



1/23/24

I have to tell you...I was rocked by what Tim said on Sunday about letting our feelings, pragmatism, and/or culture take precedence over God's word. For me, feelings are the hardest to lay at His feet...especially when what I feel seems to line up more with what's happening around me than what He says to be true. But I think about what the disciples felt when Jesus was arrested, illegally convicted, and crucified. Their feelings said all hope was gone. No one could have convinced them otherwise...but Jesus rose from the dead and is seated on His throne at the right hand of the Father. I pray that you and I will be able to hold to what's true no matter what our feelings are screaming at us. May the whisper of the Holy Spirit through God's word penetrate through our feelings to our hearts. We will never be disappointed when we choose His truth over our feelings. O Lord, please help me to believe that!!!

Blessings,  
Jonna

Luke 6:37-7:10

Luke 6:37-49 ~

Jesus spoke so fast...or at least His words were written down from command to command...it's easy to miss what He's saying. Tim preached on Sunday that there are three things we place as higher priority than the word...feelings, pragmatism, and culture. As I look at these commands, I want to evaluate my heart and see if I'm putting any of these three things above obedience to His word.

Vs. 37-38 ~ The commands...

- Do not judge. Do I want to be judged according to how I judge?
- Do not condemn. Do I want to be condemned according to the same standard I use to condemn others? I don't want to be condemned at all! So why would I condemn others?

Why do I think I'm better than them? "I am more like the worst sinner than I am like Christ" (Garrett Higbee).

- Do forgive. Do I want Jesus to forgive me according to the same standards I forgive?
- Do give. Do I want God's generosity to be measured by my generosity?

Before I even move on I realize that I can get these commands backwards. Jesus knew that. My default is to judge and condemn, to want forgiveness and generosity for myself, but close my eyes to the needs of others. O Lord, let me not decide to follow this based on my feelings, but on Your truth. When I am having a hard time with this, please help me to run to You for help. You will always be there to help me love as You love.

When Jesus spoke of giving, He said we will receive way more than we give. It will be like brown sugar in recipes. They always say to pack the brown sugar down. But God takes it even further. He packs the blessing down for us, He shakes it together to get as much in there as He can, and then He fills it so that it's spilling over. Wow. Do I believe that??? Do I believe that God has that kind of blessing for me when I give?

What I also see here is that He doesn't say this about judging or condemning. If I were to receive the judgment and condemnation I deserve, I would have nothing but wrath pressed down, shaken together and running over. O Lord, please help to forgive as You forgive, to give as You give, and to live in constant gratitude of Your mercy. There is no possible way I could ever live up to Your standard of perfection...which is another reason I shouldn't be judging or condemning others. Anything anyone has ever done to me, I have done to You in some way...and You forgive me. How can I, a sinner, hold a grudge against another sinner?

Vs. 39-42 ~ Jesus told a parable next. A blind man cannot lead a blind man...or both will fall into a pit...and it's not a fun kid's ball pit! So don't think I know better than my teacher. Let Jesus train me so that I will be like Him.

What does this blind man have to do with training? Without my submission to the Lord, I will be so blind that I won't see the massive log in my eye. Instead, I'll think my log is someone else's speck...or even worse, I'll say I have a little speck, but their LOG is MASSIVE. So I'll be about telling them they need to get it out of their eye, rather than dealing with my log.

It doesn't mean that I never point out someone's speck...but I need to first be trained by my Teacher, Jesus, so that I can be enlightened by His word and have my blind eyes open as He helps me remove the log. THEN I can help someone else. But when I do, it won't be out of pride, judgment or condemnation...it will be done in love. O Lord, please teach me and help me to NEVER think I know better than You. The temptation to think that is always there. But You show me the way of escape. Praise Your name.

