

Luke 6.37-45 | October 20, 2019

As well as some of his most memorable pictures, these are some of the most incisive/piercing words from Jesus. One direction God is moving is inward.

MOVING INWARD

We Hear Jesus say: Love your enemies, learn to forgive, be careful of hypocrisy.

6.27 "Love your enemies"

-enemy, someone at a distance, romanticism, nobility, temptation toward self-righteousness.

6.37 "Do not condemn, but forgive"

-someone closer who happens to offend; those we could easily judge or condemn.

6.41 "...why worry about a speck?"

-friend, literally brother/sibling, the one to whom you are so close you may not notice your own hypocrisy, the one who is easy to criticize because of constant opportunity/proximity.

6.44 "A tree is identified by its fruit"

-self; "what you say flows from what is in your heart." And then the penny drops with a thud.

TO THE HEART

Enemies, Offenders, Friend/Siblings, Self.

-Where we began looking through binoculars at those at a distance, we end up looking in mirror. The direction God is moving, to bring the world into alignment and love, is not outward, not with someone else (those people), but inward.

-Love has little to do with the investment/lack of others, and everything to do with the health and capacity of our own hearts.

From "Community & Growth" (Jean Vanier)

"Learning to love takes a lifetime, because the Holy Spirit must penetrate even the smallest corners of our being, all the places where there are fears, defences and envy... We have to become aware of our own weakness, lack of maturity and inner poverty. Perhaps it is this which we refuse to look at. The faults we criticize in others are often those we refuse to face in ourselves. Those who criticize others and the community, and seek an ideal one, are often in flight from their own flaws and weaknesses."

Blind Leading the Blind (6:39-40)

-The further we go inward the more we realize our own lack of clarity on how to love, and that we don't know the way; we can't see like we think we can.

-Letting God give us a new heart; relinquishing our own way and giving ourselves to Jesus who knows the way of love.

Ezekiel 36.25-26

Lord Jesus, give us new, responsive hearts.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What strikes you about this passage and why has it endured for so long as some of Jesus' most important teaching?
- What encourages you about this passage? What challenges you?
- In what ways have you let God go to center, or the heart of you? How has God shaped you and changed you for the purposes of love?
- How do you hope God will further do this? Where else do you hope to grow in love this year?