried about their promotion. What a tragedy! What a terrible tragedy that is! Don't be ashamed of being a Christian. In the most difficult places you can be a witness for Christ.

I remember when I was working in the Navy. You can't go around witnessing in the Navy, but I used to keep a Bible on my table. Nobody can stop me from keeping a Bible on my table.

I used to keep some tracts there. Nobody can stop me. I am not witnessing.

I am just keeping these things there. If somebody wants they can take it. I am not giving it to people.

They can come and take it. You know there are ways of letting your light shine if you want to. But if you are worried about promotion prospects and what people will say and this type of thing, then of course you will be a witness only inside the church building.

We have to be a witness where it is dark, not where there are already plenty of lights. Okay, let's move on to chapter 8 and verse 44. Here we read about this woman who came and touched the hem of his garment.

It is a beautiful example of someone. A lot of people were crowding around Jesus. I think of church meetings where a lot of people like us crowd around Jesus, but in the midst one woman comes with faith and touches and gets something which all the other people don't get.

I believe whenever we come to a meeting we should seek to be like that woman. I say, Lord, today in this meeting hundreds of people are going to come and sit at your feet, but I want to be like that woman who reaches out through the crowds and touches you and gets something from you before I go away. The others all just sat there and crowded around, listened and went away.

I want to get something. That's the way we should go to every meeting. Chapter 9 and verse 16.

Here we read about the feeding of the 5,000. I want you to see something about how he fed the 5,000. I believe this is the way God can use us to feed other people.

He took the five loaves. That's what needs to happen first. This little boy, all that he had was five loaves and two fish.

He did not give three loaves and one fish to Jesus saying, I better keep something back for myself. I don't know what he'll do with all this. He gave the whole thing.

That's the first thing we see there. When you come to the Lord, give everything. What is the next thing God does? He blessed the five loaves and two fish.

That's the next thing God has to do with us. When we give everything to him, he will bless us, anoint us, fill us with the Holy Spirit. Still we are not ready to be used to the multitude.

There is one more step. He broke it. Are you willing for that? He took, he blessed and he broke.

How does he break us? Through the circumstances, through situations. I have seen multitudes of good believers. God has taken them, he has blessed them, but he is not able to break them.

They are so self-confident. So they remain like that, unbroken, five loaves forever and ever. I'm not talking about numbers.

I'm talking about quality. Even the cults, Jehovah's Witnesses have got numbers. Mormons have got numbers.

I'm talking about quality. Don't glory in numbers being added to your church. It means nothing.

Quality. What type of people are coming to your church? Are they disciples? Or just numbers, converts? Every cult, false religions have got numbers increasing by the thousands. That means nothing.

Quality of person. You know, it's like the story of the lion and the rabbit was having an argument, the lion and the rabbit. And the rabbit said, do you know how fast I can have children? You know, rabbits can have children pretty fast.

A lion can't. Do you know in one year how many children I can have? So many rabbits I can have. And the lion said, well I can have only one, but it's a lion.

So it's better to get one that's a disciple than to be like rabbits multiplying so many that are just converts. Please remember that. So quality, that's the thing.

Chapter 9, we read here in he broke and then he gave to the multitude. So when God succeeds in breaking you, then he can feed the multitude and many can be blessed. Okay, let's turn to chapter 9, verse 23, one of the most important verses in Luke.

If anyone wants to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross every day and follow me. You cannot follow Jesus unless you're willing to deny yourself. That means anything that yourself wants, say no.

I'm going to put this self-life to death every day. My will, no. What is the cross? Where your will crosses God's will, that's where you have the cross.

We can say like your will is like the horizontal arm of the cross and God's will is like the vertical arm of the cross and it's crossing 90 degrees. That's where the cross comes. And on that cross I have to die because my will is going this way and God's will is going this way.

And I die on that cross and I do God's will. That's what it means to take up the cross. I give up my will, I give up my choice, my ambitions, my desires, my desire to react to somebody the way he treated me.

Okay. In chapter 9, further we read in verse 49, this is a very good word for those of us who are disturbed by other people who have another type of ministry different from ours. Verse 49, John said to Jesus, Lord we saw somebody casting out demons and he doesn't come with us.

We are preaching discipleship and that fellow is in the business of casting out demons. What did Jesus say? You know today there are people like that. They say discipleship is the main thing.

These fellows are only spending their time casting out demons. They are all stupid, foolish people. We must stop them.

Jesus said don't stop them. You mind your business and let him do his business. He's also doing something.

