

## Growth Hour Study

### Godly Leadership    Luke 6:26-49    October 11, 2020

#### ENGAGE

- I will be spending a few weeks on godly leadership. Not simply in assessing others in how they measure up to Christ's teaching on leadership, but a personal assessment of how we operate as godly leaders in our homes, jobs, and communities.
- As God's children we are called priests and kings. We are called to be a light to the world and salt to the earth. Our actions and attitudes can, indeed, shape our environments as we function in a godly "leading" way.
- Guide the conversation, within the text, toward personal analysis and commitments to the leadership qualities Christ calls us to.
- This passage is a snippet within Jesus' sermon on the plain. There are harsh words and warnings as to what to avoid as well as clear directions we are to follow.

#### EXAMINE

#### **GOD'S AGENDA IS A PLAN OF LOVE.**

##### **1. (27-28) Love your enemies.**

"But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you."

a. Love your enemies: This is a shockingly simple command to understand, but difficult one to obey. Jesus told us exactly how to actually love our enemies: do good, bless, and pray for those who spitefully use you.

i. Jesus recognized that we will have enemies. This plan of God's Kingdom takes into account real-world problems. Though we will have enemies, yet we are to respond to them in love, trusting that God will protect our cause and destroy our enemies in the best way possible, by transforming them into our friends.

b. Do good... bless... pray for those who spitefully use you: The love Jesus told us to have for our enemies was not a warm, fuzzy feeling deep in the heart. If we wait for that, we may never love them. The love for our enemies is a love that does something for them, quite apart from how we might feel about them.

i. Bless those who curse you means that we must speak well of those who speak ill of us.

ii. "We cannot love our enemies as we love our nearest and dearest. To do so would be unnatural, impossible, and even wrong. But we can see to it that, no matter what a man does to us, even if he insults, ill-treats and injures us, we will seek nothing but his highest good." (Barclay)

##### **2. (29-30) Be willing to suffer wrong.**

To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back.

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a. To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also: Continuing His astonishing teaching, Jesus said we must accept certain evils committed against us.

i. When a person insults us (strikes you on the one cheek) we want to give them back what they gave to us, plus more. Jesus said we should patiently bear such insults and offences, and not resist an evil person who insults us this way. Instead, we trust God to defend us. France points out that ancient Jewish writings say that striking someone with the back of the hand – a severe insult – was punishable by a very heavy fine, according to Mishnah BK 8:6.

ii. It is wrong to think Jesus meant evil should never be resisted. Jesus demonstrated with His life that evil should and must be resisted, such as when He turned tables in the temple.

iii. “Jesus is here saying that the true Christian has learned to resent no insult and to seek retaliation for no slight.” (Barclay) When we think how Jesus Himself was insulted and spoken against (as a glutton, a drunk, an illegitimate child, a blasphemer, a madman, and so forth) we see how He lived this principle Himself.

iv. It is wrong to think that Jesus meant a physical attack cannot be resisted or defended against. When Jesus spoke of a slap on the one cheek, it was culturally understood as a deep insult, not a physical attack. Jesus did not mean that if someone hits across the right side of our head with a baseball bat, we should allow them to then hit the left side. 2 Corinthians 11:20 probably has in mind this kind of insult slap.

v. It is also wrong to think Jesus meant that there is no place for punishment or retribution in society. Jesus here spoke to personal relationships, and not to the proper functions of government in restraining evil (Romans 13:1-4). I must turn my cheek when I am personally insulted, but the government has a responsibility to restrain the evil man from physical assault.

b. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who asks of you: With this, Jesus told us how to deal with people who mistreat, coerce, and manipulate us. We should take command of the situation by sacrificial giving and love.

i. Under the Law of Moses, the outer cloak was something that could not be taken from someone (Exodus 22:26; Deuteronomy 24:13).

ii. “Jesus’ disciples, if sued for their tunics (an inner garment like our suit but worn next to the skin), far from seeking satisfaction, will gladly part with what they may legally keep.” (Carson)

iii. “The old said, Insist on your own right, and loving your neighbor, hate your enemy, and so secure your safety. The new says, Suffer wrong, and lavish your love on all.” (Morgan)

