

Jesus the Glorious Ruler

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[0 : 01] But we are going to turn to our Bibles now because that is at the heart of what we are and what we do here. And we're going to be reading together in the New Testament in the Gospel of Luke. If you don't have a Bible, there's some at either side here, there's some at the back, there's some at the front.

Don't be shy. Come and grab one and turn it up and you'll be able to follow and see what we're reading together. Josh Johnson is preaching tonight and we've been looking with him at some of these early chapters in Luke's Gospel.

And we come this evening to Luke's Gospel at chapter 6. It's a long chapter but we're going to read it all and we'll be looking at it in a bit of detail shortly with Josh.

So I'm going to read from Luke's Gospel at chapter 6 and at verse 1. And so it was on a Sabbath while he was going through the grain fields, Jesus' disciples plucked and ate some heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands.

But some of the Pharisees said, Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath? Jesus answered them, Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him?

[1 : 12] How he entered the house of God and took and ate the bread of the presence, which is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him. And he said to them, The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.

And so it was on another Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching, and the man was there whose right hand was withered. And the scribes and the Pharisees watched him to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath, so that they might find a reason to accuse him.

But he knew their thoughts. And he said to the man with the withered hand, Come and stand here. And he rose and stood there. Jesus said to them, I ask you, Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?

And after looking around at them all, he said to him, Stretch out your hand. And he did so. And his hand was restored. But they were filled with fury and disgust with one another what they might do to Jesus.

So it was in these days he went out to the mountain to pray. And all night he continued in prayer to God. And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles.

[2 : 36] Simon, whom he named Peter and Andrew, his brother and James and John and Philip and Bartholomew, and Matthew and Thomas and James, the son of Alphaeus, and Simon, who was called a zealot, and Judas, the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

And he came down with them and stood on a level place with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases.

And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power came out from him and he healed them all. And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples and said, Blessed are you who are poor, but yours is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil on account of the Son of Man.

Rejoice in that day. Leap for joy. For behold, your reward is great in heaven. For so their fathers did to the prophets.

[4 : 06] But to you who are rich, woe to you, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry.

Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep. Woe to you when all people speak well of you. For so their fathers did to the false prophets.

But I say to you who hear, love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you.

Pray for those who abuse you. To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also. And from one who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who begs from you.

And from one who takes away your goods, don't demand them back. And as you wish that others would do to you, so do to them. If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you?

[5 : 16] For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you?

Even sinners lend to sinners to get back the same amount. But love your enemies. Do good and lend, expecting nothing in return.

And your reward will be great. And you will be called sons of the Most High. For he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.

Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. Judge not, and you will not be judged. Condemn not, and you will not be condemned.

Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure. Press down. Shaken together. Running over will be put into your lap.

[6 : 20] For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. He also told them a parable. Can a blind man lead a blind man?

Will they not both fall into a pit? A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone, when he is fully trained, will be like his teacher.

Why do you see the speck that's in your brother's eye, but don't notice the log that's in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, brother, let me take out the speck that's in your eye when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye?

You hypocrite. First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that's in your brother's eye. For no good tree bears bad fruit.

Nor again, does a bad tree bear good fruit? Each tree is known by its own fruit, for figs are not gathered from thorn bushes, and nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good.

[7 : 35] The evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil. For out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.

Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and not do what I tell you? Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I'll show you what he's like.

He's like a man building a house who dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against it, that house, it couldn't shake it because it had been well built.

But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on ground without a foundation. And when the stream broke against it, immediately it fell.

And the ruin of that house was great. Amen. May God bless to us. This is his word to all of us.

[8 : 54] We'll do open once again in your Bibles to Luke chapter 6. Luke chapter 6. This evening we are welcoming into membership a number of folks, commissioning them to service in Christ's church here in our midst.

And as they do so, they'll be making vows, vows that we've all made. And I want to just read the first vow as we begin. Do you believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

And do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord? Do you see that? Jesus as Savior and Lord.

And that's what Luke is showing us in chapter 5 and chapter 6 of his Gospel. We spent last Sunday evening on chapter 5 where Luke spells out that Jesus is the gracious rescuer, our Savior.

And now in chapter 6, Luke spells out that Jesus is the glorious ruler, our Lord. And these two things always go together.

