

Empire Church of the Brethren

Sunday Service Sermons

05 October 2025

A Good Heart

Text: "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 thorn bushes, or grapes from briers. The 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." *Luke 6:43-45.*

When Jesus speaks of the "heart" in our scripture passage for today, he is referring to that inner self, the core of one's being as an intelligent, volitional, and emotional self.

It is that center of each of us that thinks, decides, and feels.

Jesus makes it eternally important that this center be filled and overflowing with goodness. The heart determines conduct.

This principle could be called the law of the heart, because Jesus states it in the absolute form, something that will always be true.

The example from nature.

Our Lord, the Master of nature, viewed nature as full of spiritual lessons and turned to it for an illustration of this law of the heart.

"No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit."

The law involved here is that the quality of the tree will determine the quality of the fruit it bears.

The example applied to the human heart.

"The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart."

Jesus points to the parallel between man and tree.

Heart determines conduct.

Source provides product.

This insight should help us.

While the circumstances can definitely influence conduct, we do what we do because of what we are.

Conduct reveals one's heart.

Again Jesus resorts to the laws of nature to teach a painful and sobering truth about the laws of the spirit.

Our words and deeds reveal the center of our being.

The example in nature.

"Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briers."

The fruit identifies the tree.

The example applied to life.

"The 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."

In the context of a sermon in which Jesus was forbidding a judgmental spirit, this illustration may have been directed against a censorious spirit, which discloses a heart that is void of love and mercy.

Acceptable as truth, this teaching would trace our immorality, our dishonesty, our blasphemy to the very core of the self, the heart.

A change of heart brings a change of conduct.

Where conduct reveals a bad heart, a change of heart is the only remedy.

To change the fruit, we must change the tree.

A possibility of change.

In this text Jesus' words are designed to help us acknowledge our need for change, but many other Scripture verses confirm the reality of experiencing a true change of heart.

Jeremiah made such a change of heart a basic part of the new covenant.

He relayed God's promise, "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts."

The plan for a change of heart.

Since the change of heart is a work of God, what can we do?

The only thing we can do is admit our need for a change and ask God, in faith, for it.

David prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." *Psalms 51*

If we are to be ready for life's storms, we must have a good heart.

Our conduct is the clue to our heart's condition.

Let us consider our words and our deeds.

So we need a new heart?

Come today to the great heart specialist, the Lord Jesus Christ.

He will give you a new heart for life everlasting.