Jesus said because don't hinder him. He's not against you. He's for you.

Why are you bothered? See, I find today in Christendom, there are a lot of people who feel everybody must have the same ministry they have. If I'm doing evangelism, other people must do evangelism. If I'm only planting local churches, everybody must plant local churches.

Nobody else must do anything else. This is the only work that God is doing in the world is what I'm doing. What fantastic conceit.

There are a lot of people like that in every group. Some people say healing because they are doing healing. Everybody in the world must do only healing.

These are all immature babies. A mature person realizes that God gives different ministries to different people. Okay, that fellow wants to cast out demons.

Let him do it. You are called to do discipleship. Do it.

Another fellow is called to do evangelism. Let him do it. Another person is called to do perhaps social work like Mother Teresa.

Let her do it. Let's not get into conflict with all these people. Together, something of Christ can be manifested in all of it.

You know, there's a variety in creation. God did not make every flower the same color, same shape, same size. How boring it would have been.

But the flowers are so different. The colors are so different. The rainbow, so many different colors.

So it is in the body of Christ. But narrow-minded people can never see any other ministry other than their own. And this is a word to them.

Don't hinder them. Don't join them. Did you get it? Don't hinder them.

Don't join them. Why not join them? Because that's not your ministry. If it is your ministry, go ahead and join them.

But if it's not your ministry, don't hinder them. Don't join them. Praise the Lord for him.

Let him do it. Whether he's doing it right or wrong, he has to answer to his master. You do what God called you to do.

If only there were this spirit in Christendom, what a difference it would make. See, there are people, for example, I want to take this attitude to Bible schools. Some people feel nobody should go to Bible school because they never went to one.

And some people feel everybody must go to Bible school because they went to one. I say, who's right? I say, both are wrong. I say, why can't you do it your way and leave the other person to do it his way? You think God has only got one standard mold of doing everything? I don't think so.

When I was young and stupid, I used to believe such things. But I've grown a little older and wiser now. And I find that God works in various ways.

So don't think that the way God led somebody else is necessarily the way he should lead you. That's what we learned from this passage. Okay, now we go to chapter nine and verse.

It says he was going to Samaria, verse 52. Now this is very interesting. Samaria is the place where just about a year earlier, there was a great revival.

You know, the woman of Samaria, you read in John chapter four, Jesus had gone there and the whole city was revived and they all valued Jesus. And we would have thought now that Jesus is coming again to Samaria and verse 52, he sent messengers ahead of him to make arrangements for him in Samaria and they did not receive him, verse 53. Have you had that experience? I've had that experience many times.

I go to some place where I'm invited for meetings and after one year they don't want to see me again because so many people got converted and because so many people decided to follow the Lord and they didn't want to stay in those dead systems anymore. And perhaps that's what happened in Samaria. You see, the Samaritans didn't go down to Jerusalem to worship in the temple there because from the time of the Northern Kingdom, they were having their own worship there.

That's what the woman of Samaria said. Our father said this mountain is good enough, but you people say you have to go to Jerusalem. But after Jesus came and he came with this broad attitude, maybe some of the Samaritans started going to Jerusalem and that disturbed some of the other Samaritans.

And he said, if we let this fellow back in here, something will happen. Our denomination will get all broken up. So they did not receive him.

So what do you do when some denomination does not receive you? Do you call down the curses of God upon them? That's what James and John wanted to do. Lord, these godless backsliders, these all Babylonians, let's call down the fire of God upon them. And Jesus said, you don't know what spirit you are of.

Verse 55, the son of man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. Brother, if somebody does not receive you, just humble yourself and go somewhere else. It's not God's will for you to be there.

Don't call down curses upon them and call down fire upon them and all that type of stuff, because Jesus will not support you in that type of action, because he did not come to destroy people. He came to save people. What we see in all these examples is Jesus was trying to get his disciples to have a large heart.

You know, I've seen that very often with Christian leaders and their followers. The leader has got a large heart. His followers have got a very narrow heart, exactly like Jesus and his disciples.

You know, let me tell you a little story from 200 years ago when there was great controversy about Calvinism and Arminianism between John Wesley's followers. John Wesley and his followers who preached Arminianism, you can be lost after you're saved, and George Whitefield's followers 200 years ago in England, 250 years ago, who preached Calvinism, once saved, always saved. John Wesley and George Whitefield, though they held different views on this, they were both godly men.