[10:11] We cannot separate Jesus the Lord from Jesus the Savior. Jesus the Savior, Jesus the Sovereign. It is as we come under the rule of his word that we enjoy the glorious rescue that he offers.

And as we come to Jesus with empty hands desperate for him to rescue us and to deal with our sin, we're coming to a king asking him to enact his blessed rule over our lives.

Now we saw in Luke 5 last week there's the gradual building up of opposition to Jesus. Look back at chapter 5 verse 30. The religious leaders of the day grumbled at Jesus and his disciples.

And of course, grumbling in the Bible isn't some small thing. It is to reflect distrust towards God and his great redemptive purposes. It was the grumbling of God's people in the wilderness that led to a generation not seeing the land of promise.

And as then, so now, as we see in Luke, God's appointed prophet was grumbled against, Moses, and God's appointed king is grumbled against, the Lord Jesus.

[11:29] And chapter 6 sees this opposition escalate. We'll dig into that in a moment. But first, we must remember, as we saw last week, that Luke has intentionally placed chapter 5 and 6 together with matching structures so that we get a comprehensive picture of Jesus' authority.

Luke is showing us Jesus' authority through his word to rescue thoroughly, which is what we saw last week, but also to rule over his people, which we see in chapter 6.

And so, the first thing we see in our passage this evening is the life-giving rule of Jesus' unstoppable kingdom, verses 1 to 19. the life-giving rule of Jesus' unstoppable kingdom.

Jesus demonstrates what has always been true, that God's law is a blessing that protects and restores. And as he demonstrates this, he also passes judgment on dead religion that tinkers around with God's law and turns it into an enslaving, life-sucking taskmaster.

Jesus' rule is glorious and it will not be stopped by those whose business is the mere paraphernalia of religion. His kingdom will prosper.

[12:59] Luke makes his point once again with three events, just like last week. And the first two of these events, you'll see, verse 1 and verse 6, center around the Sabbath.

And so, they're bound up with the law. Now, we've seen already that the religious leaders of the day, the professors of theology and the clergy of the professing Church of Jesus' day, we've seen that they're inclined to take the law further than God laid out and intended.

Back in chapter 5, they grumble about Jesus' disciples not fasting as they do. Remember, they fast often, twice a week, we read later on in Luke's Gospel.

But God's law only ever spoke of a fast once a year for one day. They go further than God. And we saw last week that a great day of rejoicing had arrived, a bridegroom was here, the year of Jubilee was being enacted before their very eyes, the sin doctor was ministering to those in dire need and the clergy are grumbling about fasting.

Now, of course, Jesus' arrival didn't mean that the law went out the window. Jesus' response isn't to say that the law doesn't matter. In fact, the cleansing of the leper back in chapter 5 showed that wasn't the case.

[14:18] Jesus sent him to follow the right procedure. No. Jesus is here exposing that the Pharisees were caught up in a man-made perversion of God's law, so much so that they miss the glory of Jesus' salvation.

They are a picture of miserliness, showing the kind of life-sapping impact that dead religion has. And this ramps up in chapter 6.

And so we need to be clear, nobody is more scathing about and more disgusted by dead religion than the Lord Jesus. Well, let's look at these two events around the Sabbath.

We've noticed verse 1 and verse 6, they're both on the Sabbath. And in these events, we see that the law is about glorious restoration, not gleeful regulation. The law is about glorious restoration, not gleeful regulation.

The beating heart of God's work, of his word, of his law, is blessing and salvation. The first event, verses 1 to 5, Jesus' disciples grab a few strands of grain and eat them as they walk through the field so they can soothe their hunger.

[15:34] Seemingly innocent enough until the Pharisees cry, Sinners! Sabbath breakers! And the second event, verses 6 to 11, it's in the midst of Jesus teaching in the synagogue.

He's teaching in Pharisee land in their arena. And a man with a withered hand is present. And the Pharisees are watching, waiting to accuse Jesus. Will he break the Sabbath by healing this man?

Jesus does heal the man, brings wonderful restoration to someone who would have known great deprivation, probably unable to work, living a severely impeded life.

And both of these episodes expose the distortions that the Pharisees have given themselves holy to. They cannot see that God's law isn't about leaving men hungry and helpless, but it's about making men whole.

