

Jesus teaches Christians how to treat each other  
Luke 6:36-49

It is important to remember that this sermon which was delivered by Jesus was spoken to “His disciples”. Verse 20 of the same chapter makes it clear that Jesus is preaching to His followers and trying to teach them about the life of discipleship. We can therefore conclude that Jesus is not only telling us how to live in the world, but also how to live with each other within the body of Christ.

The text in this lesson reminds us to be like God in our character, and to translate that character into the way that we treat each other. The lessons are very straightforward and simple, but if we remember them, we can make the church and our community a better place. First, we are encouraged to be merciful as God, our father is merciful. In all ways, we should be like God. When we do that, we are representing Jesus the way He wants us to in the world. To be merciful means to have pity and compassion toward the ills of another person. When people are at their worst or going through their worst situation, we should be compassionate toward them. In addition, the passage encourages us to do the following;

**1) Know that you will reap what you sow.**

In other words, whatever you give out to others will come back to you. If we refrain from judging and condemning, then it will not come back to us from others. If we forgive, we shall be forgiven. If we give, it will be given back to us abundantly. However we treat others, God has a way of allowing it to come back upon us, whether it be positive or negative. Therefore, we should do unto others as we would want them to do to us.

**2) Avoid being a “hypocrite”.**

A “hypocrite” was someone who was a play-actor, or a character in a stage play who responded to another character in the dialogue with scripted lines. The biblical writers borrowed this imagery and used it to refer to religious people who pretended to be sincere and something that they really were not, while insisting that others live up to the standards that they only pretended to observe. Jesus said that the blind cannot lead the blind. The only way for us to mature in our faith is to follow the master, Jesus. It is then ridiculous for a hypocrite to think they can straighten out anyone else in the church, because they may see the faults of others, but they ignore the even larger fault that they have in their own lives. To be truly righteous, we must first look at ourselves and make sure that we are imitating Jesus before we try to “fix” someone else.

### **3) The words that come out of our mouths indicate the “fruit” within us.**

All Christians should watch what they say and how they say it. In the book of James, we are reminded that the tongue is an “unruly evil full of deadly poison”. The passage teaches us that you know a tree by the fruit it bears, but this is not simply talking about what actions we do. As illustrated in verse 45, we see that what comes out of our mouths is an indication of the abundance in our hearts. While it may be true that the works we do speak for us, it is also true that the words we say speak for us as well. How often have words been spoken in the church that have hurt other Christians and wounded them spiritually, emotionally and mentally. When a Christian cannot control their mouth, it is an indication of what fruit may or may not exist in their soul. We believe that the Holy Spirit can help us control our words, and we should trust Him to do so.

### **4) Discipleship is not just about saying it, it’s about *doing it*.**

Jesus knows that there are people who call Him “Lord” because it is the right thing to do, because everybody else is doing it, or because it sounds good. But Jesus is not simply impressed by people calling Him “Lord”. More importantly, if we call Him “Lord” then we should do what He says in His word. It is not enough to hear His word and call Him “Lord”, we must do what He says in His word. Otherwise, we are simply building our lives on a weak foundation that will not survive when the storms of life come. But when we do what He says, our life is built on a strong foundation that will survive any storm. What a tragedy for people to hear God’s word, but not do it. Our foundation gets built and our faith grows when we call Him “Lord” and then back it up by doing what He tells us.