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c. From him who takes away your goods do not ask them back: We can only practice this kind of sacrificial love when we know that God will take care of us. We know that if we give away our tunic, God has plenty more of them to give us.

i. The only limit to this kind of sacrifice is the limit that love itself will impose. It isn't loving to give into someone's manipulation without our transforming it into a free act of love. It isn't always loving to give or to not resist.

ii. We might say that Paul repeated this idea of Jesus: Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:21)

### 3. (31) The Golden Rule.

And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.

a. Just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise: The negative way of stating this command was known long before Jesus. It had long been said, "You should not do to your neighbor what you would not want him to do to you." But it was a significant advance for Jesus to put it in the positive, to say that we should do unto others what we want them to do unto us.

i. "The Golden Rule was not invented by Jesus; it is found in many forms in highly diverse settings. About A.D. 20, Rabbi Hillel, challenged by a Gentile to summarize the law in the short time the Gentile could stand on one leg, reportedly responded, 'What is hateful to you, do not do to anyone else. This is the whole law; all the rest is commentary. Go and learn it.' (b. Shabbath 31a). Apparently only Jesus phrased the rule positively." (Carson)

ii. In so doing, Jesus made the command much broader. It is the difference between not breaking traffic laws and in doing something positive like helping a stranded motorist. Under the negative form of the rule, the goats of Matthew 25:31-46 could be found "not guilty." Yet under the positive form of the Golden Rule – Jesus' form – they are indeed found guilty.

b. You also do to them likewise: This especially applies to Christian fellowship. If we would experience love and have people reach out to us, we must love and reach out to others.

i. "Oh, that all men acted on it, and there would be no slavery, no war, no swearing, no striking, no lying, no robbing; but all would be justice and love! What a kingdom is this which has such a law!" (Spurgeon)

ii. This makes the law easier to understand, but it doesn't make it any easier to obey. No one has ever consistently done unto others as they would like others to do unto themselves.

### 4. (32-35) Loving after the pattern of God's love.

"But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much

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back. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.

a. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? We should regard it as no matter of virtue, and no imitation of Jesus, if we merely return the love that is given to us.

i. Remember, Jesus here taught the character of the citizens of His kingdom. We should expect that character to be different from the character seen in the world. There are many good reasons why more should be expected from Christians than others:

- They claim to have something that others do not have; they claim to be renewed, repentant, and redeemed by Jesus Christ.
- They do in fact have something that others do not have; they are in fact renewed, repentant, and redeemed by Jesus Christ.
- They have a power that others do not have; they can do all things through Christ who strengthens them.
- They have the Spirit of God dwelling within them.
- They have a better future than others do.

b. You will be sons of the Most High: In doing this, we imitate God, who shows love towards His enemies, and is kind to the unthankful and evil.

i. "What does God say to us when he acts thus? I believe that he says this: 'This is the day of free grace; this is the time of mercy.' The hour for judgment is not yet, when he will separate between the good and the bad; when he will mount the judgment seat and award different portions to the righteous and to the wicked." (Spurgeon)

ii. This is an example – that we also are to love our enemies and bless them if we can. In doing so we show ourselves to sons of the Most High. "We are made sons by regeneration, through faith in the Son; but we are called to make our calling and election sure – to approve and vindicate our right to that sacred name. We can only do this by showing in word and act that the divine life and principles animate us." (Meyer)

#### 5. (36-38) The principles to follow.

"Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."

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a. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful: In the Kingdom of Jesus, we have a pattern for the way we should give mercy to others. We should be merciful to others the way God has been merciful to us. That's a lot of mercy, and would only require more mercy from us, not less.

b. Judge not, and you shall not be judged: With this command Jesus warned against passing judgment upon others, because when we do so we will be judged in a similar manner.

i. Among those who seem to know nothing of the Bible, this is the verse that seems to be most popular. Yet most the people who quote this verse don't understand what Jesus said. They seem to think (or hope) that Jesus commanded a universal acceptance of any lifestyle or teaching.

ii. Just a little later in this same sermon (Luke 6:43-45), Jesus commanded us to know ourselves and others by the fruit of their life, and some sort of assessment is necessary for that. The Christian is called to show unconditional love, but the Christian is not called to unconditional approval. We really can love people who do things that should not be approved of.

iii. So while this does not prohibit examining the lives of others, it certainly prohibits doing in the spirit it is often done. An example of unjust judgment was the disciples' condemnation of the woman who came to anoint the feet of Jesus with oil (Matthew 26:6-13). They thought she wasted something; Jesus said she had done a good work that would always be remembered. They had a rash, harsh, unjust judgment.