It isn't about cold, hard religion that would bring death, but rather it's all about protecting humanity. Of course, the fourth commandment about the Sabbath was given to Moses and it, in fact, did forbid work on the Sabbath.

[16:48] Jesus isn't undermining that or questioning that, but look at what the Pharisees deemed to be work, plucking a few heads of grain. It's all rather ludicrous, isn't it?

But that is the defining characteristic of dead religion, fussing about with minutia all the while missing the big picture, tinkering endlessly with more prescribed and narrow regulations so that the whole structure is corrupted.

In fact, in the Mishnah, which is a major collection of the various sayings that were passed down from the very religious leaders of Israel, it records nearly 40 different kinds of work that are banned on the Sabbath, tying a knot, weaving a couple of threads.

Work. But there are even clarifications that they add to that. It doesn't count as work if you can untie a knot as long as it's only with one hand. Do you see that this is the kind of suffocating fastidiousness that characterizes dead religion?

Let us define true religion for you. Let us take the law and the scriptures and add clarifications.

Here's our 21,000 page booklet that explains every do and don't under the sun.

[18:09] And that would be 21,000 pages likely to be utterly crushing because it's so very easy to fixate on microscopic detail. Whether it be about the do's and don'ts of the Sabbath or the strict parameters that make someone truly reformed and sound.

Oh, this group over there, well, their church law book doesn't cover this, doesn't say that. Or that group over there, well, they celebrate Christmas. They're outside the camp. Or they don't use the right Bible translation.

Or they dared to sing a hymn that wasn't from this decade. Or they dared to sing a hymn that was only 400 years old. Now, you'd think that Jesus' response should have been a simple, like, come on, don't be so ridiculous.

But Jesus' answer isn't to quibble over definitions of work. The Pharisees were masters at quibbling over the minutia. Jesus' response is different because there's a far deeper issue at stake here. Jesus shows them that they fundamentally misunderstand the purpose of the law. And so their application of it is always going to not just be narrow, but crushing.

[19:21] Jesus exposes them by looking at an example from King David, from 1 Samuel 21, where the law might seem to be broken in a far more serious manner.

Verses 3 and 4, when David was hungry, he asked the priests for bread, and because there was no other bread available, he ate the bread of the presence. Bread that was only for the priests to eat and not for anyone else at all.

Well, King David took it and ate it, and he even shared it with his men. Now, could these Pharisees take issue with great King David? Well, the truth is that David, just like the Lord Jesus, understood the law perfectly well.

Unlike the Pharisees, David knew the true intent and purposes of God's law. It was always designed to protect life, to preserve life, to promote and prosper life, not to prohibit and crush life. The need to eat, to not starve, was a far more importance than the promised rest of the Sabbath. God is not a cruel God with arbitrary rules to rob life of its meaning and joy.

[20:40] And so notice, Jesus isn't saying that the Sabbath laws do not matter, as if he's somehow come to do away with them. No, not at all. Jesus is simply saying that the Pharisees' Bible handling has always been suspect.

They fail to see that the very heart of the Bible is salvation. And isn't that what we see even more vividly in the second event? Here was someone in dire need.

The Pharisees don't want to see him helped and healed if it will damage their precious Sabbath, if it will damage their superstructure of religion that protects their place in the world.

Verse 9, Jesus says, is it lawful to do good or harm on the Sabbath, to save life or to destroy it? this question perfectly exposes, doesn't it, the callousness of dead religion.

Religion that cares very deeply about the programs and the polity of church, the power in a church so that everything happens just as it pleases those who are most invested.

[21 : 46] Religion that paints a picture of some neat and tidy rules that will order the world and satisfy our consciences. such things are compassionless, powerless to deal with the real needs, but worse, they're destructive.

We have to be realistic, don't we? To many people, this kind of religion appeals because it is a way of not having to be confronted with the living God. We can fit it neatly and tidily into the box that we give to it, and we can control it rather than having to submit wholeheartedly to the Lord Jesus. And it enables us not to have to deal with the full weight and woe of sin, because as long as we tick the right little religious boxes, we can solve our consciences and not come to terms with a dreadful and dire sickness of sin that lurks deep within us, that's so serious that God himself had to take on flesh to deal with it.

Jesus' question gets right to the heart of the Sabbath. Is it lawful to do good or harm, to save or destroy? Of course, it's to do good, to save life.

