

The Parables
Luke 7:31-35
“Children in the Marketplace”

Babies!!!

- **Carter Jaye Bosley, Adyson Grace Forester, and David Alexander Elias**
- All born in the last 4 weeks!

Thank you, Stuart!

Open Bibles to Luke 7

Pray

Today’s parable: **“Children in the Marketplace”** – Luke 7:31-35

Context:

- Not long after Jesus was baptized by John and was led into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit to be tempted by the devil, he came back to Nazareth and announced his presence in the synagogue (Luke 4). He then called his disciples and began healing the sick, raising the dead, and casting out demons.
- He had also sent them out, 2 by 2 into towns and villages to do the same: heal, raise the dead, cast out demons...
- And he was saying new things, like
 - “I didn’t come to bring peace, but a sword” – a reference to personal salvation, not military battle
 - “He who does not love his father and mother more than me is not worthy of me”
 - “And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.” (all in Matthew 10 – Matthew 11 is the sister parable)
- Word was getting around quickly about the awesomeness of God displayed in this man!
- But they had questions about his mode of operation, too.
- John the Baptist’s disciples come to Jesus while a crowd is around him, asking 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'
- Let’s pick it up in v22

Luk 7:22 And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them.

Luk 7:23 And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

Luk 7:24 When John's messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

Luk 7:25 What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings' courts.

Luk 7:26 What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

Luk 7:27 This is he of whom it is written, "'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.'

Luk 7:28 I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

Luk 7:29 (When all the people heard this, and the tax collectors too, they declared God just, having been baptized with the baptism of John,

Luk 7:30 but the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.)

..... and here comes the parable for today

Luk 7:31 "To what then shall I compare the people of this generation, and what are they like?

Luk 7:32 They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, "'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.'

Luk 7:33 For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.'

Luk 7:34 The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'

Luk 7:35 Yet wisdom is justified by all her children."

Perhaps you've been taught 100 times that the Pharisees and Scribes and Jewish leaders in Jesus' day were looking for Messiah – but Jesus didn't fit their interpretations of Messiah.

- If you're new to Christ, this might be new to you.
- Let me briefly go over this... then challenge even the oldest of believers among us...

The Pharisees leaned on carefully selected portions of the Word of God to create a MOLD for which Messiah would come.

- They weren't errant on purpose.
- They weren't lazy
- They sincerely held to a standard they'd decided was the ONLY way Messiah could possibly come – BASED ON WHAT THEY READ IN THE TORAH.
 - And they held tight to passages about a King coming to rule the world.
 - That King (Messiah) would have to look like David – the man after God's own heart – the conquering King, whose temple would be 1000 times greater than Solomon's in all its glory.
 - They believed the Babylonian captivity happened hundreds of years earlier because the entire nation of Israel disobeyed the Torah (first 5 books of the OT)
 - So they set out to create a way in which it would be nearly impossible for people (and hopefully, an entire nation, should they have the wisdom to follow the Pharisees) to disobey the Torah.
 - They called it the "Oral Torah" or "Oral Law"
 - If Jews followed their tightrope of laws, they couldn't possibly disobey the Written Torah.
 - And the Oral Torah soon became "equal" to the Written Torah, once they began teaching that it came "from God"
 - And if the Nation of Israel would finally perfectly obey the Torah, then surely God will send His Messiah, crush the Romans and their rule, and usher in Paradise – the final afterlife reserved for those who never disobeyed the Torah.

The Jews had other sects – we'd call them "denominations" today – as well:

- **Sadducees**
 - Elitists, no oral Torah, but allowed paganism and Hellenism into Judaism
 - No resurrection, because they believed that concept to be absent in the Torah.
 - Once the Second Temple was destroyed in AD 70, the Sadducees vanished.
 - Religious historians believe many Sadducees were some of the early 2nd-century Gnostics who invaded the church, as prophesied by Peter and Jude.
- **Essenes**
 - Believed both the Pharisees and Sadducees were whacked.
 - The Pharisees corrupted God's Word with the Oral Law
 - The Sadducees corrupted God's Word with Hellenism and Paganism
 - They built monasteries and stayed clear of anyone who didn't think like they did.
- **Zealots**
 - Like the Essenes in what they thought of the two major parties
 - But included the Essenes, in that monastery life didn't make much sense, either.
 - Their answer to the issues was war and violence to get their message across that true Judaism was lost.

Two things I want you to consider:

1) Jesus didn't meet any of the pre-conceived Messianic parameters of these groups of "leaders"

- He didn't follow the Oral Law (major tenant of the Pharisees)
- He taught incessantly and constantly about the Resurrection (major no-no for Sadducees)
- He ate with tax collectors and sinners, and befriended prostitutes (totally offending the Essenes)
- And he called for peace, turning the other cheek, and Loving your enemies (alienating the Zealots)

2) Don't think you're any different than they were.

