

Luke

Carefully Investigating the Gospel ... Together

SSBC Luke Bible Study #19

Take this Bible Study home and use it to guide your exploration of the scripture passage that next Sunday's sermon will be focused on.

Passage: Luke 6:43-45

Sermon Date: Jan 22, 2006

Introduction:

In last week's passage, we were told not to judge others. Now in this week's passage, we're told to pay attention to the fruitfulness of people's lives. What's going on here? Are these inconsistent instructions? Not at all – for it's all about our hearts and our motives. When I consider others' lives, am I doing so with a spirit of serving them, or of bragging that I'm better? Or when I look at my own life, am I trying to excuse my shortcomings? Or maybe I'm trying to be over-perfect? These things are not in our job description.

“The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever,” according to the Westminster Catechism. This is the ‘job description’ that we are to align our motives with. This week's study will help us to hear Christ's teaching about how we can lead more fruitful lives. As you open your Bible and tune your heart to God's frequency, you might use John 15:8 to guide your prayers:

This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

This bible study was developed by South Shore Baptist Church in conjunction with our weekly sermon series. To hear a sermon on the same scripture passage covered in this bible study, come to one of our Sunday worship services (8:30am or 11:00am) on the date listed on page 1. Or after that date you can hear it by logging on to www.southshorebaptist.com/sermons/

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Bible Study:

1. Read this week's bible passage and use the chart below to make observations and jot down any questions you have.

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p>Luke 6:43-45</p> <p>⁴³"No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. ⁴⁴Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. ⁴⁵The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.</p>	

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p><u>Parallel Passage:</u> Matthew 7:15-23</p> <p>¹⁵"Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. ¹⁶By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. ¹⁹Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.</p> <p>²¹"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²²Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' ²³Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'</p>	

2. Next, use this chart to **interpret some key observations**.

a. Select a few of your observations & questions from pages 2-3 that you find most interesting or important. Rewrite these below, and interpret and apply them using the columns to the right.

b. For each observation, begin to interpret by asking yourself these kinds of questions:

- What does it mean?
- Why is this important?
- What does this tell me about the Father? Jesus? The Holy Spirit?
- Are there other scriptures that could help me understand this?

Observation What does it say?	Interpretation What does it mean?

3. Now consider how you can **apply** the Word to your life. Look for:

- **S**ins to avoid
- **P**romises to believe
- **E**xamples to follow (remember "SPECK")
- **C**ommands to obey
- **K**nowledge to share

Don't just write things to write them – listen carefully to God's Word and what he seems to be teaching you, and look for relevant things that you're truly stirred to do. Then as you do them, God will help you learn, grow, and help others grow.

Application How do I apply what it means?

Stretch Your Thinking:

4. Jesus describes two kinds of trees and fruits.

a. Practically speaking, what did figs & grapes probably mean to people in Jesus' day, given their agrarian culture? On the other hand, how would his hearers have felt about thorn bushes?

b. What does Jesus use fruit to symbolize in Luke 6:43-45?
(Consider also Matthew 25:31-46 and Galatians 5:22-23)

c. What is "bad fruit"?
(Consider Deut 32:32, Isa 5:2, Hos 10:13, Gal 5:19-21)

d. Which kind of tree are you? How do you or could you know?

e. Ephesians 2:8-10 tells us that it is by grace that we are saved, not by our good works or fruit. Meanwhile, Matthew 7:15-23 seems to connect our fate with our deeds. What do you see as the connection between our good deeds and our eternal life? What other scriptures would you use to support your position?

f. Jesus is using fruitful trees and thorn bushes metaphorically. Can you think of any contemporary metaphors that you might also use in helping someone understand Jesus' point?

5. How does the Lord feel about the type of fruit we produce in our lives? What tests are suggested in the gospels for discerning real spiritual fruit in people's lives? Consider the following passages.

Matt 3:7-10

Matt 7:15-23

Matt 25:31-46

Luke 13:6-9

John 15:7-8

Galatians 5:22-23

6. How's your fruit? What are some ways in which you've 'loved your neighbor as yourself' lately?

- ✦ Service or Ministry to others
- ✦ Witnessing or helping others grow in their faith
- ✦ Other needs you've met for others

7. What encouraging fruit have you seen in/from others' lives recently?

8. Recalling that bringing glory to God is our chief purpose, how does it glorify God when we bear spiritual fruit? (Consider 2 Cor 9:12-13, John 15:7-8)

9. Looking ahead, how might you bear more fruit?
 - a. First, considering that our fruitfulness comes from the overflow of our relationship and walk with God, are there some steps you know you could take to move closer to God?

 - b. What practical, emotional, or spiritual needs among others in the church or outside the church do you feel a burden to do something about? How could you (or you and others) do more to help meet those needs?

As we conclude this study, let's turn our hearts back to the encouraging promise Jesus gives us in John 15:5

I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit ...

May your week be filled with the abundant fruit that overflows from walking closely with Jesus Christ.