

“Be Careful to Whom You Listen”
(Luke 6:39-40)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

We've seen there are certain things
That are true of those who seek God's Kingdom –
We are different –

That the people of the world
Will hate us for these differences –
Even think we're evil –

But that we are to love them anyway,
And return good for their evil,
So that we might be the witness
Jesus wants us to be.

This morning, we saw
How the Lord will bless us
If we will:

If we don't judge them –
The Lord won't judge us –

If we don't condemn them –
If we're not quick
To consign them to the pit –
The Lord won't condemn us –

We won't have to pay the penalty for our sins –

If we forgive them –

If we don't hold onto their offences against us –

We will be forgiven –

The Lord won't hold our offenses against us –

And if we give to them –

If we help our enemies in need –

To the degree we do,

To that degree the Lord will give to us –

B. Preview.

Tonight, Jesus now moves

From how we should deal

With enemies who might injure us,

To enemies who might influence us.

He warns us against following

Those who are spiritually blind:

1. First, because of *where* they'll lead us;
2. Second, because of *what we'll become* if we follow them.

II. Sermon.

A. First, Jesus warns us against following

Those who are spiritually blind,

Because of where they'll lead us.

We read in verse 39, “And He also spoke a parable to them: ‘A blind man cannot guide a blind man, can he? Will they not both fall into a pit?’”

A parable is a story

That's meant to teach spiritual truth,

But also to hide truth from those
The Lord intends to keep in darkness.

Jesus was teaching the truth to some,
While at the same time
Hiding His true meaning from others.

On the surface,
What He says is self-evident:
Someone who can't see
Isn't going to be a reliable guide
To someone who's also blind:
In the end,
They're both going to end up in trouble.

What does this mean?

The blind man who leads
Isn't one person, but many:

Jesus is referring here to the scribes and Pharisees –

The teachers/leaders of Israel,
Who may not have been physically blind,
But certainly were spiritually –

They were blind –

Not only to Scriptures' true meaning –

To its fulfilled in Jesus –

But being unconverted,

They were hostile

To what they could see –

The blind man that is led

Are their disciples –

Who also were blind

And hostile towards the truth.

There isn't much hope

When blind teachers

Lead blind students –

They're both going to end up

In the pit:

In this case, in hell.

Jesus said this in a veiled way

Because He still the majority

Of His work to accomplish –

He didn't want their growing hatred

To get in His way.

On the other hand,

He wanted to warn those who could hear

To avoid them –

Are there any blind leading the blind today?

Of course!

We find them in our schools/universities –

Teachers who don't believe God exists;
Who believe we're the result of matter, time and chance;

That since there is no God,
There's really no *Word from God*,
No ultimate standard of right and wrong:
The Bible is only the ramblings of religious fanatics.

Since there is no standard –
And no one to whom we're accountable –
There's only what the majority wants to tolerate –
These are the blind leading the blind.

We find them in our government –
Those educated by these schools,
Who apply their theories to society,
And turn us away from God –
The blind leading the blind.

We find them in the different religions
That have been invented by man –
And helped by the enemy of our souls –
To keep us from the truth.

Sadly, we also find them in the church –
Because of liberal seminaries and seminary professors,
Who stopped believing in supernatural revelation,
And started looking for a natural explanation for the Bible;

Because of charismatic leaders

Who wanted to become rich and famous,

Who started a cult to lead many away.

Or because of even well-meaning Christians

Who believe so strongly that works

Can't be part of the Gospel equation

That they banish them from view

And teach that salvation is only a matter

Of believing the facts.

These are the blind leading the blind.

Are there any blind enough to follow them?

There are many who would rather

Have their ears tickled by lies,

Than listen to the truth:

Jesus warns us, "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it" (Matt. 7:13-14).

The blind believe for a while

That their way is right –

That they're really doing what's good

And helping those who follow them –

Richard Dawkins –

The high profile atheist –

Just wants to free people
 From the tyranny of religion,
 So that they can really enjoy life –

But when they die,
 Both they and those who follow them
 Will find they were terribly wrong –
 They will go down to the pit,
 And have to endure an eternity of hell.

If we follow the blind –
 Those who teach what's wrong –
 We'll end up there as well.

B. Second, we shouldn't follow them

Because we'll also become like them
 In this life.

“A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher” (v. 40).

There's a reason why
 We gravitate towards those whom we do:
 It's because we see something attractive in them,
 Something admirable,
 Something we want to see in ourselves.

Virtually everyone who has ever aspired
 To become good at something,
 Has at one time looked up

To someone for their inspiration.

Jesus appears to be warning us here

That we need to make sure that influence

Is one that will help us, rather than harm us.

Jesus is warning those Jews

Who looked up to the scribes and Pharisees

As their spiritual mentors:

If they sit under them,

They will become as bad.

Jesus, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves” (Matt. 23:15).

There is the sad story of Charles Templeton,

Who was so used by the Lord

To bring people to Christ,

That he was called the Billy Graham of Canada.

As some point in his career –

He decided he needed an education,

And went to Princeton Theological Seminary –

Princeton is the seminary of the PCUSA –

The church this denomination separated from in 1936,

Because they were beginning to deny

The fundamentals of the Gospel –

By 1948, they had become liberal –

Templeton sat under those who questioned
Whether the Bible could be the Word of God.

Afterwards, he struggled for almost a decade,
And finally declared himself to be an agnostic.

He tried to convince Billy Graham,
And raised such questions in his mind,
That he almost gave up the ministry.

Graham finally decided,
That even though he couldn't answer
All the questions Templeton had raised,
That the Lord would eventually show him –
And He did.

Graham went on to be America's foremost evangelist
For the next five decades.

The point is:
If those we admire are blind,
Not only does this call into question
Whether or not we can really see;
The best we can hope for
From that relationship
Is to descend into a greater darkness.

If the Lord has graciously
Opened our eyes to see the truth –

To see who Jesus is –

Son of God and Man,

The only Savior –

That He is the perfect example;

That His ways are right;

Then we need *to sit under Him*:

Jesus says, “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matt. 11:29-30).

That’s what it means to be a Christian –

It means to sit under Him,

Learn from Him,

Become like Him.

We do this by getting into His Word,

Reading about Him –

What He did,

What He said –

By praying and asking the Lord

To make us more like Him.

By going to where His Word

Is taught and preached.

By making the best use

Of every opportunity the Lord gives us

To learn more about Him and His ways.

And by putting into practice

The things we learn from Him –

We may not grow as much

As we would like while we're in this world,

But one day, we will be just like Him

When we finally come home to heaven.

Jesus is the One we need to admire,

To learn from,

To become like,

To follow –

If we have His Spirit,

That's what we'll do –

To have this admiration for anyone else

Is to go the wrong direction:

Jesus, "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me" (Matt. 10:37-38).

If we want to be like Jesus,

We need to follow Him,

And if we do, we will be lifted to heaven. Amen.

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