- Best example I can give you:
 - If Jesus were born in 1986 and began his ministry today, what would he be like?
 - What would he be doing?
 - What sort of person would he call to be his disciple?
 - What denominations and religious leaders would be most offended by him?
 - As you consider your answers...
 - Are they based on what you read in scripture, or on your HOPES?
 - Are you prepared for Jesus to
 - Surprise you?
 - Do something new?
 - Reject certain beliefs you've held true since before you could talk?
 - Challenge you?
 - Examples:
 - If he sent you out with just one other friend to downtown and commanded you to heal the sick, raise the dead, and cast out demons, would you go?
 - You might go, but would you heal? Even try to raise the dead? cast out demons?
 - Some might instinctively be thinking, "Well, if the Lord is doing it, then yeah..."
 - The Lord SENT you to do it!!

- If he wanted you to accompany him to a notoriously corrupt businessman's house party, would you hesitate?
 - Why?
 - Would you try to talk him out of it... "Um Jesus, this guy... you don't want to deal with the publicity nightmare..."
 - How long might it take for you to work through all the 'what if's,' and just GO?
- If he did something unlawful, would you do it with Him?
 - I can only imagine Peter and the rest of the apostles following Jesus down the path in the vineyard on the Sabbath, and he casually picks a grape off the vine and puts it in his mouth... the guys all look at each other... slyly pick a grape, look again at each other... put it in their mouth... smile... do it again... and wonder, "what if my mom is watching???"

We all have FILTERS.

- If you know Bill Hatch, you know he has what he calls a "filter"
 - To his credit, he's employing it more often, in the appropriate times!
- But I'm not talking about that kind of filter.
 - ***I'm talking about filtering the information that comes IN, not the stuff that proceeds OUT.***
 - ***IOW, Filter = How we manipulate our own minds to determine VALUE.***
- For example, we have a filter that protects our favorite things.
 - Favorite colors
 - Everybody, on the count of three, say your favorite color...
 - Blue!
 - If yours is orange, that's fine... for you.
 - And if you ask me why I don't like orange as much as blue, I'll simply say "Because it's not blue."
 - **And I'm not necessarily aware I have a filter – at least, not until it's pointed out to me.**
 - And I think that's the POINT of all this.
 - We toss very good things aside, not because they're bad, but because we're like "children in the marketplace" demanding a specific response, or demanding that something fit pre-determined molds.

Ever given a **birthday present**, and been disappointed by the way it was received?

- Now you're getting closer to what Jesus is teaching.
- You were "offended" that the one receiving the gift didn't respond how you thought they would, or SHOULD.

(next) So, in Jesus' day, the Pharisees and Scribes and Jewish Leaders had a FILTER for their Messiah.

- Apparently, even John the Baptist – the one CHOSEN by God – prophesied by Isaiah, questioned whether or not Jesus was truly "The One"
- Let me read for you the prophecy John the Baptist fulfilled (**Isaiah 40:3-8**):
 - Isa 40:3 A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

- Isa 40:4 Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.
- Isa 40:5 And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."
- Isa 40:6 A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.
- Isa 40:7 The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the LORD blows on it; surely the people are grass.
- Isa 40:8 The grass withers, the flower fades, ***but the word of our God will stand forever.***

God's Word – God's truth – God's ways – are not subject to man's filter.

- God's truth simply IS.
- And will stand forever.
- You may nod your head in agreement, but church... like with most things, you probably don't even realize you're pushing the Lord's Truth away in many areas of your life.
- And because of that, this may be a difficult message to apply to your life.
- ***If you are somewhat absentmindedly shoving God's truth aside because it doesn't fit your mold or make it through your long-employed filter, how can you know where to start???***
 - If you don't even know you're doing it, how can you know how to address it?

Where to start: A few thoughts:

1) God does not respond to YOU. YOU respond to HIM.

- Everything originates with God.
 - If it's been a while since you read Job 38-42, do it.
- Take risks in your responses to God's moving in your life
 - When you're wondering if a certain thing is of the Lord, just ask HIM.
 - **Lord, is that you?**
 - So many people say things like, "I just feel like maybe the Lord is moving in this/that direction..."
 - You have access to the very throne of God!
 - Just ask HIM – and listen. Pause, and listen.
 - Passing by the hungry person – you get a nudge...
 - Lord, is that You?
 - Wondering if you should call someone to encourage them.
 - Lord, is that You?
 - Feeling like you should stop doing something...
 - Lord, is that You?
 - Too many irons in the fire?
 - Lord, which one do I need to step away from?
 - Don't wonder so much. ASK.
- **Our FILTER is often our enemy.**
 - We hear spiritually sound people say things like...
 - I just really felt God saying....
 - I just sensed He was....
 - I felt a nudge...

