

### Cast Your Net

While attempting to evangelize the lost, one thing necessary is the understanding that we **don't** know what lies beneath the outer persona of each individual.

1Sa 13:14 But now thy (*Samuel speaking to Saul*) kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought Him **a man after His own heart** (*David*), and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over His people, because thou hast not kept *that* which the LORD commanded thee. (*Emp. added*)

1Sa 16:7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: **for the LORD seeth not as man seeth**; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but **the LORD looketh on the heart** (*Heb.3824- mind, understanding*). (*Emp. added*)

Psa 139:23 Search me, O God, and know my heart (*Heb.3824*): try me, and know my thoughts:  
24 And see if *there be* any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Jer 17:10 I the LORD search the heart (*Heb.3820- the will and even the intellect*)[*it's what drives us*], I try the reins (*Heb.3629- figuratively the mind*), even to give every man according to his ways, *and* according to the fruit of his doings.

Only God can know what is in the inner man, his thoughts and intentions. Just as Jesus understood the intentions of the rulers of His day.

Mat 23:27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness. 28 Even so ye also **outwardly appear righteous** unto men, **but within** ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. (*Emp. added*)

Mat 7:16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. (*A tattooed, unshaven, long haired biker bum could be a diamond in the rough.*)

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When things are not what they seem.

Luk 5:3 And He entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And He sat down, and taught the people out of the ship. 4 Now when He had left speaking, He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught (*Gk.61- a haul [of fish]*). 5 And Simon answering said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net. 6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. 7 And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. 8 When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for **I am a sinful man**, O Lord. (*Emp. added*)

As a trout fisherman I know how Peter must have felt. There are places where you can even see the fish but they aren't biting. Other times all you see is water and if you don't get a bite after a while you think the hole is empty. You might walk away and before you know it someone else

takes over and there have been times where I would tell them there was nothing there. But wouldn't you know it, almost as soon as they sit down they get a bite. Peter saw the water **but Jesus saw the fish**. Which is the way we need to be when focusing our evangelism toward whatever the class of people we hope to be saved. And even though Peter saw himself as a sinner, Jesus saw his inner man as a disciple. And so it is with many people who don't even see themselves as servants of the Lord.

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The government worker.

Luk 5:27 And after these things He went forth, and saw a publican (*not "chief among the publicans" like Zacchaeus-Lk 19:2*), named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and He said unto him, Follow Me. 28 And he left all, rose up, and followed Him. 29 And Levi made Him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them. 30 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against His disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners? 31 And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. 32 I came not to call the righteous (*Gk.1342- innocent*), **but sinners to repentance**. (*Emp. added*)

The lost come from every class. Our duty is to look at every one as a soul that needs saving. These scribes and Pharisees turned their collective noses up against these tax collectors as though they had an odor about them. They felt the same way about the Christians, but...

2Co 2:15 To God we are the aroma of Christ among those who are saved **and among those who are dying**. 16 To some people we are a deadly fragrance, while to others **we are a life-giving fragrance**. Who is qualified to tell about Christ? (*God's Word*) (*Emp. added*)

**We should be!**

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Notice how Jesus dealt with this type of bigotry. A.k.a., "the golden rule".

Luk 6:31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

*Mat 7:12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets. (This fulfills the teaching of the O.T. law and the prophets.)*

Luk 6:32 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? (*"do you deserve any thanks for that?" GW*) for sinners also love those that love them. 33 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. 34 And if ye lend *to them* of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. 35 **But** love ye your enemies (*notice, He didn't say like*), and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for He is kind unto the unthankful and *to the evil*. 36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. 37 Judge (*Gk.2919- to distinguish: -avenge*) not, and ye shall not be judged (*Gk.2919- to distinguish: -condemn*): condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: 38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete (*Gk.3354- figuratively to estimate: -measure*) withal it shall be measured to you again. (*Emp. added*)

We are to forgive but only as God forgives. He can't when not asked because they would then continue sinning against Him. I can't remember the name of the movie, but it came on some time ago about a strange man who came to the house of a struggling couple who were in dire need of financial relief. It was like "The Twilight Zone" type of show. Anyway, they were told that all they had to do was open the box and their troubles were over, but, that someone, they didn't even know, would have to die because of it. They fretted for a while but finally succumbed to opening the box. At that moment the strange man came to their door to pick up the box and deliver the large amount of money that would take care of all their financial worries. He then told them that the box had to be given to someone else in a similar situation, someone they didn't know and who didn't know them. So the moral of the story is how we judge others is the way we also will be judged. If we don't "*open the box*" on someone else we won't be subject to have it opened on us.

