

## Overcoming Hypocrisy, Developing Integrity

Series: Encountering Jesus (through the Gospel of Luke)

Brad Bailey - March 24, 2019

### Luke 6:41-42

"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? <sup>42</sup> How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

### Luke 6:43-45

"No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. <sup>44</sup> Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. <sup>45</sup> The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.

### Luke 6:46-49

<sup>46</sup> "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? <sup>47</sup> I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice. <sup>48</sup> He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. <sup>49</sup> But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete."

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**TEXT: Luke 6:41-49**

### **Intro**

**About 18 months ago... a new book was released by a group of authors and photographers called: The Potemkin Village. In this book they share pictures of buildings and towns like “Peace Village” .... It lies in North Korea...just across from the border with South Korea...and by all accounts....the town is an uninhabited village ...more of a facade...as a means of propaganda...to lure South Koreans to defect to North Korea.**

This is just one example of what they call “Potemkin Villages”... or Buildings.

The original term "Potemkin Village" derives from a story dating back to 18th-century Russia. In 1787 in Czarist Russia, Prince Grigori Potemkin organized a lavish trip down the Dneiper (Neeper) River for Catherine the Great to show off the results of his much-heralded building projects. As they floated by, Potemkin pointed out village after village which he had built. All looked prosperous and were thronged with happy, well-dressed peasants.

But the entire scene was a hoax. The "villages" consisted only of painted facades erected by Potemkin for the occasion. The peasants had been dressed up and transported from miles away to give the appearance of real towns. **Behind the facade of prosperity, the peasants continued to live their lives in poverty and misery.**

**And today, Jesus calls us to consider how we may be building facades instead of true lives.**

**Today... we are continuing our journey of Encountering Jesus through the Gospel of Luke. I want to back up to final portion of text we ended with last weekend...as it overlaps with what Jesus is saying in the verses that follow.**

### **Luke 6:41-42 (NIV)**

*"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? <sup>42</sup> How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.*

Here in the middle of Jesus words...we see the target of what he is calling us out of. **“You HYPOCRITE”**

**He is speaking to the nature of hypocrisy.**

Hypocrisy is something we commonly react to today.

We do well to understand that Jesus confronts this on a deeper level as a central part of his calling to all lives.

The English word is completely **brought over from the Greek** word.

*Hypocrite* is the Greek word itself, just brought right into English. Almost letter for letter.

However, the Greek word *hypocrite* is the same word as the Greek **word for an actor**.

Hypocrisy reflects the **nature of acting... of performance**.

Back in those days, actors used a **literal mask**. If you were playing a joyful role, a role in which you were a joyful person, you put on a joyous mask, or you put on a grieving mask ... those masks sometimes you've seen on those old insignias for theaters. That's really how they were done.

Here's the point. **The mask hid what you were really like**. All good acting is that way.

**Hypocrisy reflects the nature of hiding...of wearing a mask that hides my true condition...that hides who I really am.**

No matter what's in your heart, you can still play a great part. What you present on the outside is not at all necessarily what's on the inside.

Acting is a gift. Not realizing you are acting...is not.

Jesus is confronting the very nature of human life that is hiding from it's true condition.

This **becomes obvious** in what he **describes as the person who doesn't realize the log in their eye**.

**One of the ways in which we hide... is by diverting attention** from who we really are is by finding fault with other people.

It's turning the **interrogators light** upon others... **the brighter it is...the less likely we are seen... by others...but even by ourselves**.

**Problem with hiding from God...is that He is the One we so desperately need.**

**Illustration: Hide N Seek...hide so well...left there alone...only way to end is to come out...**

**> Dilemma for us all.... Love is what we are hiding from.**

**The Scriptures tells us that there is a shame that hides from love... a darkness hides from light.**

**When Jesus is saying, "You fail to see the plank in your own eye."...he is telling us two things: There is a big problem...and we really are avoiding it.**

The **word he uses** that is usually translated **log or plank** is the word that is used for a **load-bearing beam in a house**... he's talking about something enormous **like a tree**...or a **telephone pole**.