The law is a blessing to mankind, not a burden. And if there's any one commandment where this can be seen most clearly, then it's surely the Sabbath. The whole fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy has already been cast by Luke and Jesus in Sabbath terms as the great year of Jubilee, the year of liberty from bondage and captivity.

[23 : 33] Sabbath was a good gift for man to bless him with rest every week, to bless him with the freedom to worship, to be renewed and fed from on high every week, to be strengthened for his purpose in the world every week.

the Sabbath was to be restorative, a blessing to help us be more truly human as we're shaped more and more in the likeness of Christ. The laws around the Sabbath are to protect our ongoing restoration, not to pointlessly fill our lives with regulation.

And the year of Jubilee was the ultimate Sabbath, not just every seven days or every seven years, but after seven sevens of years, the Sabbath of Sabbaths of Sabbaths, where there was release of the captives, restoration for people's poverty, rest from work, a majestic picture of salvation.

And so when Jesus says, verse 5, that he is Lord of the Sabbath, he is surely speaking in light of his claim in chapter 4, that his ministry, his purpose was to proclaim the year of the Lord's fever, the year of Jubilee, the Sabbath of Sabbaths of Sabbaths.

And so how dreadfully wrong these Pharisees are, staring them in the face is the fulfillment of the law, the one who delivers all that it promises and all that it protects.

[25 : 04] And they look at him and say, sinner, instead of Savior. Failing to see that the scriptures all revolve around Jesus and his glorious act of salvation will skew all kinds of things.

You see, dead religion, merely external religion that pays lip service to Jesus, hypocritical religion, all of these things turn God's wonderful work of redemption for man into a woeful web of restrictions for man.

man. And it moves the very focus of mankind away from the bountiful recreation that's promised, and instead places the focus onto bare religiosity.

And don't we see with this second event, the authoritative word of Jesus has genuine power to bless and restore this man with a withered hand, in complete contrast to the asinine words of the Pharisees.

whose words can help no one. Well, notice, finally, the great irony here is that those who make and twist the laws of dead religion always seem to be able to remove the demands from themselves.

[26 : 25] They accuse Jesus of breaking one of the commandments by healing, but verse 11, what do they do? Well, they're at work. Working out a plan to get Jesus.

They plot harm and ultimately murder, breaking another of the commandments. It's an abiding picture of religion devoid of Jesus, religion that's at man's whim.

Jesus brings fullness, but verse 11, dead religion brings fury. well, briefly, the third event in this first section of chapter 6, we see verses 12 to 19, powerful renewal and the rejection of perverted religion.

Powerful renewal and the rejection of perverted religion. Jesus' mission is unstoppable, and where he encounters those who have closed their hearts to him, he will move on and continue to call to himself his true people.

A recurring picture in Luke is Jesus being rejected and rejecting at the same time. We saw that with Nazareth, didn't we? People refuse him and he refuses them.

[27 : 46] And we see the same thing here with the calling of the twelve. Jesus' calling of the twelve is a rejection on what he's just exposed. Jesus signals his intent to bring renewal, to draw people back to the true gospel.

That is the same gospel preached by the Old and New Testament, by the prophets and the apostles. So verse 12, Jesus goes to the mountain. Verse 13, he called twelve apostles, just as there have been twelve tribes in Israel.

Of course, Jesus isn't enacting some kind of replacement here that does away with all that is old. No. Having been confronted with a perverted form of Old Testament faith, Jesus signals a moving on from the dead, skewed religion of the Pharisees and all of their leaders and structures and strictures.

And instead, there's a calling back to the eternal gospel. Jesus' calling of the twelve signals that it's time to reject and renew. He's here to call his true people.

And so here are the men who will carry forward this glorious gospel and this glorious mission. You see, Jesus won't be stopped by those who tinker with religion. He will always draw out the faithful remnant and continue to enact his great purposes in the world.

[29 : 13] the official religious leaders of the day, of any day, will be rejected when they corrupt the gospel.

That is a very solemn word to a country whose national churches have redefined the Christian faith in their own image. change. But it is also a hopeful word to those who know their need, those who bear fruit in keeping with repentance and cling on to Jesus, those who listen to him, those who receive him gladly.