- ***These types of sayings in the church make their way down to the newly saved, young believers.***
- And their filters say, “That’s how you do it – you just sense God, or feel Him, or have a gut feeling He’s doing it...”
- NO! You ASK Him. You read His truth, see Him moving, and ASK Him if He is calling you to it.
 - And you wait upon Him for the answer.
- One might as well say,
 - “I really felt like God wanted me to play that flute, but He didn’t dance!”
 - “And when I sang that dirge, I sensed God wasn’t really mourning.”
- God doesn’t respond to you. You respond to HIM.

2) Identify your many filters.

- Examples
 - You likely have a filter about homeless people, and how to properly minister to them
 - Don’t give them money...
 - Teach a man how to fish – don’t just give him a fish
 - You likely have a filter about enabling people
 - Some rules are sound, some are just excuses not to get involved
 - You likely have a filter called “boundaries”
 - Some are sound, some are not
 - You likely have a filter about worship music.
 - This one never goes away.
 - You likely have a filter about how to raise children “the right way”
 - Perhaps the most frustrating of all – watching Christian parents raise their children by the standards of worldly psychology rather than God’s Word.
 - You likely have a filter about Politics.
 - Immigration, economy, independence...
 - I have news for you: Your political party doesn’t consult the Bible before taking a stance or a side.
 - That’s YOUR job.
 - GOD has an opinion on ALL THIS STUFF!
 - How does your opinion line up with His?
- **A filter is only valuable if it is Biblically sound.**
 - It’s trash if it is based in tradition, culture, socially acceptable mindsets.
- A Biblical filter is radical in just about every culture.
 - Get yourself past the shock and awe of what it might be like to be offensively DIFFERENT from the societal and cultural norms.
 - Not offensive in a rude way – offensive in a Christ-centered way, as He was.

3) Spring Cleaning

- **2 Cor. 4:16, Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.**
 - When I say “spring cleaning” I don’t mean you only need to renew your mind every now and then.
 - I mean that seasons in your life – challenges in your life – will turn your head in such a way as to question your filter.

- The Lord WILL shock you with his movements sometimes, BECAUSE your filter didn't allow for such movement.
- When I say "Spring cleaning" I mean sweep the mind every now and then of what doesn't belong.
 - You get convicted of truth – then clear out what hindered that truth for so long.
 - Rearrange some of the furniture and toss some of it to the curb as you mature in the Lord.
- **Eph. 4:23, be renewed in the spirit of your minds**
- **Rom. 12:2, Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.**

4) Watch for the fruit

- **Mat 7:15-18** "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit."
 - Somehow in the Christian church, the term fruit has come to solely apply to salvations.
 - That's a misnomer – a false teaching.
 - Fruit in Matthew 7 doesn't mention salvations.
 - Most references in the Bible about fruit aren't exclusive to salvations.
 - If I'm involved in an evangelistic effort, then yes, the fruit is salvations.
 - But if I'm involved in discipleship, the fruit is the disciples carrying out the disciplines of God's Word.
 - If I'm using my Spiritual Gifts, the bulk of the gifts are for the purpose of (IOW, FRUIT) edifying the body – which is not salvations.
 - If I'm encouraging someone, the fruit is their encouragement, and so on.
- In our text today, Jesus' first few words in response to John's disciples' question were about the fruit of the Christ.
 - He said in Luke 4 he'd come to fulfill the Isaiah prophecy – to preach good news to the poor, liberate the captive, heal the sick...
 - And here in Luke 7, his answer to whether or not He's the True One is, ***"Look at the results. I'm doing what Isaiah said I would do. I'm doing what I said I would do. Yes, you can be assured I am the One, because you can see the fruit."***

And this is why He finishes the parable with **"Wisdom will be justified by her children."**

- Jesus uses it as a summary for the entire context.
 - The simple meaning: If the fruit of the vine is good, then the vine is good.
- We tend to spiritualize a lot of things in the Christian church.
 - Sometimes we keep doing certain things the same way over and over again, with little fruit.
 - And when people courageously challenge us on that, we might say, "The devil is the discourager – God told me to do this, so I must continue on."
 - Indeed, God might have told you to do it, but trying a different approach might be in order.
 - If there's no fruit, it doesn't mean give up – but it certainly might mean retreat, regroup, go from another angle.

- As you wonder about living and serving in God's truth and love, Watch for the fruit.
- **Where there's fruit, there is Christ.**
 - Let the results of God's truth determine what gets through your filter.

So there's your **homework:**

1) God does not respond to YOU. YOU respond to HIM.

2) Identify your many filters.

3) Spring Cleaning

4) Watch for the fruit

I feel like saying, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

PRAY