Col 3:23 And **whatsoever ye do**, do it heartily, **as to the Lord** (*"for He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil"-Lk 6:35*), and not unto men; 24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. 25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is **no respect of persons**. (*Emp. added*)

Now if there's no respect of persons with God, why should there be with us? God doesn't save according to socio-economic statuses.

Jas 2:1 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, **with respect of persons**. 2 For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; 3 And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: 4 Are ye not then **partial** in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? (*Emp. added*)

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The rich.

Luk 18:18 And a certain ruler asked Him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? 19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou Me good? none is good, save One, *that is, God. (Jesus was being cynical because of what the Jewish rulers of that time thought of Him as not being Who He said He was.)* 20 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother. 21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up. 22 Now when Jesus heard these things, He said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow Me. 23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich. 24 And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, He said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! 25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. 26 And they that heard *it* said, Who then can be saved? 27 And He said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God. 28 Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed Thee. 29 And He said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, 30 Who shall not receive manifold more **in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting**. (*Emp. added*)

Someone might say "Oh but if I was rich I wouldn't have a hard time giving up my wealth to serve God!" But what if your wealth was an inheritance from the family fortune that was passed

down from generations before you and you witnessed your parents working very hard for it? Or what if your own personal wealth was something you sweated and sacrificed to obtain? Would you then think it would be easy to walk away from such a high standard of living? We might condemn the rich young ruler in this passage but unless we walked a mile in his sandals we have no right to judge him “lest we also be judged” without mercy. The scribe and Pharisees made that mistake.

Mat 23:29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchers of the righteous, 30 And say, **If we had been in the days** of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. (*Emp. added*)

Not all wealthy people will be lost. Do we really see how beneficial their being wealthy is to society as a whole? Once again, class envy is the sin of covetousness.

Tax collectors purchased, through bid, the right from the Roman government to exact specific levies and customs from their fellow citizens. Since the Romans already had the full sum of taxation paid for from these bids, whatever these individuals collected after reaching that amount, aside from some interest that might have been required, was their profit. In many cases that right was abused.

Luk 19:1 And *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho. 2 And, behold, *there was* a man named Zacchaeus, which was the **chief among the publicans**, and **he was rich**. 3 And he sought to see Jesus Who He was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. 4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him: for He was to pass that *way*. 5 And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house. 6 And he made haste, and came down, and received Him joyfully. 7 And when they saw *it*, they all murmured, saying, That He was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. 8 And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, **the half of my goods I give to the poor**; and **if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation**, I restore *him* **fourfold**. 9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save **that which was lost**. (*Emp. added*)

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The known dregs of society (*those at the bottom*).

Luk 7:36 And one of the Pharisees desired Him that He would eat with him. And He went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. (*He was probably hoping to catch Jesus in making a mistake.*) 37 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner (*We often look down on prostitutes but forget that they need “clients” to stay in business. If she had no “clients” she wouldn’t be in such a business and thus not be impugned in such a way.*), when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, 38 And stood at His feet behind *Him* weeping (*the Jews reclined at their meals with their feet behind them*), and began to wash His feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed *them* with the ointment. 39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw *it*, he spake **within himself**, saying, This man, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this is* that toucheth Him: for she is a sinner. 40 And **Jesus answering** said unto him (*I guess Simon didn’t realize Jesus could read his mind*), Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. 41 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed

five hundred pence, and the other fifty. 42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? 43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he*, to whom he forgave most. And He said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. 44 And He turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet (*a custom among the Jews where the feet of their guests were washed or at least were given water to rinse the dirt from their own feet*): but she hath washed My feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head. 45 Thou gavest Me no kiss (*a formal greeting*): but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss My feet. 46 My head with oil thou didst not anoint (*by which guests could appear refreshed according to Mat 6:17,18 with regard to fasting*): but this woman hath anointed My feet with ointment (*Gk.3463- perfumed oil*). 47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, **which are many**, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little. 48 And He said unto her, **\*Thy sins are forgiven.** 49 And they that sat at meat with Him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? 50 And He said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace. (*Emp. added*)

*\*Mat 9:5 For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? 6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith He to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. 7 And he arose, and departed to his house.*

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The poor. (*By no choice of their own. There are many who fall into hard times.*)

Luk 21:1 And He looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. 2 And He saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. 3 And He said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: 4 For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury (*Gk.5303- poverty*) hath cast in all the living that she had.