· We break this command when we think the worst of others.

· We break this command when we only speak to others of their faults.

· We break this command when we judge an entire life only by its worst moments.

· We break this command when we judge the hidden motives of others.

· We break this command when we judge others without considering ourselves in their same circumstances.

· We break this command when we judge others without being mindful that we ourselves will be judged.

c. Condemn not... forgive: Jesus expanded the idea beyond simply judging others. He also told us to condemn not and to freely forgive.

d. Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over: Jesus encouraged the freedom to give without fearing that we will become the loser in our giving. He wanted to set us free from the fear of giving too much.

i. This is true and has been tested when it comes to generosity with material resources. Simply said, you can't out-give God. He will return more to you, in one way or another, more than you give to Him. Yet

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the most pointed application of this in context is not so much the giving of material resources, but with giving love, blessing, and forgiveness. We are never the loser when we give those things after the pattern of God's generosity.

ii. Put into your bosom: "The Jew wore a long loose robe down to the feet, and round the waist a girdle. The robe could be pulled up so that the bosom of the robe above the girdle formed a kind of outside pocket in which things could be carried. So the modern equivalent of the phrase would be, 'People will fill your pocket.'" (Barclay)

e. With the measure you use, it will be measured back to you: This is the principle upon which Jesus built the command, "Judge not, that you be not judged." God will measure unto us according to the same measure we use for others. This is a powerful motivation for us to be generous with love, forgiveness, and goodness to others. If we want more of those things from God, we should give more of them to others.

i. We might say that Jesus did not prohibit the judgment of others. He only requires that our judgment be completely fair, and that we only judge others by a standard we would also like to be judged by.

ii. When our judgment in regard to others is wrong, it is often not because we judge according to a standard but because we are hypocritical in the application of that standard – we ignore the standard in our own life. It is common to judge others by one standard and ourselves by another standard – being far more generous to ourselves than others.

iii. According to the teaching of some rabbis in Jesus' time, God had two measures that He used to judge people. One was a measure of justice and the other was a measure of mercy. Which ever measure you want God to use with you, you should use that same measure with others.

iv. We should only judge another's behavior when we are mindful of the fact that we ourselves will be judged, and we should consider how we would want to be judged.

### THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN TWO WAYS.

#### 1. (39-42) Illustrations centered around the idea of seeing.

And He spoke a parable to them: "Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother's eye."

a. Can the blind lead the blind? This is obvious. The blind can't lead the blind. Therefore we should never look to other blind men to lead us; nor should we try to lead others in our blindness. Instead, we should make Jesus our leader, our teacher, who sees and knows all things.

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i. Jesus reminded us that some supposed leaders are blind – beware of them. Later Jesus said of some of the religious leaders of His day, They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch (Matthew 15:14)

ii. “Though the Pharisees and teachers of the law had scrolls and interpreted them in the synagogues, this does not mean that they really understood them...The Pharisees did not follow Jesus; so they did not understand and follow the Scriptures.” (Carson)

iii. In these words of Jesus we see the guilt of those who are blind leaders of the blind. We also see the responsibility of followers to make sure their leaders are not blind.

b. A disciple is not above his teacher: A disciple was much like a student, with the added element of following and patterning after the master or teacher. In this way, the disciple would never be greater than the teacher, yet everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher. We will become like those we follow, so we must decide to choose good teachers to follow.

i. In this perfectly clear and logical truth, Jesus gave a wonderful promise. As we are taught by Him and grow in Him, we will become more like Jesus. More and more, we are conformed to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29) and ultimately, when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is (1 John 3:2).

ii. “The Lord Jesus became like unto us in our low estate, that we should become like Him in his glory... There must ever be the limitation of the creature as compared with Him by whom all things were made. But in our measure there shall be the same perfect beauty – his beauty upon us.” (Meyer)

c. And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? The figures of a speck and a plank are real figures used humorously. Jesus shows that we are generally far more tolerant to our own sin than we are to the sin of others.

