



## WHAT FILLS YOUR HEART?

(LUKE 6:39-45)

**A person's character is revealed in the way they live and treat other people.**

We may detect in Jesus' remarks a rebuke to the Pharisee teachers and leaders of his day, but they are also a warning to the Christian community for whom Luke is writing, and therefore to ourselves. We have seen how disciples of Jesus are called to be "children of the Most High" and to treat others as God would. The more aware a disciple is of their own faults and shortcomings, the less likely they should be to judge other people.

The comparison with a tree and its fruit is particularly telling. The fruit is evidence of the state of health of the plant which bears it. So it is with the disciple: how they behave shows the kind of person they really are. ■

### REFLECT

It is easy and tempting sometimes to reduce being a believer, a disciple of Jesus, to doing things, to the way we live on the outside. Jesus is telling us today that how we are outwardly is an indication of what we are truly like inwardly. Our fruit should be the result of our relationship with God, not something we put on for show because we think that this is how we should be or act. The term "hypocrite" comes from Greek theatre and has the sense of an actor, one who is playing a part, wearing a mask and reciting lines they have already learned beforehand. Jesus is encouraging his audience to be true to their authentic selves and not to claim other levels of knowledge or wisdom. Not the easiest of challenges, by any means.

Perhaps we might remember that at the root of our Christian faith is the idea of covenant. This is the relationship into which God entered freely with human beings, first with all people through Noah, then in a particular way with one individual and his descendants, Abraham. This relationship was established in a new way in the person and the self-giving of Jesus, which we renew each time we celebrate the Eucharist together. Thus, our Christian life is not primarily a matter of *doing* certain things or living in a certain way. It is more about the person who we are, and this manifests itself in our outward life and behaviour.

The Gospel reading echoes the warning from Ecclesiasticus about what a person says reflecting what is actually in their heart. Nowadays, we appreciate better the meaning of Freudian slips of the tongue and what our sense of humour tells us about ourselves. However, it is only by admitting our faults and prejudices that we can do something about them. So when we say to ourselves, "I shouldn't be thinking like that," we are better to ask where that thought came from in the first place. It is only by bringing them out into the open that we can get rid of things that we have kept hidden and we will be much the better for it. ■

### LEARN

The word "hypocrite" comes from the Greek verb "to answer".

It is used in connection with the theatre, to describe an actor.

Greek actors wore masks during the performance, hence the English meaning of a hypocrite being someone playing a part, rather than being themselves.

### DO

Look at plants growing as you walk along. Ask yourself what kind of fruit you are bearing: thank the Lord if it is good and ask the Lord's help if it needs improving.



### SAY

**Open our hearts, Lord, to accept the words of your Son.**

(cf. Acts 16:14)



**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

The Lord became my protector.  
He brought me out to a place of freedom;  
he saved me because he delighted in me.

**GLORIA**

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

**COLLECT**

Grant us, O Lord, we pray,  
that the course of our world  
may be directed by your peaceful rule  
and that your Church may rejoice,  
untroubled in her devotion.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of  
the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**FIRST READING** Ecclesiasticus 27:4-7

A reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus.  
In a shaken sieve the rubbish is left behind,  
so too the defects of a man appear in his talk.  
The kiln tests the work of the potter,  
the test of a man is in his conversation.  
The orchard where the tree grows is judged  
on the quality of its fruit,  
similarly a man's words betray what he feels.  
Do not praise a man before he has spoken,  
since this is the test of men.

The word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

**PSALM** Psalm 91

Response:

It is good to give you thanks, O Lord.

1. It is good to give thanks to the Lord,  
to make music to your name, O Most  
High,  
to proclaim your love in the morning  
and your truth in the watches of the  
night. (R.)
2. The just will flourish like the palm-tree  
and grow like a Lebanon cedar. (R.)
3. Planted in the house of the Lord  
they will flourish in the courts of our God,  
still bearing fruit when they are old,  
still full of sap, still green,  
to proclaim that the Lord is just.  
In him, my rock, there is no wrong. (R.)

**SECOND READING** 1 Corinthians 15:54-58

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the  
Corinthians.

When this perishable nature has put on  
imperishability, and when this mortal nature  
has put on immortality, then the words of  
scripture will come true: Death is swallowed  
up in victory. Death, where is your victory?  
Death, where is your sting? Now the sting of  
death is sin, and sin gets its power from the  
Law. So let us thank God for giving us the  
victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Never give in then, my dear brothers, never  
admit defeat; keep on working at the Lord's  
work always, knowing that, in the Lord, you  
cannot be labouring in vain.

The word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleuia, alleuia!  
Open our hearts, O Lord,  
to accept the words of your Son.  
Alleuia!

**GOSPEL** Luke 6:39-45

A reading from the holy Gospel according to  
Luke.

Jesus told a parable to his disciples, "Can  
one blind man guide another? Surely both  
will fall into a pit? The disciple is not superior  
to his teacher; the fully trained disciple  
will always be like his teacher. Why do you  
observe the splinter in your brother's eye and  
never notice the plank in your own? How can  
you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take  
out the splinter that is in your eye,' when you  
cannot see the plank in your own? Hypocrite!  
Take the plank out of your own eye first, and  
then you will see clearly enough to take out  
the splinter that is in your brother's eye.

"There is no sound tree that produces  
rotten fruit, nor again a rotten tree that  
produces sound fruit. For every tree can  
be told by its own fruit: people do not pick  
figs from thorns, nor gather grapes from  
brambles. A good man draws what is good  
from the store of goodness in his heart; a  
bad man draws what is bad from the store of  
badness. For a man's words flow out of what  
fills his heart."

The Gospel of the Lord.  
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**PROFESSION OF FAITH**

I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages.  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, consubstantial with  
the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,

(all bow during the next three lines)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the  
Virgin Mary,  
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under  
Pontius Pilate,  
he suffered death and was buried,  
and rose again on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead  
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,  
the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is adored  
and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and  
apostolic Church.  
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness  
of sins  
and I look forward to the resurrection of the  
dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

O God, who provide gifts to be offered to your  
name  
and count our oblations as signs  
of our desire to serve you with devotion,  
we ask of your mercy  
that what you grant as the source of merit  
may also help us to attain merit's reward.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

I will sing to the Lord who has been  
bountiful with me,  
sing psalms to the name of the Lord Most  
High.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Nourished by your saving gifts,  
we beseech your mercy, Lord,  
that by this same Sacrament  
with which you feed us in the present age,  
you may make us partakers of life eternal.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

We thank you Father for the life and  
knowledge which you have made known to  
us through Jesus your Son. As this bread  
which we have broken was once scattered on  
the hillside and was gathered and became  
one again, so may your Church be gathered  
from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.  
For yours is the glory and the power through  
Jesus Christ our Lord.

*The Didache, 2nd century*