When George Whitefield died, one of John Wesley's followers asked John Wesley, do you think George Whitefield will be in heaven? Will you meet George Whitefield in heaven? And John Wesley said, I don't think so, because he'll be so near the throne, and I will be so far back, I may not be able to see him there. Look at the attitude of this godly man, and look at the attitude of the followers. The followers were always thinking this man's doctrine is wrong, he'll go to hell.

John Wesley's attitude was, his doctrine may be different from mine, but he was a far more godly man than me, and he'll be so close to the throne. You see that a leader is always large-hearted. The followers are always very narrow-minded.

You see that in every denomination in Christendom. Sometimes even the leaders are narrow-minded, then it's pathetic. Okay, we come to chapter 10 and verse 5. Jesus said to his disciples, whenever you enter a house, first of all say, peace be to this house.

That's a good example for us to follow. Wherever we go, to bring peace. We are instruments of peace, like Francis of Assisi who prayed, Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Wherever I go, let me bring peace. And if there is a man of peace there, your peace will rest upon him. If not, it will return to you.

Our homes must be homes of peace, and at least the man must be a man of peace, even if the woman is not a woman of peace. The man must be a man of peace, one who will not quarrel, one who will not fight, one who will not argue, one who will not get into controversies with people. Be a man like that.

Let your home be like that. A peaceful home, a peaceful man. That is where the peace of God rests.

And Jesus said to his apostles, when you go and live in a home, look for such a home. That's the type of home where God dwells. And that's a great challenge to us, to make our home like that.

We move on to verse 19. The Lord says, I have given you authority over all the power of Satan and nothing shall hurt you. Wonderful promise for all those who serve the Lord.

God has given us authority over all the power of Satan. And he says in verse 18, I have watched Satan fall like lightning. The Bible says, resist the devil and he will flee from you.

James 4, 7 and 8. Submit to God, resist the devil and he will flee from you. And at what speed will Satan flee from you? Verse 18 here, with the speed of lightning. Have you seen lightning? 300,000 kilometers a second.

That's the speed of lightning. That's the speed with which the devil will run away from you. At 300,000 kilometers per second.

If you resist him in Jesus name, if you have first humbled yourself before God. I give you authority over all the power of the enemy. Do you know the difference between authority and power? There are two words here.

I give you authority over all the power of the enemy. There's a difference between authority and power. Let me give you an example.

You see a huge truck with a lot of power to go full speed at a hundred kilometers an hour, rushing down the road. And one small little policeman just puts up his hand like that and the truck stops. This is authority.

What the truck has got is power. And there can be ten trucks like that behind it. They'll all stop.

This is a picture of the authority Jesus gives small people like us. When we tell the devil in Jesus name, stop thus far and no further. There's a word like that in the book of Job.

Thus far shall you come and no further. That's what the policeman is saying. Okay, you come that far, you stop there.

Do you believe that God gives us such authority over Satan? He certainly does. We must exercise it. See that policeman has got the entire authority of the government behind him.

If that truck driver does not obey that policeman, he's in trouble. And if the devil doesn't obey me, he's in trouble. Do you believe that? I believe it.

Please remember that. If your life is clean and you're obeying the government, the kingdom of heaven, you've got authority. You just lift up your hand and it stops.

Ten trucks will stop. A hundred trucks will stop. No matter what power they have.

That's the difference between authority and power. But at the end of it all, when you see all these trucks stop, don't rejoice that the demons are subject to you. Rejoice in something even more wonderful than that.

That my name is in the book of life. That I'm a child of my heavenly father. Some people are excited about demons being cast out, sick people being healed, authority.

That's all baby stuff. Rejoice in the fact that you're a son of God, a daughter of God. That's the most important thing.

Now, verse thirty to thirty-seven is the story of the good Samaritan. And you know that story, that Levite and the priest, their sin was that they did nothing. The good Samaritan who belonged to some despised denomination.

The people who belonged to the good denomination did not do anything. But the fellow who belonged to some despised denomination, a Samaritan, he came and helped this poor man. Sometimes, I tell you, it's those people who belong to the denomination which you despise, whom God may accept more than you.

Who was the one who had the right doctrine? The Levite and the priest. But who was the one who did good to that poor man? The Samaritan. Who's the one who's got the right doctrine? Perhaps you.

But it's the other fellow whose doctrines are a bit wrong, who may be more Christ-like than you are towards poor people. I found that a lot of people whose doctrines are right, they don't help poor people. They don't have compassion for the poor.