i. Though there might be a literal speck in one’s eye, there obviously would not be a literal plank or board in an eye. Jesus used these exaggerated, humorous pictures to make His message easier to understand and more memorable.

ii. It is a humorous picture: A man with a board in his eye trying to help a friend remove a speck from the friend’s eye. You can’t think of the picture without smiling and being amused by it.

iii. An example of looking for a speck in the eye of another while ignoring the plank in one’s own is when the religious leaders brought the woman taken in adultery to Jesus. She had certainly sinned; but their sin was much worse and Jesus exposed it as such with the statement, He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first (John 8:7).

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d. You yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye: Jesus indicates that the one with the plank in his own eye would not immediately be aware of it. He is blind to his obvious fault. It is the attempt to correct the fault of someone else when we ourselves have the same (or greater fault) that earns the accusation, “Hypocrite!”

i. “Jesus is gentle, but he calls that man a ‘hypocrite’ who fusses about small things in others, and pays no attention to great matters at home in his own person.” (Spurgeon)

ii. Our hypocrisy in these matters is almost always more evident to others than to ourselves. We may find a way to ignore the plank in our own eye, but others notice it immediately. A good example of this kind of hypocrisy was David’s reaction to Nathan’s story about a man who unjustly stole and killed another man’s lamb. David quickly condemned the man, but was blind to his own sin, which was much greater (2 Samuel 12).

e. First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother’s eye: Jesus didn’t say that it was wrong for us to help our brother with the speck in his eye. It is a good thing to help your brother with his speck, but not before dealing with the plank in your own eye.

### **2. (43-45) We can only follow Jesus this way if we have been radically changed by Him. If Jesus has touched us, it will show in our lives.**

“For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”

a. A good tree does not bear bad fruit...every tree is known by its own fruit: This fruit is the inevitable result of who we are. Eventually – though it may take a time for the harvest to come – the good or bad fruit is evident, revealing what sort of tree we are. Not every tree is the same.

i. “Not to have good fruit is to have evil: there can be no innocent sterility in the invisible tree of the heart. He that brings forth no fruit, and he that brings forth bad fruit, are both only fit for the fire.” (Clarke)

ii. “It is not merely the wicked, the bearer of poison berries, that will be cut down; but the neutral, the man who bears no fruit of positive virtue must also be cast into the fire.” (Spurgeon)

iii. Just before this Jesus warned us to judge ourselves first, to look for the speck in our own eye before turning our attention to the beam in our neighbor’s eye. Therefore before asking it of anyone else, we should first ask: “Do I bear fruit unto God’s glory?”

b. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good...out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks: Our words reveal our heart. If there is good treasure in the heart, it will show; if evil, that also will

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show in time. Our words say more about us than we think, and reveal that some are good men and some are evil men.

#### 3. (46-49) Concluding exhortation: doing what Jesus commanded is our foundation.

“But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do the things which I say? Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.”

a. But why do you call Me “Lord, Lord,” and do not do the things which I say? Jesus made a distinction between those who merely make a verbal profession of faith, and those who actually both hears His sayings and does them.

i. We must use the language of “Lord, Lord” – we cannot be rescued if we do not. Though hypocrites may say it, we should not be ashamed to say it. Yet it alone is not enough.

ii. This warning of Jesus applies to people who speak or say things to Jesus or about Jesus, but don’t really mean it. It isn’t that they believe Jesus is a devil; they simply say the words very superficially. Their mind is elsewhere, but they believe there is value in the bare words and fulfilling some kind of religious duty with no heart, no soul, not spirit – only bare words and passing thoughts.

iii. This warning of Jesus applies to people who say “Lord, Lord” and yet their spiritual life has nothing to do with their daily life. They go to church, perhaps fulfill some daily religious duties, yet sin against God and man just as any other might. “There are those that speak like angels, live like devils; that have Jacob’s smooth tongue, but Esau’s rough hands.” (Trapp)

iv. Jesus put this in the form of a question: Why? “If we are disobedient, why continue the profession of obedience?... Each soul guilty of the wrong referred to must face this ‘Why?’ alone. All that need be said is, that to do so will inevitably be to discover the unworthiness of the reason.” (Morgan)

b. Whoever comes to Me: Here, in three brief points, Jesus described the one who does follow Him in wisdom and truth – and went on to illustrate the wisdom of that one.