It's hopeful because his glorious kingdom will not be stopped. Do you see verse 17?

A great multitude come to Jesus again. His mission isn't stopped, it isn't put off course. The multitudes come to him again and they come from all of Judea and Jerusalem, Israelites flock to Jesus, but also pseudo-Gentiles from Tyre and Sidon.

You see, the religious leaders of Israel rejected Jesus, but his mission carries on and goes out beyond the borders and boundaries of Israel. And once again, what is it that characterizes Jesus' ministry?

[30 : 35] Verse 18, his word goes forth with authority and it brings healing and wholeness. It heals people from their sin and it frees them from bondage to sin and the evil one.

It does all that dead religion cannot do. Now, one final detail here, verse 12. You'll have noticed that Jesus brings the appointment of the twelve in prayer to his father, seeking wisdom in appointing them.

But look at the detail that sticks out like a sore thumb here. Verse 16, Judas Iscariot was appointed and he would become a traitor. I think Luke is putting this here to just prompt a thought in the Lord's people.

We mustn't treat prayer as like rubbing a lamp and summoning a genie to make wishes to. Ralph Davis is so insightful here, listen to him. Doesn't this text highlight what many believers know by experience, that along with our prayers, the mysterious providence of God is at work?

And it's useful for us to see this for it may keep us from a sort of presto view of prayer, thinking that if we are praying, well then of course God's going to make it all turn out fine. But not always.

[32 : 02] Prayer may not always resolve mysteries, but may intensify them. And he says it doesn't hurt the Lord's people to ponder that. The Lord Jesus prayed and appointed his twelve and one would turn out to be a traitor, turning him over to death.

But that very death would guarantee the victory of the Lord's kingdom. A mysterious providence indeed. Well, as Jesus calls his twelve, he sets out the nature of his kingdom.

And that's what we see in the second section of this passage, verses 20 to 49. We see the lose-your-life-to-gain-it nature of Jesus' upside-down kingdom.

The lose-your-life-to-gain-it nature of Jesus' upside-down kingdom. Jesus' kingdom, and so Jesus' followers, are distinct from this world.

Notice, in what is often referred to as the Sermon on the Plain, notice that Jesus is speaking particularly here to his disciples, verse 20. This is teaching about life and service with Jesus' king.

[33 : 15] And Jesus' teaching follows three sections. First, belonging to Jesus and ministering effectively for him means knowing blessing where the world sees none.

Blessing where the world sees none, verses 20 to 26. There are four blessed things that Jesus mentions, verses 20 to 23, and four woes that he mentions, verses 24 to 26.

Let's look at the blessings. These are Luke's beatitudes, blessings, and they have a much more physical sense than Matthew's equivalents.

Luke is more literal. Literally, the parr, the hungry, and the sorrowful, blessed are they. And that's because Luke makes very clear the reason Jesus' followers will experience these things.

Verse 22, blessed are you when people hate you and exclude, revile, and spurn your name as evil on account of the Son of Man.

[34 : 21] Notice the reason? Because of Jesus. It's a bracing thing, isn't it? What's the first thing Jesus says in his kingdom manifesto to his disciples?

On my account, you'll be hated, your name will be dirt, and you'll be looked upon as evil. We've seen that, haven't we, in the last decade?

Christians in this country have moved from being silly, a bit stupid for believing in God, to now being dangerous. How long will it be until various governing bodies for medics and teachers and all kinds of other jobs will make it impossible to belong to Jesus, and have their seal of approval.

But this gets more bracing, doesn't it, when we look carefully at verse 23. This has always been the case, this has always been the way, their fathers did it to the prophets.

Notice, who is Jesus saying the hatred will come from? It is unbelieving Israel. It was the professing church of the day who hated and scorned the prophets.

[35 : 37] Great opposition comes to Jesus' followers from within the visible church, from those who cling to dead religion, but want it to have the name of Jesus on it.

Look at Jesus' words to them. Verses 24 to 26, woe, woe to you when people speak well of you.

You see, it was always the false prophets who featured on Radio Israel's revival are.

What is one of the most telling ways to see how faithful a church's ministry is? It's by looking at how the world speaks of them. What are their credentials like on inclusivity?

Are they celebrated or condemned? Are they with the world or with Jesus? Jesus says woe to those who want this world with all of its wealth and acclaim.

