

**The Legacy of a Saint is not Temporal but Eternal**  
**Rev. Terrance Jacob on Luke 6:20-31 at SALC on 11/02/25**

Do you know people who just light up the room when they walk in? Throughout history we know of people that have that effect. They have an aura! I know some of you are thinking, "I think I do that - I mean you, not me." And it's not about what they're wearing or the hairdo or their swagger. People like Presidents - at least some of them; I know one US president, whose father hailed from Kenya - he has an aura, even before he became president. I mention him only, because he was the only US president I actually sat down with. There are some artists; some church leaders; some sports persons and the like who may light up the room. Even in everyday life, there are some of our friends and family who light up the room.

A Roman Catholic blogger, Shannara Johnson in "*Diary of a Stumbling Saint*" claims that one can make one's aura bigger and brighter by telling oneself for 21 days, "I love myself unconditionally," "I am kind to myself," and similar, what I would call, "self-affirmations". For a Christian talking about "saints", I'm surprised Johnson does not add, "God loves me just as I am" or something like that. Positive affirmations.

But does that really work to grow your aura? You may think it works because it may build your self-confidence. YOU may feel like you light up the room, but others may not! They are probably saying, as one struts one's self, "What a jackass!" There's no gimmicks to that aura, it's just about who the person is. People see the person and the aura as genuine.

However, some people can lose their aura. Like when someone "falls from grace", so to speak, they can go from lighting up the room, to a room where people leave when they enter. It happens to disgraced politicians or religious leaders - I won't mention names. There's also

fallen school principals, coaches, family patriarchs and matriarchs who do harm after being good. They can lose their esteem or aura.

Another way to put it is that they lose or damage their legacy. When they die, tributes will receive mixed reactions. When a person dies, what a tribute it is if we can say, “so and so lit up the room.” So, what legacy do you want to leave? Not just at the tribute when your life is celebrated, but for posterity.

Jesus says in today’s Gospel, it is not wealth, possessions, achievements and status that matters. In Luke 6, the verses 27-31 say: *“But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you.”*

Let’s go to the beginning of today’s text: Jesus starts by pronouncing blessings on those who are mistreated on account of the Gospel and how they will be restored and blessed, but that is not their legacy: that they were poor and persecuted, but blessed! That’s not their legacy. That is the Lord’s legacy, so to speak. By Grace they are blessed and Grace is Christ’s identity and eternal legacy.

Paul says to the Galatians, “It is the fruit of the spirit that is our legacy” It’s listed in Galatians 5:22-23: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These are the fruits of the Spirit, not ours; so it is eternal. What God does in and through us is our legacy. How God’s light shines through us or how we reflect the light of Christ is our legacy. Paul says to the Ephesians in today’s second reading in Chapter 1 from v 15: *I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this*

*reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers.*

The things that have eternal value are our legacy - your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and your love for the saints. In God's kingdom there is no social status or any gradation of society - that is here and we leave it behind. It's good if someone leaves a legacy gift. That benefits others left behind (I'm sure our Finance Committee is happy I mentioned that), but no legacy on earth is eternal. What IS eternal, is faith in and love for God AND how we respond to the Grace that is given freely in our engaging the world. That lasts. Not just in eternity, but it is a legacy which others will follow and be influenced by you on earth, and your legacy will also become their legacy.

A story is told of missionaries going to India and preaching about Jesus the resurrected Christ. The local Indians said, "we know that man. He came to us in the first century AD. He was all that you say this Jesus was. But he died and was buried here. We can take you to his grave!" They took them to the grave of the Apostle Thomas, who is believed to have gone to India in the diaspora of the 1st century Christians. One's eternal legacy is that one was like Jesus. Fully like Jesus. Even Jesus who freed the oppressed, set captives free, reached out to the marginalized and the rich alike, because He loved all people. Then, most significantly, He gave His earthly life so that we might be saved.

Conclusion: They say "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." How do people see you? As a saint with an aura? Or maybe no aura? But let me remind us that sainthood and legacy is not about your aura. It's about Jesus saying like God the Father said about Him, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." Let's live to please God, loving God and loving neighbor in word and deed, and we'll leave a legacy that's eternal. Amen.

## Children's Sermon

What do you want to be when you grow up? Changes. Then you grow up and sometimes your mind changes - we are allowed to change our mind.

Remember this: When you were baptized you became a child of God. You are called a Christian - which means "little Christ" - what does Christian mean? Sometimes our parents say, "My child is my mini-me."

So no matter what you become do not forget that you are a disciple of Jesus, a little Christ first.

So the first answer to "What do you want to be when you grow up" should be, "I want to be a mini-me of Jesus" Be a good Christian first, then whatever second.