We can all see the irony of someone with a huge telephone pole in their eye trying to help someone remove a speck in their eye.

But I don't think he is trying to emphasize the size of one's sin... as if to suggest those guilty of murder are trying to help those guilty of stealing.

**His point** is that there is **something really wrong** that keeps us from seeing clearly.

**Logs are significant...and the more honest we get...the more we may face. We tend to look the decency of our outward behavior and think we have nothing to hide... but Jesus is speaking of the heart...and sees that which is fundamentally choosing to live lives of self-deception... more defiant than we realize.**

He's saying the reason we can't bear to look ourselves in the mirror spiritually is that we know there's something really wrong...something we have difficulty facing.

Whether you believe in God or not, whether you believe in sin or not, ...there's still a voice that feels a certain fundamental shame...a separation. It's a voice we can spend out whole lives trying to ignore...or fight...or drown out with noise.

It's the plank we don't want to see.

**Naturally we hope we can make a quick impression...** but Jesus confronts what must change...it's the heart within us.

He continues...

**Luke 6:43-45 (NIV)**

*"No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. <sup>44</sup> Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. <sup>45</sup> The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.*

He continues to speak into that nature of hypocrisy.

This imagery is taken from what is a common sight in Palestine; behind rough hedges of thorn and of the prickly pear, fig-trees are often seen completely covered with the twining tendrils of vine branches. These vines may grow together...but look at the fruit and you will know what type of tree they are.

**The fruit of human life... reflects the root of human life.**

You are trying to show a good face... but only a change in your heart will create good fruit. It's a challenging truth.

It's common today after someone has done something deemed morally awful... to hear someone say: **"It's just not like them."** ...to speak of how **"out of character"** someone's behaviors was.. **"I don't know what got into them?"**

And while there certainly can be outside influences upon human character ...including biological or chemical influences...or circumstantial influences... the more notable fact is that something has been getting into us and it's growing.

**In general...what comes out of us...comes from within us.**

**If I tell you I have the measles and I actually have the mumps... what will you get?**

**Jesus said: "out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks."**

Who you are will come out.

**The heart will show over time and under pressure.**

**Those who are closest will see the unscripted and unrehearsed.**

**When pressure comes... our true nature will show.**

**Think a moment about a water-saturated sponge. If we push down with our finger even slightly, water runs out onto the table. We immediately know what fills the interior pockets of the sponge. The same is true of ourselves. We can tell what fills us on the inside by what comes out under pressure.**

If someone were to evaluate who we really are... the substance of our beliefs... based on what comes out of us in our daily speech and actions...what conclusion would they draw?

But Jesus now speaks of the person for whom good things come out because good things were stored in their heart.

**...And that is the nature of integrity.**

Integrity is **when what we are becoming what we say we are becoming.**

**Integrity: the state of being whole and undivided**

Your actions, especially your words flow out of your heart. What do your actions and words reveal about the condition of your heart? [2]

Jesus simply makes the point that good fruit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, and self-control come from a heart that has been changed by God.

It's helpful to understand that ultimately... we need a new force to work within us. A connection to God's nature to join us.

This is what Jesus bears. He offers his nature which can change us. So he continues...

**Luke 6:46-49 (NIV)**

<sup>46</sup> "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? <sup>47</sup> I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice. <sup>48</sup> He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. <sup>49</sup> But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete."

Jesus is calling us out of the duality of hypocrisy and into the life of integrity.

So he calls us to consider what our relationship to him really is. When he begins asking, "Why do you call me Lord" and not do what I say...he is raising the fact that we can have a relationship with him that is not truly receiving what he bears.

**We can have an academic relationship.** Jesus spoke of how the religious leaders know the Word but do not actually shape their lives in doing it.

