

A Study of the Gospel of Luke – Part One

Lesson 14

➤ Read Luke 6:37–49.

In the second half of his Sermon on the Plain, Jesus uses a number of word pictures and parables, and even a spot of humorous exaggeration, to teach all who will listen important truths about what the life of the believer should look like. The teachings here call the listeners and readers “to look at themselves honestly and introspectively”¹, examining both the internal aspects of their lives—their thoughts, motives, attitudes—and the external—their words and actions.

➤ Read Luke 6:37–49.

1. Re-examine verses 37–38. In these verses Jesus tells his followers *not* to do two things and *to* do two other things, and for each command he gives a promise. Fill in the commands and promises below.

| Action | Result |
|------------------|---------|
| If you do not... | then... |
| If you do not... | then... |
| If you... | then... |
| If you... | then... |

2. Read Matthew 18:21–35. Then write down what this parable teaches us about why it is inappropriate for believers to judge or condemn others.

3. What sinful attitudes lie behind the type of judgment Jesus forbids in our passage?
v. 37b

Luke 18:9–14

Romans 14:10

James 4:11–12

In verse 37 Jesus is not forbidding every form of judgment. He "does not prohibit the administration of justice in law-courts or the distinction between good and evil."² Elsewhere, believers are called to be wise and discerning (see, for example, Mt. 7:6; Jn. 7:24; 1 Cor. 5:9–13; 1 Thess. 5:21–22; 1 Jn. 4:1).

For contrast, look back at Luke 6:35–36, from which this week’s verses flow.

4. In the middle of verse 38, Jesus elaborates on the promise that accompanies the command to give. What does this illustration convey about God's giving?
5. Given the commands in verses 37–38 that have come before it, what do you think this statement means: “with the measure you use, it will be measured to you” (v. 38c)?

➤ **Read Luke 6:39–40.**

6. Clearly, it is dangerous for a blind person to lead another blind person. But Jesus is not really talking about people who are unable to see. What does “blind” mean here?
7. What does this mini-parable suggest “students” should look for in selecting a guide or teacher for their lives? (You may want to consider how you evaluate what you read online.)

Even though we have human teachers and pastors, who is our ultimate teacher, the only unfailingly reliable guide for life? (vv. 46–49; Mt. 23:8–10)

➤ **Read Luke 6:41–42.**

8. In verses 41–42 Jesus uses hyperbole, or exaggeration, to make his point. What do the speck and the plank represent?

9. Why is it absurd for a person with a plank in her eye to try to remove a speck in someone else's eye? (Can you think of more than one reason?)
10. Jesus himself provides the solution to the impossible situation he has described: "first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye" (v. 42).
- a. How do you think one goes about removing a "plank" from one's eye? (Ps. 139:23–24; 1 Jn. 1:8–9; Rev. 3:3a)
 - b. How should one then proceed to remove a speck from someone else's eye? (Gal. 6:1–2)

► **Read Luke 6:43–45.**

11. Jesus now turns to the language of trees and fruit. Again, he is using figurative language to communicate a spiritual reality. If the tree is a person, what does the fruit represent? (📖* Eph. 5:8–11)

12. What is the relationship between the heart and the "fruit"? (v. 45; Mk. 7:20–23)


The Heart

"The heart... refers to a person as he or she is, especially in the deepest thoughts and being..."³

13. How is a person able to bear good fruit? (Jn. 15:1–6; Gal. 5:16, 22–23)

14. At the end of this section, Jesus focuses specifically on speech. Be alert this week: notice your words and the tone in which you speak them. Consider how the words you say, as well as the manner in which you say them, reflect the state of your heart. At the end of the week, write down one or two observations.

► **Read Luke 6:46–49.**

15. Through this comparison of two houses, what is Jesus saying provides a person's life with a rock-solid foundation? (vv. 47, 49a;  Jas. 1:22–25)

16. What might the flood and torrent (v. 48) represent?

17. Although the words of Jesus that we are to put into practice include all of the things he has said, the reference in this parable is especially to his words in the Sermon on the Plain. Review Luke 6:17–49. What lesson—whether a small detail or a general principle or a practice—do you want to carry away with you from this sermon?

Pray that God would impress this lesson on your memory and your heart and would cause it to bring forth fruit in your life.

* For further study

¹ Darrell L. Bock. *Luke: Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Vol. 1: 1:1–9:50 (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 625.

² Norvel Geldenhuys. *The Gospel of Luke: The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951), 213.

³ Bock, 617.