Vs. 43-45 ~ Jesus said we have to look at our fruit to see where our heart really is. If I'm bearing bad fruit like fits of anger, wrath, sexual immorality, envy, jealousy, choosing sinful

pleasures rather than being filled with the Spirit...it really doesn't matter what I say, my fruit gives me away. To bear good fruit, my actions will be shown in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Where my treasure is, my heart will be...and where my heart is, what I treasure will be displayed. I can only pretend or muscle it for a time, and then what I really desire will come out. Out of the abundance of my heart my mouth will speak.

This is a big deal. I learned that the right side of the brain, where my fight or flight mechanism lives, processes faster than my left side of the brain, where my logic lives. So for all those times I speak before I think and I say, "That's not who I really am," well...it kinda is. I think God allows it so that my heart can be exposed...so that He can train me and rescue me. Let me not forget that He is the one who teaches me what forgiveness is. O Lord, please help me not to be afraid to look at my fruit...so that You can help me get the log out of my eye and change my heart. I praise You that it's never hopeless with You. I never have to be stuck in my sin. You transform my heart and renew my mind.

Vs. 46-49 ~ I have a choice to make...where I build my house. I can build my house on the foundation of Jesus, which is so strong that no storm or wind or three little pigs can huff and puff and knock it down.

Or I can build my house on sand. No matter how solid the sand looks, it's not gonna hold.

What is the only difference between the house on the solid rock, Jesus, and the house on the sand? Jesus is the only difference. My choice is to listen to Jesus and follow Him or to listen to my feelings (what I feel), pragmatics (what I think), or culture (what I hear), and follow them. No matter how much I think my feelings or the others will hold me, they will not. O Lord, please help me to make EVERYTHING I think, feel, or hear bow to You. You are my solid Rock.

Luke 7:1-10 ~ I never saw this before, but when Jesus went to Capernaum and was approached by elders of the Jews to heal the servant of a Roman centurion, they said, "He DESERVES for You to help him. He is WORTHY...because he loves our nation and he built our synagogue." That was really nice of them to say, and the centurion was a really nice guy. I mean, he even cared about his servant. He could have just let him die and gotten another one. He could have said, "Agh...they're a dime a dozen. Whatever." But he didn't. He cared for his servant and wanted to help him. But was he worthy of Jesus?

Jesus didn't question them about the centurion's worth. He just went with the Jewish elders to help the centurion's servant who was dying. If Jesus questioned people every time they showed their pride or wrong thinking, He would never heal any of them!

On the way to the centurion's house, he sent word to Jesus through his friends. His message was, "Please don't trouble yourself. I am NOT WORTHY to have You come under my roof." Wow. I so want to have that kind of mindset. No matter what others think of me, I never want to be bold enough and so arrogant that I think Jesus OWES me anything. Whatever He gives

me, it is His grace, mercy, and kindness. Never His duty.

The centurion didn't say, "Just let my servant die." He still asked for Jesus to help, but from a distance. He said, "I understand authority. I have authority...but not like You. All You have to do is say the word and my servant will be healed." Oh! To have that kind of faith! O Lord, may it be so in my heart!!!

I love Jesus' response. He MARVELED! He could have said, "That's right you're not worthy. What were you thinking?" But He said, "Even in Israel, I haven't seen such faith." Jesus probably knew exactly what was going to happen. But He still found so much joy in it. I think that's so cool. His heart is so good. There is definitely no bad fruit that comes from His tree. He took all the bad fruit on Himself when He died on the tree.

He healed the centurion's servant. I wonder how that centurion and his servant were impacted that day. I bet their lives were never the same...and I bet I'll be able to ask them someday in heaven.

Father, please help me to take Your word to heart. Please help me to choose to obey Your word when my feelings are angry or hurt or anxious. Help me to turn to You. Help me to see that pragmatism bows to You. You work outside of man's logic. You who are Lord of the Sabbath are also Lord of wisdom. And please please help me not to be fooled by culture or friends who mean well, but allow culture to define their beliefs. I don't even realize how blind I can be unless You show me. Help me to surrender to You and learn from You. I am never better than my Teacher and Lord, Jesus Christ. Praise Your name...not my feelings, not my human logic, and not what culture teaches. You are Lord over them all.