

**“Be Wise”**  
*October 27, 2019*  
Luke 6:39-49

## **I. Introduction**

As most of you know, in my earlier life I was a physics and math teacher at Greendale High School. There are three major steps that a good teacher uses to help his students learn a particular topic. First, there is the presentation of the information. Then the teacher shows examples related to that topic. And, finally, the student is given some hands-on experience. For example, if the topic is the Pythagorean Theorem, the teacher would have to describe the equation:  $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$ , where  $a$  and  $b$  stand for the lengths of the two legs of a right triangle and  $c$  stands for length of the the hypotenuse. The teacher may have to remind the students what a right triangle is and which sides are the legs and which one is the hypotenuse. Then the teacher would show how the theorem or equation is used to calculate the third side of a right triangle when the other two sides are known. Finally, after showing several examples, the teacher gives the students opportunities to do some problem solving on their own—the dreaded homework.

Jesus had just chosen the Twelve Apostles—men who will carry on Jesus’ commission after His death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven. But they weren’t ready yet—they needed to be taught what it is to be a follower of Jesus Christ; to be a disciple. The Gospels were written so that we can know who Jesus is—as John wrote in [John 20:31](#), “**But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.**” But as we learn about Jesus, we also see Him at work. As the master teacher, Jesus followed the same pattern as any master teacher. First, He taught about the topic, then He gave some examples, and finally, He gave His disciples some problems of their own. In Luke’s account of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, we find a summary of Jesus’ sermon—His teachings—on true discipleship. In chapters 7 and 8, Jesus will demonstrate what a disciple can do, and finally in chapter 9, He will give the Twelve the opportunity to practice what they had heard and seen.

So far in Jesus’ lesson, in [verses 20-26](#), He defined disciples as repenters, i.e., men and women who recognize their sinfulness and hunger for the righteousness that only God can give. He went on to teach in

verses 27-38 that true disciples are also marked by love, even for those who hate and persecute them. In the final verses of His sermon, Jesus, using several parables, warned the Twelve as well as the other disciples gathered around Him to be wise in living their lives and in doing their ministry.

## II. Be Wise

**A. First, be wise in leadership.** Jesus began this final section with a warning that called disciples to pay attention to leadership—both those that they follow as leaders and themselves as they seek to guide others. The rhetorical question, “**Can a blind man lead a blind man?**” has the obvious answer—no way. Since a blind man cannot see where he himself is going, he cannot safely or reliably lead another blind person. They will most likely “**both fall into a pit.**”

*Blindness* is used in both the Old and New Testaments to describe lacking truth and lacking spiritual insight. For example, 2 Corinthians 4:4 says, “**The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.**” In Matthew 26:16 & 17, Jesus called the Pharisees “**blind guides**” and “**blind fools.**” Disciples must choose carefully those they follow as particular teachers. At the same time, the disciples must be sure that as they lead and as they teach that they are wise and not blind guides. If we see ourselves as excellent guides, but do not realize our blindness, we will only lead people into the ditch ourselves—turn to Romans 2:17-23. One should follow the right teacher and not apply too much authority to one’s self.

On the other hand, Jesus is the “**way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father, except through**” Him (John 14:6). Because He is the “**Light of the world,**” those who follow Him “**will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life**” (John 8:12). Jesus Christ alone opens the eyes of the spiritually blind—in Luke 4:18 Jesus said, “**The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free.**” Jesus—the Word of God—is the only teacher without error.

Like His earlier statement, Jesus’ statement, “**The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher,**” is indisputable. One must be discerning as he follows a teacher or

as she teaches. A teacher's limitations and errors will inevitably be reflected in his or her students. Once again, the only teacher without error is Jesus Christ—this is why [Hebrews 12:2](#) says to fix "our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith."

**B. 2<sup>nd</sup> be wise, don't be a hypocrite.** Continuing the image of "the eye," Jesus taught that a disciple must be able to see clearly enough to help a brother see better. It is certainly not wrong to help a brother see better—to see his sin. [Turn to James 5:19-20](#). But a disciple of Jesus Christ needs to be honest with himself and not be a hypocrite. Instead of ignoring sin in his own life, a Christian must pay attention to his own faults first and deal fully with them before turning his attention to the treatment of the little faults of others—[turn to Galatians 6:1-5](#).

**C. 3<sup>rd</sup> be wise in character.** In the illustration of the tree Jesus reminded His disciples that fruit is always true to character. The fruit a tree produces is a great indicator of that tree's health. Good trees do not produce bad, inedible fruit, nor do bad trees produce good, edible fruit. Going on Jesus said, "Each tree is recognized by its own fruit." An apple tree produces apples, not oranges. As Matthew's parallel account makes clear, the bad trees are false teachers. In [Matthew 7:15](#) Jesus warned, "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves." Then in [verse 16](#) Jesus used the same illustration: "By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles?" Disciples must be wise as they observe the fruit or character of others—and themselves.

Jesus went on to give the application: "A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart." Just as trees produce fruit consistent with their nature, so do people. The hearts of the false teacher and the unsaved bring forth "evil things." The hearts of the righteous, having been transformed by the Holy Spirit ([Romans 12:2](#)), bring forth "good things." Just as the fruit reveals the nature of the fruit tree, so also what people say reveals the nature of their heart, "for out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks."