Not that she didn't work hard for her money but that she understood her priorities. We might think "*Yea, but we still need some rich people in the church to balance things out*". Possibly. But where's our faith? Don't we understand that God will take care of us if we are doing good?

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So, when judging someone else **we** are to have a childlike innocence.

1Co 14:20 Brothers and sisters, don't think like children. When it comes to evil, be like babies, but think like mature people. (*God's Word*)

Eph 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Eph 5:1 Be ye therefore followers of God, **as dear children** (*Gk.5043-τεκνον- a child: - daughter or son*); 2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour. (*Emp. added*)

In the beginning of most Christian walks there seems to be a tenderhearted innocence that after a while begins to waver, whether by influence or just by the process of maturing. It's the same way with how we mature physically as humans. As we get older and more experienced we lose a certain amount of purity. And along with maturity comes cynicism and with cynicism comes a

less loving attitude. It's what the rebirth process is supposed to bring back. Our tenderhearted, loving, innocence.

1Co 13:4 Charity (*love*) suffers long, *and* is kind; charity envies not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; 6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; 7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopes all things, endureth all things.

Luk 18:15 And they brought unto Him also **infants** (*Gk.1025- an infant: -babe, [young] child*), that He would touch them: but when *His* disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them. 16 But Jesus called them *unto Him*, and said, Suffer (*allow*) little children (*Gk.3813- παιδιον- a childling, that is, [properly] an infant, or [by extension] a half grown boy or girl*) to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for **of such** (*referring to their innocence*) is the kingdom of God. 17 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God **as** a little child (*Gk.3813*) shall in no wise enter therein. (*Emp. added*)

Luk 9:46 Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest. 47 And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by Him, 48 And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child (*Gk.3813- figuratively an immature Christian*) [*Even though the disciples were not called Christians until later in Antioch {Act 11:26} it didn't mean they weren't followers of Him before that.*] in My name receiveth Me: and whosoever shall receive Me receiveth Him that sent Me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great. 49 And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us. 50 And Jesus said unto him, Forbid *him* not: for he that is not against us is for us.

*Jesus was not defending denominationalism here. Moses had this problem in Num 11 with the giving of the Spirit to the seventy men chosen to help him in judging the people. There were those who were not of the seventy that received the Spirit that were reported to Moses to have him stop them. His response was similar to Jesus'. Here's the parallel passage to the Lk 9 incident.*

Mat 18:1 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven? 2 And Jesus called a little child (*Gk.3813- figuratively an immature Christian*) unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, 3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye **be converted** (*Gk.4762- to twist, that is, turn quite around or reverse: -convert*), and become **as** little children (*Gk.3813- a childling*), ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven. 4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of Heaven. 5 And whoso shall **\*receive** one such little child in My name (*Gk.3686- authority*) receiveth Me. 6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones **which believe** (*Gk.4100- by implication to entrust [especially one's spiritual well-being to Christ]*) **in Me**, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea. (*Emp. added*)

\* Mat 10:14 And whosoever shall not **receive** you (*speaking to the twelve who were yet immature*), nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. (*Emp. added*)

Mat 10:16 Behold, I send you forth **as sheep in the midst of wolves**: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. (*Emp. added*)

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So, before we can even attempt to convert others we first need to look inside ourselves so that we will no longer look on the outward appearance of anyone else. Whether they are rich, poor, middle class or even the dregs of society, as “fishers of men” (*Mat 4:19*) we are to “cast our nets” and “let them down for a haul” (*“expect a great catch”*) understanding that **every** soul is precious if we truly are “the children of the Highest” (*Lk 6:35*). But, if you’ve not been “hooked” by the message of the Gospel plan to save your soul, you can be. All you need to do is...

Hear: Romans 10:17 ... "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Believe: Heb 11:6 ... "for he that commeth to God must believe that He is"...

Repent: Lk 13:3 ... "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Confess: Mat 10:32 "Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess before My Father which is in Heaven."

Be baptized: Acts 22:38 "...Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.."

Remain faithful: Rom 6:4 ... "even so we also should walk in newness of life."

If this is your desire, we stand ready to aid you in this!

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*Revised 1/25/24*

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