He says you've had it. You've had it all. All that you will have, you've had. Whereas verse 23 to his own he says rejoice in the day you share my scorn, leap for joy.

[36 : 48] And he says that all on top of being told four times that it's blessed to suffer for Jesus. Maybe you're sitting there thinking there must be a translation error here. How can the blessed life look like that?

What is it that makes these hardships blessed? Well, embracing them isn't stepping into the unknown. There is a rich and noble heritage amongst the Lord's people of suffering.

And Jesus invites his followers to join the honor roll. When we face all kinds of trouble in Jesus' name, we're walking the same path as the prophets of old.

We walk in the same footsteps as giants and as Jesus. And that is evidence of real faith, of bearing fruit in keeping with repentance.

It acts as a reassurance in that. But it's also blessed because we genuinely identify with Jesus, the gracious rescuer and glorious Lord in his scorn.

[37 : 55] God and by doing that we're making clear that we are conscious of the unseen reality of heaven and hell. Because we receive the scorn knowing that it does affect us here and now.

It is costly. It is deprivation. It is painful in ways and at times. But we're living for the world to come. verse 23 it shows that we're conscious that there is an unseen reality of heaven and hell and we're conscious that our reward is great in heaven.

Well, Jesus' followers being fruitful for him will also mean, secondly, bearing what the world will not. Verses 27 to 38.

The way of Jesus is the way of love at great cost. The key and repeated command here is verse 27 and verse 35. Love your enemies.

[39 : 03] God's people have always been marked by sacrificial love. But Jesus isn't talking in general terms here. These commands flow straight from what we've just seen.

The enemies here are those who are persecuting you for belonging to Jesus. What is the way of the people of God when the world tries to crush them and shame them?

Verse 27. It's to do good to them. That doesn't mean affirm them in their evil, but seek their good, seek their salvation.

Verse 28. When people curse and abuse you, bless and pray for them. verse 29. When someone humiliates you by slapping you in the face, that could be a real physical slap or a bare-faced insult. What do you do? Don't respond in kind. When someone wants to humiliate you for belonging to Jesus, own that humiliation.

[40 : 06] When things are taken away from you on account of Jesus, your cloak or whatever it is, don't back down, don't disown what it means to belong to Jesus. Give your tunic to. Make it clear that Jesus means more than the clues on your back.

Let nobody think that Jesus is all satisfying until it hits your bank balance or your street cred. Verse 30. I don't think verse 30 is a seemingly random insertion about giving to the poor, to beggars. The context is all about suffering for Jesus. In fact, the word begs could and probably should be translated as demands. demands, when people demand of you because you belong to Jesus, don't hold back.

Give what they seek. I don't think Jesus' words here are that his people should be doormats in all of life, who never defend themselves. But I think instead his words are not to stoop to the level that your enemies play at.

When mud is thrown at you because you belong to Jesus, don't throw mud back. When tempers flare, keep calm. When it's costly to follow Jesus, embrace the cost to show that Jesus is worth it.

[41 : 23] Model to those who would attack you, model to them what Jesus has done. Care most about their souls. It would be very tempting for us if someone got us sacked for being faithful to Jesus to be thinking about revenge, not redemption, to think about our protection and not the powerful work of salvation that they need.

But isn't it striking that verses 27 to 31 are the very things that Jesus exemplified as he was accused and faced his crucifixion. He rebuked his disciples' violence and undoes their damage. He makes no defense for himself. Lots are drawn for his things and he hands them over. And on and on. Luke is saying that when faced with scorn for belonging to Jesus, his people will model what their king does.

The one who didn't act to defend himself but instead acted to rescue wretched sinners. Verse 31, doing to others as you'd want them to do to you.

And then verses 32 and following makes clear that the difference that Jesus followers have is that they love not just the lovely. Even sinners will reciprocate love.

[42 : 49] But Jesus says, verse 35, love your enemies for great will be reward. Jesus followers will be fruitful servants of the glorious king as they bear what this world will not.

Meeting hatred with hope, meeting contempt with the cross. Listen to Ralph Davis again. The disciples' deportment under the pressure of persecution should be so different that it astounds the world.

They are to be marked with a love that makes the pagans go around scratching their heads. The love that marks Jesus' disciples must go beyond the boring reciprocity of this age.