Those who follow false spiritual teachers will demonstrate the same corruption and character that the teacher does. Only those who follow Jesus Christ can produce the fruit of repentance. Believers do sin, but

the witness of their words and works—their character—is consistently good to the glory of God. In terms of ministry, servants of God who are faithful will reproduce themselves in people who are in turn true to the Lord—writing to Timothy, Paul wrote in [2 Timothy 2:2](#), “**And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.**”

**D. Finally, be wise in obeying.** As He brought His lesson to a close, Jesus emphasized obedience—be wise in obeying. Speaking to all of those gathered there—to the Twelve, to His other disciples, and to the great number of people from all over Judea ([Luke 4:17](#)), Jesus said that it is not enough merely to hear His Words and call Him “**Lord.**” A true disciple must obey what Jesus commands. He said, “**Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?**”

In this age of tolerance and rejection of absolute truth (especially religious truth), there seems to be a belief that anyone who is sincere in their faith will go to heaven. Sadly, even some evangelicals hold this view. God, they say, will accept those who are sincere in their religious commitment, even if they never leave their false religion, or profess faith in Jesus Christ. Some go as far as to argue that involvement in a false religion may actually be aiding them in coming to God. Things were no different in Jesus’ time.

But submission to Jesus Christ as Lord is a non-negotiable part of true salvation. [Romans 10:9](#) says, “**If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.**” Peter wrote in [1 Peter 1:2](#) that the goal of salvation is “**for obedience to Jesus Christ.**” Jesus said in [John 14:15](#), “**If you love me, keep my commands.**” Those who love Jesus will keep His commands. On the other hand, [John 3:36](#) says, “**Whoever rejects, i.e., doesn’t obey, the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on them.**” In [Matthew 7:21](#) Jesus said, “**Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.**” [James 1:22](#) says, “**Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.**”

The non-negotiable requirements of confessing sins, repenting of them, and trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Savior and Lord are necessary for salvation. Those who fail in doing so but trust in good works and religious ritual will not see heaven, no matter how sincere their religious beliefs.

Jesus then used the parable of the wise man and the foolish man to illustrate the consequences of the decision one makes about Jesus. The one who obeys what God commands in His word “is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock.” The phrase “dug down deep” refers to the deep heart searching that marks true repentance. The only foundation for salvation is Jesus Christ—1 Corinthians 3:11 says, “For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

Jesus said that “When the flood came, the torrent struck the house but could not shake it.” The storm, the flood, may be the last judgment, but it is also the tests of life that come to every person—Christian and non-Christian. Those who build their lives on the Rock have nothing to fear. In the midst of trouble, they have “the peace of God, which transcends all understanding” (Philippians 4:7). They “know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28). And are able to say along with David in Psalm 23:4, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”

To “build a house on the ground without foundation” means not to build on the Rock; at best one gives lip-service to Christ but doesn’t obey His will. The house may look good and strong from the outside, but when the problems of life arise and tensions flood the heart, “it collapsed and its destruction was complete.” Not everyone who professes to know the Lord has had a real experience of salvation. They may have been active in church and other religious organizations, but if they are not saved by faith, they have no foundation to their lives; they have no peace. When difficulties come, instead of glorifying the Lord, they desert Him—their house of testimony collapses.

### III. Conclusion

Jesus’ lesson to the Twelve and to His disciples is appropriate for His disciples today—for us. Be wise in how you live. Be wise in whom you choose to follow as leaders—those you listen to, those whose articles and books you read. Are they reliable spiritual guides? Are their teachings based on God’s Word or

man's word, man's pride? Are they the blind leading the blind? If you are a leader, a teacher what is the foundation for what you teach? Are your words based on God's Word or man's word?

What about any faults in your life? We are often aware of little faults in others, such as our children or our spouses, while we ignore our own great faults. Jesus calls such priorities hypocrisy. He calls His disciples to self-accountability. Those who do the best job of restoring others in their walk are those who can see themselves as they truly are. This means being able to receive rebuke and then, honestly going to the Lord so that the plank in our eye may be removed. Only then are we ready to consider how to help a fellow believer remove the speck from his or her eye. **1 John 1:9** says, **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."** Remember, *"to confess"* means to agree with God that you have sinned and to covenant with Him not to repeat it again.

As children of God we need to watch the fruit in our lives. Do the things you do and the things you say bring honor and glory to God? The mouth is a good test of who we are spiritually, as **Luke 6:45** says, **"For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks."** What do your words say about your heart—your god? What kind of fruit do you bear?

What are you building your life on? **Turn to 1 Corinthians 3:11-15.** Why do you do the things you do—for God's glory or man's applause? Do you obey God and His Word, or do you hunt and peck—choosing what to do and what to ignore out of His Book?

Finally, as well as teaching His disciples, Jesus also spoke to those who weren't one of His children. I suspect that much of which He said didn't make sense to them—**1 Corinthians 1:18** says, **"For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."** But His parable of the wise man and the foolish man was easily understood by everyone—without Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, there is no foundation and one's life will end in ruin. **John 3:36** says, **"Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."** Putting it a different way, when you die and you stand before God and He asks you why you should be allowed into heaven, what will your answer be? As we've already seen this morning, anything other than

*“Jesus is my Lord and my Savior—He died for me”* is wrong--unacceptable. Acts 4:12 says, **“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”**

If you’ve never done so, why not make Jesus your Lord and Savior today? **BE WISE!**