**Or our relationship with Jesus may be that of being a "fan"...** someone who likes to be associated with him... gets the T-shirt... especially if he makes the playoffs... but really isn't personally shaped by him? Jesus knew there were many who were fans...but not followers.

**These ways of relating to him... can still carry on the means of covering up our façade...of trying to look good on the outside....of hiding from who we are on the inside.**

**So he asks: Why do you call me "Lord."** It's common in our Christian culture to speak of "Lord Jesus" as if it were merely his name. We do well to stop and realize, **"Lord" is not a name...it is a declaration of relationship.**

**To know him as our Lord... means he has authority... as a master...one I serve and submit to. We build our life upon what he declares.**

And that is the nature of real belief. Real belief is not about that which you talk about ...or repeat ...or admire ...or discuss ...or even defend. It's about what you actually choose as your foundation to build upon. [3]

**The metaphor or image shifts slightly...** from a tree's true nature to a building and it's foundations. But the point is the same.

The nature of who we are is set in the nature of the tree... just as a **building's integrity lies in the foundation.**

It's the inner life we are building within that is real... that is our true life...that provides a foundation that will or won't last.

**And so Jesus presents us with two builders...both build...but one ignores the foundation...while one digs deep.**

Jesus says we are **all building houses**. To build a house **speaks of building a life**...and reflects the **place we belong**... and **find security in**.

**One man was foolish** - He didn't dig at all ...he was in a hurry. When we build without thinking about the foundations... we build upon that which comes and goes...like sand that when the storms come...will simply be washed away. He builds what serves only the shallow nature of a building.

We do well to hear these words call out to us...as we **live in an age more focused on outward image than has ever existed**.

We have taken the very nature Jesus sees... of outward symbols that are facades behind which the heart still hides...and have fashioned whole means of living vicarious dual lives.

We have created bigger than life **heroic figures** of movies and sports. We can live vicariously through

We have an **industry of fashion** unknown in human history at the level of popular culture.

We are so focused on the outer image... making it more than it is. **We make it our identity... not as a form of life but as life itself**.

Social media...which may serve many things...offers us a profound way of focusing us on our image. It invites me to create...a "profile." Think about that. We "create profiles"... as representations of ourselves.

**But one man was wise and dug deep** and laid his foundation on a Rock

**Digging deep means I have to get to what is solid.**

Digging deeper mean I have to go beyond the thinly veiled facades that have been built... and seek that which is **substantial and lasting to build upon**.

That is what the one does who listens to Jesus and builds his life upon his words.

**How can we develop a life of integrity?**

We have to **come out of the hiddenness**...in which we find a pseudo existence... and pseudo comfort... and dare to face our naked condition... to be met by the face of grace...and be changed.

As Tim Keller so often describes, the Gospel is this...

**"We are more sinful and flawed in ourselves than we ever dared believe, yet at the very same time we are more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than we ever dared hope."**

As we continue through this season of Lent... the 40 days leading to Good Friday...it offers us a time of searching... reforming.

**If he becomes the Lord of our lives...he enters within...and something begins in our hearts. Something changes in the very core... over time new fruit emerges. Like all fruit...it may take time...but it will emerge. (Not simply some outward identifying with “being a Christian”...or with “Christian identity”...but in relationship to a new Lord of our lives.**

But the real invitation lies in the fact that **we search because we can. We come out of hiding because God is able to love us. [4]**

Only when we let God’s love define us...can we begin to integrate what we have denied. The ultimate source of emotional health that enables you to welcome criticism, that enables you to welcome the truth about yourself, for you to become finally a person of integrity so that what’s on the inside and what you believe about it on the outside are finally together ... is if your conscience and your heart are shored up with the knowledge that he loves you infinitely. He loves you always. He loves you unconditionally. He died for you while you were an enemy.