They glory in their right doctrines and rejoice in their right doctrines on Sunday mornings in the meeting. That's what the Levite and priest. They were going to the meeting.

They are more interested in going to the meeting on time than helping one poor man on the way. The good Samaritan missed his meeting, but he helped somebody. Which is better? Think about it.

That's what Jesus said. The denomination you despise, the Jews despise the Samaritans. Their doctrines are wrong.

They are half-breeds and all that. And Jesus was saying, those despised people whom you despise are more acceptable in my eyes than you with all your correct doctrine and everything else. Think of that.

There are so many groups today that separate from other groups saying, we are building the body of Christ. We have got the right doctrine. We have got this, that and the other.

But how much are you serving those who are in need? There are many Christians who despise somebody like Mother Teresa saying that, well, she didn't have the right doctrines. But brother, I'll tell you, you may discover in heaven that she gets a much better reward than you with all your correct doctrines. I certainly believe that.

I believe she'll get a much better reward than me. I haven't helped the poor in India even 1% as much as she has. I know some of her doctrines were wrong.

I don't question that. And I'm not saying that I'm going to do what she did or believe her doctrines. But I believe we should not despise those who have another ministry, even if they are wrong in certain doctrines

like the Samaritan.

Learn to humble yourself and don't think God values only correct doctrine. He values those who have a compassion for the poor. I was hungry and you fed me.

I was sick and you came to visit me. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. When all the people with their right doctrines were having their meetings, you were the one with the wrong doctrine who came and helped me.

Isn't that possible? Don't despise these people in other groups. That's the word I share with you from this parable. Verse 38 to 42.

Here's another incident which teaches us that Mary, who sat at the feet of Jesus, was more acceptable to God than Martha, who was doing a lot of work, just like the good Samaritan who helped the poor person with his wrong doctrines, was more acceptable to God than the priest and the Levite with the right doctrines who were going to the meeting on Sunday morning. So Martha was doing a lot of work for the Lord, like many of us do. We do so many things for the Lord, not for ourselves.

We are serving here, serving there, serving here, serving there. Mary, what was she doing? She was listening. Now we don't appreciate those who listen because we say, well, the main thing is we got to do something.

You see, this is the balance for the previous parable. Some people can listen to the previous parable of the good Samaritan and say, yeah, that's it. We must keep on doing something for the Lord and help the poor people here, the poor people there.

And so Jesus balances it, the Holy Spirit balances it, with another story, which is a true story, of someone who was doing a lot for the Lord, and when she came before the Lord, the Lord rebuked her and said, that's not the important thing. The important thing is to listen to what I have to say, to sit at my feet and listen to the word of God. This is the balance that we need.

The balance of Mary, who learned to wait upon the Lord and listen to His word, and to be like the good Samaritan who goes out and helps other people. To come into the Lord's presence, to wait upon Him, to listen to Him and to go out and help other poor people. Not just to all the time listen, listen, listen, listen, listen and do nothing.

That's not the way God wants. Nor to be like the good Samaritan, just keep on serving, serving, serving, serving and you don't have any time to listen to what God has to do for you. We see a beautiful balance here in scripture.

In chapter 11, verses 1 to 13, I want to tell you something. It's very dangerous sometimes to take one verse all by itself and try to get a doctrine out of it. Whenever you read a verse, see the context.

For example, Jesus was told, his disciples asked him, he was praying in a certain place, and they had never in their life heard anybody pray like this. And so they said, Lord, boy, this is something I have never heard anybody in my life pray like this. Teach us also to pray.

What was so great about Jesus' prayer? He was not using fancy words or anything like that. He was just talking to his Heavenly Father like a conversation. And the type of prayers which the disciples had heard in

the synagogues was these long bearded Pharisees with their long faces, with their trembling voices, saying, Oh God, this type of stuff.

And Jesus was just talking to his Father like you converse with somebody. And they had never heard prayer like this. And they said, Lord, teach us this type of prayer.

This is real prayer. And he taught them. Our Father, who art in heaven, talk to God like you talk to your daddy.

And he went on. He didn't stop there. Some people stopped there.

He said, I'm teaching you how to pray. Supposing one of your friends comes to your house and you don't have any food for him and it's midnight. You've already eaten enough.

What will you do? Go to your neighbor, bang away at the door at midnight, wake him up, get the food, give it to your friend. This is prayer. Still answering the question, Lord, teach us to pray.

Like that you must go to God when there are people around you in need. Maybe somebody needs ministry which you don't have the ability to help him. Maybe, for example, you had to preach the word and you don't have a word to preach to people.

