

Luke 6:37-45 – A new heart

Jesus continued teaching his disciples. We are now listening to him. What is the kingdom of God like? How do we live in it? What kind of king is he? He is showing us. In this part, he is telling us how to live with others – how to love our neighbour. This is where kingdom living begins; how we treat other people. The kingdom is a kingdom of godliness and kindness. But what really does this mean? Let us listen...

1. As we do to others, so will others do to us (v37-38)

Jesus said, “do not judge”. In a courtroom, a judge tells you what he thinks. He gives his verdict. That is for him, but is not for us. Often we must judge; we must be wise in all our relationships. But Jesus speaks about judgments that are not our business. We are not to take God's place. We would not enter our neighbour's compound and begin to criticise his home. In the same way, many things are not for us and we should leave them with God, not take them to ourselves. Jesus says we must not condemn. Again, this belongs to God. We rather must forgive and restore relationships. Jesus will sit on a throne and judge on the last day. But before then, he even was ready to forgive those who crucified him (Luke 23:34). God will make sure that we receive what we deserve. If we judge, condemn and reject, then God will bring the same to us. Where then will we be? A forgiving, accepting, generous home is so different to a mean, hard, closed one. Jesus told us that as we deal with others, so will we be dealt with. This needs faith. We must forget ourselves and love others – and believe that God will look after us. We need to be converted so that we learn to trust God, not ourselves. We need to give ourselves into the care of Jesus, not go our own way. What are you doing?

2. As we are, so will others learn to be (v39-42)

People learn by watching and copying other people. This is how we learnt as babies. Paul said, “Be imitators (copiers) of me, as I imitate Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1). People will learn about Christianity from Christians. That is why it is serious to join the church. You are becoming an example for others to follow. If a blind leader leads blind people, they will both finish in the ditch (v39). If we are not godly, then others who follow us will not be godly either. We should not fool ourselves. Our fine words are useless unless we are godly. A student will not rise above his master's teaching (v40). God hates hypocrisy. “Hypocrisy” means that we speak against sins in others, yet do them ourselves. God is not fooled by our hypocrisy. We are like people with logs in their eyes, trying to clean small specks out of other peoples' eyes. Real Christianity must begin with ourselves. Do we have the power of the Spirit in our lives? Is our Christianity just a pretending, on the surface? Or is Christ really living in us?

3. As our hearts are, so are we (v43-45)

Many people have only the name of a Christian. How can we be real? We must have a new heart. All comes from the heart. A good tree cannot give bad fruit; a bad tree cannot give good fruit. The kind of tree makes sure of the kind of fruit. It is the same with us. Our life will be like our hearts. Our hearts are bad from birth; we need Jesus to come and make them new. This will happen if we ask him. We need to believe that he died and rose for sinners, and ask him to come into our life. He always forgives hypocrites who repent; does not judge and condemn them, but gives them new life. Have you asked him?