Jesus' followers will be fruitful in his service when they bear what the world will not, when they model their savior. And finally, Jesus' followers being fruitful in his service means building in a way that the world does not.

Verses 39 to 49. Jesus' people are to be realistic about themselves, not indulging in fake news about themselves. the final set of parables is all about lives that are honest and consistent.

[44 : 09] Belonging to Jesus isn't a set of external tick box things, a dead religion 2.0 kind of thing. No, following Jesus is totally different. It means being honest about oneself and one's weakness, one's limitations, and not specializing in pointing out the weakness of others.

See verses 39 to 42. Jesus' followers, if they are to be fruitful for him, are to be honest about themselves. In ministry, it's so vital to know one's weaknesses and limitations.

If we're blind to ourselves, then those we will lead will be blind too. Because verse 40, a disciple is not above his teacher.

In fact, the truth is that those you train, those you lead, will be just like you. It's a proving word to those who would or do lead in God's church.

If we lead in a way that examines the minor flaws in others whilst ignoring our major flaws, then that's what will be harvested again and again. The Pharisees were specialists at seeing the speck

in others, but not so with Jesus' people.

[45 : 28] verses 43 to 45, Jesus goes on, there's no faking, no hiding, and he pushes his point a bit further for verse 43, no good tree bears bad fruit.

Each tree is known by its own fruit. And being honest with oneself means really looking at what flows out of your heart. Verse 45, out of the abundance of the heart one speaks.

friends, Jesus can give us new hearts. He does give his people a new heart. And with his help, we will produce good fruit.

Not perfection, but consistent and repentant lives. Jesus' point is that faking it won't work.

Eventually, the bad fruit will become evident.

With the Pharisees, the fruit was cold, callous, compassionless religion. Jesus is saying that toying with religion doesn't work, but submitting to him, following him, receiving from him, actually transforms hearts.

[46 : 36] You see, we could try painting apples to look like oranges for a while, but that will be seen through. Jesus deals with the root, the tree, and thus the fruit.

And so he says, verses 46 to 49, simply crying out, Lord, Lord, will do no good. Great confessions of faith, pious prayers, a great show of religion, and mere fascination with theology.

Jesus isn't interested in that. He says, verse 49, that's like building your house without a foundation. At the first sign of trouble, it will fall to pieces, and it leads to a ruinous future.

God's love. But the one who, verse 47, hears Jesus' authoritative words and does them, well, that's a whole other story.

That is building upon a great foundation that will stand into eternity, that will stand until the day that the kingdoms of this world are engulfed fully and finally by the kingdom of God.

[47 : 40] And do you see, there isn't anything dramatic or magical about following Jesus. What does it look like, verse 47?

Comes, hears, and does. That's the life of faith. Coming to Jesus, listening to Jesus, doing what Jesus says.

Friends, as Jesus people, we ought to be honest about ourselves. Isn't that what's required to come to Jesus in repentance? It's coming recognizing that we're flawed and in need.

When we forget that we need grace, we will cease to offer it to others. Jesus' rescue and rule go together, and that means we don't need to fear reality or hide it, because Jesus is Lord and Savior, because we can be honest, because we can be honest about ourselves and receive his grace, we can be gracious to others and be fruitful, building on reality, building on real grace.

And so we don't need to pretend and fixate and outward things and loudly and piously say, Lord, Lord. No. The humble, repentant, honest people of God can come and hear and do.

[49 : 13] No pretense, just repentance and faith, coming to Jesus and responding to Jesus. But Jesus finishes with a stark word, doesn't he?

he lands his sermon with the sound of the makeshift house smashing to the ground. Forsake Jesus, toy around with him, and it's a grim picture of ruin and rejection.

Jesus is the gracious rescuer, the glorious ruler, the saviour and the sovereign.

And we can't fake it with him, and we can't only take a bit of him. But he says to us, everyone who comes to me and hears my word and does them, is like a man building a house with a deep foundation, building on rock.

Such a one is unshakable. Let's pray. Lord God, grant us grace that we would be ever able to submit to your word and rule.

[50 : 39] Perish any lingering ambition within us that would prevent us bearing fruit and building the obedience of faith. Help us, for we know we can't do it alone.

And assure us that your spirit works miracles in man. And we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.