Go bang in God's presence and say, Lord, give me a word for these people. Maybe you need an anointing to help people. Maybe a gift of healing in some village where maybe it's to cast out demons out of somebody.

Go to God and get that power and deliver that person. That's what he was teaching here. Lord, teach us to pray.

Whatever the need is of the people you are called to serve, not of every Tom, Dick and Harry in the world, the people you are called to serve, the ones who come to you. This man was not going to try and get bread for the whole countryside. It is the one who came to him.

So the ones who come to you, your particular task, go to God, bang away and say, Lord, give me what it takes to help this man. It may be your son. It may be your daughter.

It may be somebody in your home who is needy. Go to God, bang away till you get what you can to help your son or daughter, to help that needy person. And then Jesus said, if you ask like this, verse nine, you'll get.

If you knock like this, it will be open to you. If you seek like this, you'll find everyone, verse 10, every single person who asks like this, knocking, knocking, knocking, knocking till he gets, will receive. The people who knock two, three times and go away, they don't receive.

The people who ask few times and go away, they don't receive. That's why you have not received. But ask like this, knock like this, and every single person will receive.

And then he says, God is a father, verse 11. This is all answering that original prayer. Lord, teach us to pray.

God is a father. If you ask him for fish, you think he'll give you a snake? No. If you ask him for an egg, will he give you a scorpion? You know, fish can look like a snake and a snake can look like a fish, but he won't give you a snake.

A scorpion looks like a boiled egg, I mean a fried egg, but he's not going to give you a scorpion. No, he'll give you an egg. And then what is the ultimate answer? What am I talking about? The Lord says, I'm saying that you must go, verse 13, and ask God to give you the Holy Spirit.

That's the ultimate goal. What have I been telling you all this time? You're telling me to teach you how to pray? Okay, here it is. Go and ask God for the Holy Spirit.

Go and ask your father for the Holy Spirit's power, the Holy Spirit's gifts. Earnestly desire the gifts of the Holy Spirit. That's the only way you can help those people who are in need.

All your knowledge and your Bible study won't help you if you don't have the power of the Holy Spirit. If you don't know how to pray and lay hold of God and get the power of the Holy Spirit, you're wasting your time. Beautiful.

Okay, we move on to chapter 12. We spoke about the leaven of the Pharisees and Jesus says here, explains it, the leaven of the Pharisees is hypocrisy. The word hypocrite is another Greek word like baptism.

Baptism means immersion. Hypocrisy is from the Greek word hypocrites, which means, in ordinary Greek, it means actor. Don't be an actor.

You know what an actor is? Say one of these Hollywood actors who's acting like Moses in the film. Very holy man. And after the acting is over, when he goes home, he's a drunkard and he's living with his third wife or something like that.

That is his real life. Then tomorrow again, the shooting begins for the next scene. Again, he's Moses, holy man carrying the Ten Commandments.

And then he goes home and he's back to his old life again, drinking and fooling around with women and all that. This is an actor. When he comes on the stage, he's a holy man.

In his home, he's a different man. Do you know that a lot of preachers are like this? When they come on the pulpit, they are holy people, speaking in other tongues. When they go home, in their mother tongue, they are shouting at their wives.

And then next Sunday again, they are in the pulpit, preaching holy things. And then they go home, they are cheating, they are scheming how to make more money, how to visit those rich people and how to visit those rich churches where I can get an offering. What is this? Acting.

First class actors. These people should go to Bollywood. Because they know how to act.

Act holy, pray holy, talk about holy things. Don't be an actor, Jesus said. Acting is the leaven of the Pharisees.

Let there be no acting in your life. What you are at home, you are in the pulpit. What you are in your financial transactions at home, you are openly.

There is nothing deceptive. If you do business, don't ever cheat. If you work in an office, don't ever take anything that doesn't belong to you.

Be exactly the same 24 hours of the day, 7 days of the week. Don't be holier on Sundays than on other days. You cannot be.

That will be acting. If you have to act holy one day, that is this leaven. So hypocrite means actor.

Ok, there, then further, Jesus says about in times of persecution, verse 3 to 12, don't be discouraged because the hairs of your head are numbered, verse 7. You are of more value than many sparrows. You may be brought with courts and people may try to kill you. Don't be afraid of them.

You don't have to think in those days what you have to speak. The Holy Spirit will teach you, verse 12, in that hour what to speak. Now please remember, this is not referring to preaching in the pulpits.

