

Great Questions of Jesus Series

“Why Do You Call Me Lord, Lord and do not do what I say?”

Luke 6:46

Please turn in your Bibles to Luke 6:46

“Why do you call me Lord, Lord and do not do what I say?” is the question from Jesus that we’re spending time meditating on this morning.

And the natural response would be to take that question home with you and prayerfully meditate on it and discover areas of your life that you’re living life for your pleasure rather than God’s glory and commit to changing those areas and you’re done – until time passes and you find yourself right back where you are today and wonder why you can’t ever change for good.

And the answer to that question can be discovered as we look at the broader context in which Jesus asks this very important question. So, this morning I want to look at both the context preceding Jesus’ question and the context immediately after the question. Because both contexts will help us institute permanent change in our lives in our goal to become more obedient to what Christ taught. What we will discover is that Jesus uses two excellent examples in his explaining why we struggle so much with living lives in complete obedience to the teachings of Jesus. First he uses an **agricultural example** and secondly Jesus uses an **architectural example**.

So, let’s first look at what precedes Jesus’ key question this morning.

Luke 6:43-45 (NIV) *“No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.*

Why do you call me Lord, Lord and do not do what I say?”

Jesus sets up His question by talking about how agriculture works. And even if you’re not a farmer this illustration should make sense to you. I have a beautiful hydrangea tree in front of my house. This time of the year it produces gorgeous puffy white flowers. And it’s been doing this for several years now. I’d be quite surprised if one year I came out to admire this tree and instead of beautiful white flowers on it I found instead **apples** growing on it. Why would that be shocking? Because **hydrangea trees don’t produce apples**. It’s not part of their nature. Apple trees produce apples and hydrangea trees produce hydrangea blossoms. They produce what by nature they are. And Jesus then says this same exact principle applies to each of our lives as well. If at your core, you’re a person in love with God and each and every day your passion is to live your life to please God, then you’ll produce fruit which will reflect God to the world. But if you’re a person who’s passion is most often to **please yourself**, then your actions will reflect that as well. And while it might be true that occasionally someone who’s bad on the inside might produce good deeds, in the long term it’s not sustainable.

Jesus’ summary statement of this teaching is *“For out of the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.”* Don’t you find that to be true? If you find yourself constantly gossiping or swearing or lying, then that’s a good indication of where your heart is and you need to ask God’s help in transforming your heart to become more like Jesus. What you’re most in love with will most often be revealed in your words and actions. So, while our natural response to Jesus’ question this morning is often to try to control our actions (which is often referred to as *“sin management”*) – the more effective method is to work on transforming your heart. And then right out of this section flows Jesus question: ***Why do you call me Lord, Lord and do not do what I say?”***

In a similar passage in Matthew, he records Jesus talking about the tree and it's proper fruit and then he ends with this quite bold declaration:

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' (Mt 7:21-23 (NIV)

That's some pretty impressive things that these individuals had done: prophesying, casting out demons and performing miracles. But apparently these impressive acts were not part of God's will for their lives. I take it that they were being done for their own glory rather than God's. And so while on the outside they might have looked impressive, they were living in disobedience to God. And God's saying, while they might fool others with their behavior, they don't fool God and in the end he will claim to not know them.

The same thing exists today. Christians might look very impressive on the outside, but on the inside they are a very different person. And while our outside actions do matter to God, what Jesus was continually stressing was that our effort needs to be more on changing our inside rather than merely the outside. For, if we get the inside right – the outside will take care of itself.

Whenever I find myself struggling with sinful thoughts or actions, I can pretty much guarantee that I've taken my focus off of God and onto what I want rather than what God wants. I've allowed my heart to stray and when that happens my actions reflect that. The key is to continue to relish and thoroughly enjoy the fact that you once were lost but now you're a much loved child of God with a God ordained future to live out with His strength inside of you. And you are called and equipped to reflect God every moment of every day wherever you find yourself. There's no higher calling than that. It's when we choose to forget that and stoop to a lower level of existence that we lose ourselves.

Which then leads us right into Jesus' second illustration. The first illustration was **agricultural** in nature. This second illustration is **architectural** in nature.

Luke 6:46-49 (NIV) ***"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"***

As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. They are 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. 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."

It's absolutely true that without a proper and solid foundation, it doesn't matter how beautiful your house is, it's in danger when the storms of life come. Because we're ill equipped to respond to the storms. And notice, Jesus doesn't say, "***If the storms come***" or "***Maybe the storms will come.***" He says, "***when the storms come.***" It's inevitable that storms will enter your life in some shape or form.

The best time to prepare for a storm is not when it shows up but prior to it showing up. The best time to prepare is when you're in the process of building your life. It's critical to storm survival that you lay a good foundation that can stand up to these storms. And of course the foundation Jesus is referring to is Himself and His teachings and our identity found in Him. It takes very intentional effort to build a solid foundation on Jesus Christ. It doesn't happen by accident.

Warren and Pam Adams know this truth quite well. Warren and Pam lost their home in **Hurricane Rita** which struck **Galveston, Texas in 2005**. After that devastation they took a hard look at their lives and the location of their home and decided that they really liked living on the beach in this location and determined to rebuild. But they wanted to make sure their house wouldn't be

destroyed the next time a hurricane swept through the area. So, they contracted to dig extra deep when they laid the foundation for their new home, into the bedrock below. Also as part of their solid foundation they decided to build their home on higher stilts than the typical homes around them. They went up 14 feet instead of the typical 6 feet that the surrounding homes had built theirs. That extra preparation paid off when **Hurricane Ike** roared through Galveston, Texas 7 years later, wiping out nearly everything in its path – except for one home. Want to venture a guess as to who's home was left standing. Here's an aerial view of the devastation and that one home is Warren and Pam Adams. After this photo was released many believed it was fake. But indeed it's real – and it demonstrates the importance of carefully building the foundation of not only our homes but our lives as well.