i. “Carefully note the three-fold condition. 1. ‘Every one that cometh to Me,’ surrender. 2. ‘And heareth My words,’ discipleship. 3. ‘And doeth them,’ obedience.” (Morgan)

c. He is like a man building a house: In Jesus’ final illustration of the two builders, each house looked the same from the outside. The real foundation of life is usually hidden and is only proven in the storm.

i. “The wise and the foolish man were both engaged in precisely the same avocations, and to a considerable extent achieved the same design; both of them undertook to build houses, both of them

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persevered in building, both of them finished their houses. The likeness between them is very considerable.” (Spurgeon)

d. When the flood arose: Jesus warned that the foundations of our lives will be shaken at some time or another, both now (in seasons of difficulty) and in the ultimate judgment before God. It is better that we test the foundation of our life now rather than later, at our judgment before God when it is too late to change our destiny.

i. Time and the storms of life will prove the strength of one’s foundation, even when it is hidden. We may be surprised when we see who has truly built upon the good foundation. “At last, when Judas betrayed Christ in the night, Nicodemus faithfully professed him in the day.” (Trapp)

e. He who heard and did nothing: Merely hearing God’s word isn’t enough to provide a secure foundation. It is necessary that we are also doers of His word. If we are not, we commit the sin that will surely find us out, the sin of doing nothing (Numbers 32:23) – and great will be our ruin.

i. Yet no one can read this without seeing that they have not, do not, and will not ever completely do them. Even if we do them in a general sense (in which we should), the revelation of the Kingdom of God in the Sermon on the Mount drives us back again and again as needy sinners upon our Savior.

## QUESTIONS

Luke 6:22-35

- Which do you like more, to receive compliments or criticisms?
- The answer to this question is pretty obvious, right?
- Think of a time when you were ridiculed or made fun of by people viewed as “popular” or “important.” Maybe you have even been made fun of for being a Christian.
  - Did it make you want to rejoice or crawl into a hole and hide?
- Now, think of a time when you were complimented by a boss or influential person in your life.
  - Did it make you feel like you were on cloud nine?
  - According to today’s passage, you should not be seeking this type of praise, but instead rejoice when people exclude you because of your faith.
- What does Christ say will happen to those who are hated, excluded, and slandered, versus those who are spoken well of in this life?
- Why do you think Jesus addressed the issue of being ridiculed because they were his followers?
- Why do you think Jesus mentioned the way their ancestors treated God’s prophets, as opposed to false prophets? What point was he trying to make?
- What kind of warning was Christ trying to give those who sought out words of praise and affirmation from other people?
- What habits do you need to change to reflect what Christ taught about being ridiculed versus praised by others here on earth?
- Do you struggle with seeking the approval of other people? How can you take this passage and teach others about the view Christ had?

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- How can you find joy in being ridiculed because of your faith? What are ways you can teach others about not trying to please others and win their approval?
- What is one thing you learned from this passage that will help you become a better disciple of Christ, and help others to do the same?

#### Luke 6:37-45

- What is Christ telling his disciples to do and not to do to others?
- What examples did Christ use to make his point about how we live our lives?
- What kind of “fruit” is Christ referring to in this passage?
- Why do you think Jesus addressed the issue of judging and condemning others?
- Why do you think Jesus focused on hypocrisy with his disciples?
- Why should we look at our individual lives before looking at the lifestyle of others? What point is Christ trying to make in this passage?

#### Luke 6:46-49

- What types of people is Jesus contrasting in this passage?
- What is Christ telling his disciples through the parable of the rock and sand?
- What happens to those who hear but do not do what Christ says?
- Why do you think Jesus addressed the issue of hearing and doing versus hearing and not doing what He says?
- How was Jesus addressing the issue of hypocrisy in this passage? What does it mean to call Jesus Lord?
- What is Jesus saying true obedience looks like?