**The late Brennen Manning...drawing from Merton...wrote:**

***My false and private self is the one who wants to exist outside the reach of God's will and God's love-outside of reality and outside of life. And such a self cannot help but be an illusion. We are not very good at recognizing illusions, least of all the ones we cherish about ourselves-the ones we were born with and which feed the roots of sin. For most people in the world, there is no greater subjective reality than this false self of theirs, which cannot exist. A life devoted to the cult of this shadow is what is called a life of sin. [5]***

***God calls us to stop hiding and come openly to Him. God is the father who ran to His prodigal son when he came limping home. God weeps over us when shame and self hatred immobilize us. Yet as soon as we lose our nerve about ourselves, we take cover. Adam and Eve hid, and we all, in one way or another, have used them as role models. Why? Because we do not like what we see. It is uncomfortable intolerable-to confront our true selves.***

***As Merton said, "The reason we never enter into the deepest reality of our relationship with God is that we so seldom acknowledge our utter nothingness before him." His love, which called us into existence, calls us to come out of self-hatred and to step into His truth.***

***When we have come to believe in the voices that call us worthless and unlovable, then success, popularity, and power are easily perceived as attractive solutions.***



***Self-rejection is the greatest enemy of the spiritual life because it contradicts the sacred voice that calls us the "Beloved." Being the Beloved constitutes the core truth of our existence. [6]***

I want to let Brennen Manning's own voice bring this home.

[PLAY: Brennan Manning: Do you believe that I love you? At <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0iaZp3CzUXk>]

Closing Prayer: Time spent allowing the love of God to speak to us. To welcome the fruit of lives shaped by it.

**Resources:** While generally shaped distinct from others, I am indebted to the thoughts of J. Ligon Duncan, "You Are What You Do"; Tim Keller, Integrity, and Brennen Manning's writing.

**Notes:**

1. See: The Potemkin Village (German) Paperback – December 26, 2017, by [Gregor Sailer](#) (Author, Photographer), [Walter Moser](#) (Author), [Judith Lehner](#) (Author), [Linda O. Lehtinen](#) (Author)

The website is here: <https://www.gregorsailer.com/The-Potemkin-Village>

The curious architectural phenomena in the haunting images are focused on political, military, and economic features: field exercise centers in the United States and Europe, the allure of European city replicas in China, and urban vehicle testing tracks in Sweden. Not surprisingly, the country of the term's origin, Russia, still fakes whole streets in disguise when high-ranking political celebrities are visiting from abroad. Sailer's images provide access to the world of fakes, copies, and artificial fronts.

More about how true. - <https://www.straightdope.com/columns/read/2479/did-potemkin-villages-really-exist/>

2. This same truth is clearly spoken of in...

James 1:22-25 - But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

Galatians 6:7 – 8 - Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

3. Tim Keller notes, “Do you hear Jesus saying this over and over in the gospels to His disciples? Remember what He says in Matthew chapter 12 verse 50? “Whoever does the will of My Father is My brother and sister and mother.” Remember what He says in Luke 11:28? “Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and observe it.” Remember what He says in John 13:17? “If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.” Remember what He says in John 14:15? “If you love Me, keep My commandments.” Remember what He says in John 14:24? “He who does not love Me, does not keep My words.” Remember what He says in John 15:14? “You are My friends if you do what I command you.” Or Paul, in Galatians 6 verses 7 and 8 says, “Do not be deceived. God is not mocked. For whatever a man sows, this he also will reap.” And John says, in 1 John 2:3, “We know that we have come to know Him if we keep His commandments.”

Also...

Matt. 7:22 -23 22 "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' Jesus declared in Matt. 15:8 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. 9 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'"

4. Regarding the role of love,

1 John 4:18-19 (NIV)

There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. <sup>19</sup> We love because he first loved us.

Romans 8:38-39 (NIV)

<sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, <sup>39</sup> neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

5. Brennan Manning, "Abba's Child", p. 34

6. Brennan Manning, "Abba's Child", p. 18, 20, 27