Jesus nailed it when he talks about the reason many claim to know Jesus but don't actually do what He says is because **they don't have a solid foundation** built on Jesus and at their core they are more in love with living life their way rather than God's way.

The **apostle John** wrote similar instruction but he goes a bit further. Look at what he calls Christians who claim to know Christ but don't obey his teachings.

1 John 2:3-6 (NIV) *We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. 4 Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a **liar**, and the truth is not in that person. 5 But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: 6 Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.*

Did you catch what he calls these individuals? He calls them "**liars**". Pretty strong language but he's right on in his agreement with Jesus. And these types of people are rampant across America today. People who may claim to be "spiritual" or followers of Jesus but don't seem to believe that should impact how we live our lives.

Jesus' own brother, James, addressed this same issue in his letter. In a discussion about how faith ought to affect how we live our lives he puts demons a step higher than Christians who claim to know and follow Jesus but it doesn't affect how they live their lives.

James 2:18-19 (NIV) *Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. 19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.*

So, how do we go about making sure that we are living a life consistent with the teachings of Jesus?

Practical Steps:

1. **Know Jesus' teachings** – Read God's Word daily. And let it soak into you by meditating on it. Read a passage of Scripture and then ask God, "*how do you want to use this passage of Scripture to change me?*" According to **2 Timothy 3:16-17** God's Word is intended to be primarily not for our **information** but for our **transformation**.
2. **Establish a foundation of delighting in Jesus.** This is way different than merely knowing facts and figures about Jesus. This is focusing on the goodness of Jesus in your life every single day. I've learned this principle from several of you here in this congregation who have consistently displayed this to me in both good times and challenging times as well. And I am so thankful for you. I've seen some of you walk through painful difficulties and disappointments in your lives and yet have continued to say, "**Yet, God is so very good**", and it's been clear to me that this is not merely what you should say – it's what you truly believe. And it's that attitude that has carried you through difficult times in your life. So, you establish at your core the belief that Jesus is good all the time – even though life might not be at the present time. And when life is painful and difficult you've already established that Jesus is good and sometimes His good intentionality may be that He is walking with you through this difficult time with the hope that He might change you in the midst of these difficulties. So, perhaps the challenge is not to ask

God to remove your difficulties and disappointments but to fully use them for His glory and your transformation.

3. **Determine that God's plan for your life is always better than your plan.** It was a mistrust in this fact that initially led Adam and Eve to commit the very first sin. Satan convinced them that God was holding out on them and they could actually achieve far better circumstances for their lives if they ate of the forbidden fruit. And each of us have continued to make that same choice down through the ages. But at some point you need to determine in your mind, and let your heart follow suit, that God's plan is always better than your plan. If you don't believe this at the core of your being, then you'll keep chasing after the next gratification of your sensual desires and turn your back on God, if even for a short time. But a powerful principle continues to exist today and that's the more times you turn away to seeking after your personal satisfaction in the things of this world rather in God, it becomes easier and easier to do it the next time. And then eventually you'll find yourself seeking fulfillment in the world rather than in God as a lifestyle and not merely a random occurrence.
4. **Surround yourself with other Christians who are fervently seeking after God's desire for their lives in everything.** That kind of radical commitment will begin to rub off on you.

Those four steps lay a great foundation that will help carry you through the storms of life since you're laying a solid foundation.

We recently got to see this principle in effect in the local and national news at the sentencing hearing for **Tony Weekly Jr.** On July 31, 2016, Mr. Weekly was driving his semi, as he'd done for many years. On this day, while driving and talking on a hands free phone, he reached down to pick up a drink and in this split second distraction was all it took for him to slam into the van in front of him and causing a multi-car accident. When he plowed into the back of the Pal family mini-van he killed parents, Jamison and Kathryn along with their 3 young children. The family was about to move to Japan to work as Christian missionaries. At Mr. Weekly's hearing Jamison's father, **Cedrick Pals** spoke and **asked the judge to show mercy on him.** He said, *"I struggle to find the words that describe the grief that grips me. I know how much God has forgiven me. How can I not forgive you?"* Pals said there are three words that come to mind: *"Forgiveness. Mercy and Hope."* This type of reaction to a tremendous tragedy comes from a family who have laid a firm foundation in Jesus Christ.

Jesus' question, ***"Why do you call me Lord, Lord and do not do what I say?"*** hopefully causes us to examine ourselves today and this week and not just merely attempt to change our behavior but cause us to go deeper and determine to change the core of our foundation by using these four steps.

Let's stand together and close in prayer.

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and do not do what I say?”***
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Before our passage Jesus uses an a_____ example

After our passage Jesus uses an a_____ example

Why are the people in Mt 7:21-23 rejected by Jesus?

When is the best time to prepare for the storms in your life?

Why is a solid foundation so important (physically or spiritually)?

Practical Steps for a Solid Foundation:

1. Know Jesus' _____
How are you doing this?
How can you do this better?
2. Establish a foundation of _____ in Jesus
How are you doing this?
How can you do this better?
3. Determine that God's _____ for your life is always better than your _____.
How are you doing this?
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