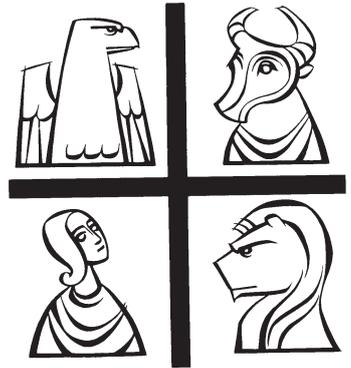


Reading Luke in Lent



Gospel of Luke 6:17-49

Jesus Ministers to a Great Multitude

17 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
18 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.
19 And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power came out from him and healed them all.

The Beatitudes

20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said:
'Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.
21 'Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.
'Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.
22 'Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you
and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man!
23 Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven;
for so their fathers did to the prophets.

Jesus Pronounces Woes

24 'But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.
25 'Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry.
'Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.
26 'Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.

Love Your Enemies

27 'But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,
28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.
29 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.
30 Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods
do not demand them back.
31 And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.
32 'If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you?
For even sinners love those who love them.
33 And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you?
For even sinners do the same.
34 And 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.
35 But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return,
and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High,
for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.
36 Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.

Judging Others

37 'Judge not, and you will not be judged;
condemn not, and you will not be condemned;
forgive, and you will be forgiven;
38 give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down,
shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap.
For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.'
39 He also told them a parable:
'Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit?
40 A disciple is not above his teacher,
but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.
41 Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye,
but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?
42 How can you say to your brother,
"Brother, let me take out the speck that is 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 is in your brother's eye.

A Tree and Its Fruit

43 'For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit,
44 for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thornbushes,
nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush.
45 The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good,
and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil,
for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

Build Your House on the Rock

46 'Why do you call me "Lord, Lord," and not do what I tell you?
47 Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them,
I will show you what he is like:
48 he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock.
And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it,
because it had been well built.
49 But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man
who built a house on the ground without a foundation.
When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.'

Reflection

Luke has referred to Jesus teaching a number of times. Now he gives us his teaching. There are three sections: the beatitudes and woes, the commands on love and mercy, the teaching on the two ways. The beatitudes (blessings) and the woes are given in parallel — blessed are the poor, woe to the rich. Like the Magnificat this shows the values of the world turned upside down.

St John Paul identified St Luke's Gospel as the 'gospel of mercy' with the commands 'Love your enemies' and 'Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful' at the heart of the message. In the final section Jesus offers a series of images and parables to illustrate the choice we have to follow.

- Look through the passage and underline the particular words or phrases which speak to you.
 - How do we build up a heart full of good treasure?

Prayer

YEAR C

Compassionate God and Father,
you are kind to the ungrateful,
merciful even to the wicked.

Pour out your love upon us,
that with good and generous hearts
we may keep from judging others
and learn your way of compassion.

We make our prayer 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.