Some people don't prepare and come to the meeting and waste everybody's time. But this is referring to the time when you are persecuted and you stand in a court, that time the Holy Spirit will tell you what to say. But if you try to stand in the pulpit and claim this verse, you'll find it doesn't work.

You got to spend a little time. You know, it's like cooking a meal. What a lot of time a housewife takes to cook a good meal.

Many times I'm invited for a meal and I often ask myself, Lord, have I taken that much pains to prepare the message I preach to these people. A lot of preachers, you know how they deliver a message. It's like a housewife, oh, somebody's coming.

Ah, throw everything in. Mix it all up. Here it is.

The dal and the ice cream and all is mixed up in one bowl and you can have it. In any case it's going to be mixed up in your stomach, you might as well eat it like this. This is the hodgepodge that so many preachers get up and give to people on Sunday mornings.

Don't ever do that. When you see a nicely laid out meal, cooked well, the dal is in one pot, the ice cream is another, the rice is here and the chicken curry is there. I know it'll get mixed up in your stomach, but don't mix it up on the table.

Keep it all in separate. And when you present the message of God, give it like this clearly that people can understand and don't force things. Let them take what they want.

Do you take that much pains over preparing a message to give to other people? Otherwise you're not fit to be God's servant. This is referring to the time when we are persecuted and all God will give us. Now here's a man who came to the Lord in verse 13 and said, Lord, tell my brother to divide the property with me.

And the Lord said, I'm not going to get involved in all that. I'm talking about the kingdom of heaven. If you want property there, come and meet me.

And there are a number of other things here, which we don't have time to look at all of it. Jesus said in verse 31, seek God's kingdom first and all the other things will be added to you. I believe all of us must be living demonstrations of the fact that we seek God's kingdom and all the other things are added to us.

Verse 35 onwards of chapter 12, we are told to live in readiness for the coming of the Lord who may come anytime and be ready, be faithful. And in verse 42, if the Lord has given you charge over other believers, be faithful not to beat them, but to give them their rations. There are some people, it says, who instead of feeding the others, they flog them.

Verse 48. That means when they get up and preach, they don't give them solid food to eat, to grow spiritually. They just hit them.

You're like this and you're like this and you're like this. Verse 48. Many preachers are like this.

When they can't feed people, they flog them. The Bible says the Lord will come one day and punish all these people who are flogging my children. Learn to feed God's flock, not flog them.

Chapter 13. I just want to show you one verse, verse 34. We see how Jesus had a tremendous compassion for Jerusalem, that he wept over them.

He wept over Jerusalem and said, Oh, how I wish I could have gathered you and brought you into God's presence. Chapter 14, verses 12 to 14. We see here that the Lord says, when you give a luncheon or a dinner, don't invite your friends and brothers.

Invite those who cannot repay you. Again, you find that burden of the prophets in the Old Testament. Care for the poor.

When you go to find a place to preach God's word, don't just go to the rich people. Set the banquet of the gospel for the poor people, for those who cannot repay you, those who cannot give you their tithes, those who cannot give you any offerings. Think about such people.

Those are the people who need to hear what God has to say through you. And one last thing, we can stop with this. Chapter 14, verse 25 to 34.

We read about the conditions of discipleship. Number one, verse 26. You must love Jesus more than father, mother, brother, sister, wife, children, everybody.

Number two, verse 27. You must take up your cross every day and follow Jesus. Number three, verse 33.

You must not possess anything on earth. You can have things, but you must not possess them. What's the difference between having and possessing? Possessing means I say it's mine.

Like Abraham held Isaac, God said, give him up. He got Isaac back. After that day, he held Isaac, but he never possessed him.

You may have a house. You say, Lord, it's not mine. It's yours.

You can live there, but treat it like a house that belongs to God that he's allowed you to live rent free. Have you got a scooter? You say, Lord, that's not mine. It's a scooter that belongs to God.

He's allowed you to use it. That's how we must use all property on this earth. You can use it.

Maybe it's in your name, but you recognize that everything you have belongs to God. That's the way we can be disciples. Then verse 34, you will be like salt, which has not lost its taste.

The trouble today is a lot of salt does not have its taste because people have preached evangelism without making them disciples. The conditions of discipleship are here in chapter 14. Preach that, then only will you make disciples.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, help us to live in the light of these wonderful things that we have read in your word and to glorify your great name here on this earth to build your church. We pray in Jesus name.

Amen.

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