

How We Should Live as Part of God's Family

Series: Luke

October 29, 2017

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As important as a yearly physical exam may be for our bodies, the Scriptures encourage us to conduct a personal spiritual exam of our faith in Jesus.

2 Corinthians 13:5 *Examine yourselves to see if your faith is genuine. Test yourselves. Surely you know that Jesus Christ is among you; if not, you have failed the test of genuine faith.*

Jesus doesn't just relate to people where they are and give them comfort; He challenges them to step it up to a higher level.

Jesus issued these challenges after praying all night.

Luke 6:12 *One day soon afterward Jesus went up on a mountain to pray, and he prayed to God all night.*

Some examples of the higher level of living that Jesus taught:

1. Treat others the way you want to be treated.

Luke 6:27-31 ²⁷[Jesus said,] *"But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. ²⁸Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you. ²⁹If someone slaps you on one cheek, offer the other cheek also. If someone demands your coat, offer your shirt also. ³⁰Give to anyone who asks; and when things are taken away from you, don't try to get them back. ³¹Do to others as you would like them to do to you."*

We want Jesus to take our side when we have conflicts, but Jesus says we are to love, pray for, and be charitable to those who oppose us.

Verse 31 is called the Golden Rule.

Jesus laid a foundational principle when He said to love our enemies and then shared six spiritual practices to apply to our lives.

A. Do good to those who oppose you.

- B. Bless those who talk badly about you.
- C. Pray for those who hurt you.
- D. When insulted, turn the other cheek.
- E. Give people the resources they need.
- F. Treat others the same way you want them to treat you.

2. Be just as merciful as your Heavenly Father.

Luke 6:32-38 ³² *"If you love only those who love you, why should you get credit for that? Even sinners love those who love them!"* ³³ *"And if you do good only to those who do good to you, why should you get credit? Even sinners do that much!"* ³⁴ *"And if you lend money only to those who can repay you, why should you get credit? Even sinners will lend to other sinners for a full return."*

³⁵ *"Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for he is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked."* ³⁶ *"You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate."*

³⁷ *"Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn others, or it will all come back against you. Forgive others, and you will be forgiven."* ³⁸ *"Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back."*

God wants those who don't know Him to see Jesus in the loving, good, and generous lives of those who have accepted Him.

Jesus continues to challenge and motivate us to a higher level of righteousness.

3. Get an eye check-up.

Luke 6:39-42 ³⁹ *"Then Jesus gave the following illustration: 'Can one blind person lead another? Won't they both fall into a ditch?'"* ⁴⁰ *"Students are not greater than their teacher. But the student who is fully trained will become like the teacher."*

⁴¹ "And why worry about a speck in your friend's eye when you have a log in your own?" ⁴² How can you think of saying, 'Friend, let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,' when you can't see past the log in your own eye? Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye."

4. Get a heart check-up

Luke 6:43-45 ⁴³ "A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit. ⁴⁴ A tree is identified by its fruit. Figs are never gathered from thornbushes, and grapes are not picked from bramble bushes. ⁴⁵ A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. What you say flows from what is in your heart."

The fruit of a tree is an indication of the underlying nature of the tree. Likewise, a person's actions, words, and attitudes are an unfailing indication of the state of their heart.

5. Get an ear check-up.

Luke 6:46-49 ⁴⁶ "So why do you keep calling me 'Lord, Lord!' when you don't do what I say? ⁴⁷ I will show you what it's like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching, and then follows it. ⁴⁸ It is like a person building a house who digs deep and lays the foundation on solid rock. When the floodwaters rise and break against that house, it stands firm because it is well built. ⁴⁹ But anyone who hears and doesn't obey is like a person who builds a house right on the ground, without a foundation. When the floods sweep down against that house, it will collapse into a heap of ruins."

Jesus wants His followers to not only hear the Word of God, but to act on what they hear by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Action is the proof that one is a true follower of Jesus.

Conclusion

What Jesus said was really important; what Jesus did was more important. He died on a cross because He loved us, so that we could be forgiven of our sins and become part of God's family.

The same is true for us and for LFMC. What we say is really important, but what we do is more important. Actions speak louder than words.

Luke 6:46 *"So why do you keep calling me 'Lord, Lord!' when you don't do what I say?"*