

Trinity IV

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 10 July 2022

Preacher: Fr. Wade Miller

[0 : 00] Be merciful just as your Father also is merciful. These words from our Lord recorded in St. Luke's Gospel are extremely relevant in our current context.

We have seen, we have witnessed the aftermath of senseless shootings in public places like schools and community parades.

We have watched in Hoare the reporting of 53 dead bodies found in the back of a parked Texas tractor trailer as immigrants were cooked to death.

There are many descriptions, many words that could be used for the current state of our culture, but mercy is not one of them.

All of what is happening evokes a sense of moral outrage in us for a time. But then we become a bit desensitized.

[1 : 09] We get caught up in ourselves and in our own schedules, and so we don't think about the moral collapse we see all around us.

The church, however, is not called to sit back and watch the world burn to the ground. We are called to lead the way in pressing forward for a better future.

One that is filled with hope, not despair or desolation. But how do we do this? How do we promote a better way forward?

Luke chapter 6 provides the way for Christians to be light in a dark world. Our Lord uses the following action words to describe what we should and should not be doing.

Jesus says, judge not, condemn not, forgive and give. Again, judge not, condemn not, forgive and give.

[2 : 19] And these four actions should characterize every Christian. So let's begin with the first two, which states what we are not to do.

That is, we are not to be judging or condemning others without first a proper examination of self.

Our Lord says that we should not judge others until we have first judged ourselves.

In other words, we are called to make proper judgments. We are called to judge. We are called to call out wickedness.

But first, that begins looking at ourselves. Let me say this another way that will help us make sense of what our Lord is communicating to us.

We are not to overreact in a harsh manner towards others. We are not to condemn others. The first thing we are to do is to look at ourselves, to see our own shortcomings, to see our own sin, before we start barking at others and accusing them of wrongdoing.

[3 : 33] Jesus uses that analogy of looking at the speck of dust in another person's eye without first seeing the plank or the beam in our own.

He says it's not until we get rid of our own sin that we can then have a right judgment and a right response to others. Friends, we are called to judge.

But that begins with each and every one of us starting with ourselves. But the second two responses are just as important.

Our Lord tells us what we are to do. He tells us what we're not to do, but now he tells us what we are to do, and that is we are to forgive and we are to give.

We are called to be people who forgive just as we have been forgiven in Christ Jesus. And we are to be people who generously give to God and to others.

[4 : 44] And all of this takes us back to the very opening words of our gospel text this morning here in Luke chapter 6, verse 36, which states we are to be people of mercy just as we have received mercy in Christ.

