

THE WORD FOR TODAY

FRUIT TREES AND WELL-BUILT HOUSES (Luke's Gospel Chapter 6, 43-49)

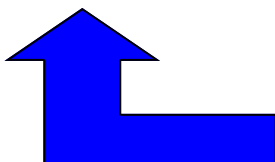


In this passage Jesus is speaking to his disciples and to the large crowd which often surrounded him.

He frequently spoke of everyday things which the crowd would understand, and here he speaks of fruit trees to people who knew how important the harvest was. He spoke of houses, and many of those he spoke to would live in simple homes which were fragile in bad weather.

They would understand his message as indeed we do today. Where we choose to lay down our foundations, and where we choose to give our hearts, is still just as important for our lives and for our well-being.

Follow the words of this passage, beginning on the north wall of this little building. You will then walk round the church building anti-clockwise, pausing at various benches to read and think. There are seven boards to read. We use the New International Version of the Bible, which you can find on the internet under Bible Gateway. The whole "Word for Today" can be found on the church website, www.libertonkirk.net



Turn immediately left to find the first Bible extract on the bench

“No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognised by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thorn-bushes, or grapes from briars.”

1

2025 was a wonderful year for fruit in the U.K. Trees and bushes in our gardens were laden with fruit, and we knew what was good to eat straight from the tree and what was not, although everything could be used in some way—jams, chutneys or juice.

If we relate this to ourselves, we would surely like to be productive and admirable, but it does depend on something quite fundamental—something deep inside us.



***Lord, I want to be good and productive
but I know that I need to be good from
the inside out.
Help me to be more like Jesus, I pray.***

(No. 2 is on the bench straight ahead of you near the East Door of the church)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

“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.”

2

How often have you avoided speaking to someone or making a visit because you selfishly can't spare the time? How often have you helped someone or made a grudging contribution to a charity while thinking they don't deserve it, or they have brought it on themselves? It's a sobering thought that Jesus knows what we are thinking as well as what we are doing. How good it would be to have a heart and mind full of good thoughts! There's only one person who can help us with this.



***Lord, work in me to transform my heart
so that everything I do and say comes from deep inside
and speaks of you and your love.***

(No. 3 is round the corner of the church against the East wall)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord’, and do not do what I say?”

3

I am sure God rejoices to hear the worship rising from churches on Sundays, but he must wish that all that worship could be translated into lives of service during the week. It doesn't have to be spectacular service like volunteering for the RNLI (although they welcome new volunteers!), but could be just being available to listen to someone who needs to talk, or have a cup of tea with someone who rarely has visitors. It all contributes to bringing God's Kingdom to our neighbourhood. Not only that, but God knows that this is not just for the benefit of his kingdom, but for our own benefit as well because knowing Jesus in our lives is the best possible way to live. This is how we find the life in all its fullness that he came to bring.



***Lord, help me to follow you in my daily life:
to love those around me, to welcome the stranger.
Remind me that “church” is for every day of the week.***

(No. 4 is further along this wall of the church)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

“I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice. He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock.”

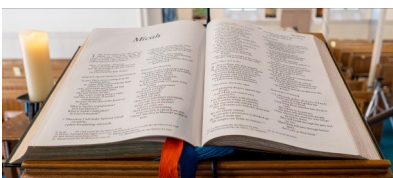
4

Following Jesus is not easy, but he doesn't ask us to do things without giving us the resources we need. By making our best effort we are laying the foundation of a secure future for ourselves, safe in the arms of Jesus, our rock in an uncertain world.



***Lord, help me to seek always to be more like you,
as growing closer will ground me more deeply in you.
Thank you for the security I get from knowing you in my life.***

(Walk along the back of the church and turn left at the end. You will find No. 5 on the bench)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

“When the flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built.”

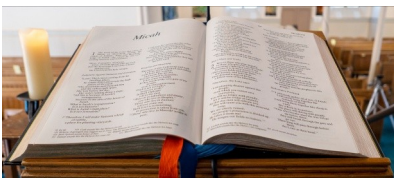
5

Flooded houses are a mess. They need cleaning up and they take time to dry out, but they recover. When disasters strike and Jesus is there to reassure and strengthen us, we recover too—we discover reserves we didn't know we had and we find rest in him. All we need is our trust in him to get us through the crisis.



***Lord, thank you that I can step into the future unafraid.
I know that whatever life throws at me you will keep me from falling
and bring me through.
Deepen my trust in you, I pray.***

(You will find No. 6 past the tower beside the Covid Memorial)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

“But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation.”

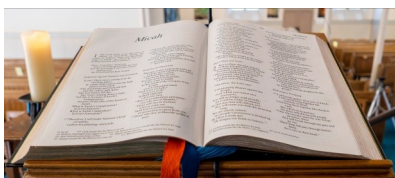
6

How often do we think we are self-sufficient? There are so many people who don't think they need Jesus, they don't need to keep to his commandments and try to follow him, because their lives are good without him. They forget that life sometimes has nasty shocks in store, which need extra resilience and resources.

***Lord, forgive me when I
am sure I can manage
without you.
Show me the way to
live to benefit others
and myself.***



(You will find No. 7 on one of the benches at the front of the church building)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

“The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.”

7

Children love this story, and the action songs that go with it. They like throwing themselves on the floor when the house collapses!

Adults, however, know how quickly lives can be derailed by bereavement, an unexpected diagnosis, a redundancy, a breakdown in relationships. They know that they need something or someone to hold on to.

That’s what Jesus offers us if we are prepared to follow him.



***Lord, how can I face some
of the things life throws at
me without you?
Hold me close.
Help me to follow you
day by day.***

***Liberton Kirk has no minister at the moment, but you can contact us at
minister@libertonkirk.net and your request will be dealt with by the appropriate person.***



THE WORD FOR TODAY

Photographic Credits:

The Bible image on all panels is by Gary Ross

Other photographs are as follows:

Introduction	Yuliia Dementsova on Unsplash
Page 1	Marek Studzinski on Unsplash
Page 2	Keir-in-sight Archives on Unsplash
Page 3	Dan Stephens on Unsplash
Page 4	JSB Co. on Unsplash
Page 5	Chris Gallagher on Unsplash
Page 6	Sopan Sopian on Unsplash
Page 7	Zed Akxis on Unsplash