

LUKE I Jesus' Sermon on the Plain Text: Luke 6:20–26

Values of the Kingdom vs. Values of the World

Introduction:

1. **There are times when TRUTH is counter-intuitive to the way we normally Think...**
 - a. True North Doesn't Look Correct B/C We Calibrated our Compass to a Different Direction
 - b. The strong current of culture causes us to drift and we become disoriented to true North
2. **Two Navy Battle Ships Were to conduct sea trials off the eastern seaboard of U.S.**
To Test the Ship, the Systems and the Crew... But a Marine Layer lowered the Visibility ...¹
3. **POINT: The Truth is the Immovable Rocks of Reality...**
 - a. The Truth Doesn't Care What Your Rank Is! —or the STORY You Are Telling Yourself
 - b. Just Because He was a Captain of a Battleship Didn't change the Fact That...
He Was Going to Sink It if He Didn't Change Course!
4. **In This Sermon Jesus is Contrasting Two Value Systems:**
The Values of the Kingdom vs. the Values of the World
 - a. **IN THE WORLD:** Status, Rank, Intelligence, Looks, Wealth, Possessions, Popularity —All Carry High Value Because They Assign Rank and Self-Worth.
 - b. **IN THE KINGDOM:** These Are Not Strengths But Weakness Because None of Them Can Change the Truth—they Usually Blind Us to the Truth
Your Self-Worth and Value is Not Based on Worldly Standards—but on Heavenly ones!

I. THE BLESSINGS – Notice Who Jesus Calls Blessed...

A. YOU WHO ARE POOR → THE BLESSING OF POVERTY

1. **The word 'Blessed' is the greek word *Makarios*: *Blessed, Happy, Fortunate.***
But How is Poverty a Blessing?
2. **The Poor Who Are Blessed are Those Who Follow Jesus for theirs is the Kingdom of God — Jesus calls them '*poor in spirit...*'**
Meaning: Happy are those who know they are spiritually destitute & poor w/o God
 - a) We Stepped Out of Denial that we were Self-Sufficient and didn't Need God
—And Now We Totally Depend on God who blesses us!
 - b) Because then We Seek God and Find True Riches and Blessing!
3. **It is the blessing of being approved and accepted by God!**

B. YOU WHO HUNGER → THE BLESSING OF HUNGER

1. **Physical Hunger is a universal human experience—as is Spiritual Hunger**
 - a) Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness Have Stepped Out of their Denial and Openly Recognize their need for God...
 - b) They Seek God with all their heart—Desiring the Bread of Life Every Day!

¹ Stephen Covey, '7 Habits of Highly Effective People', p.33.

2. You can see this in Jesus' parable of two people at the temple praying...

- a) A Pharisee is praying to God by praising himself how great he is
- b) A Tax Collector is hitting his chest begging God to be merciful to him
- c) One is Full of Himself — the Other is Hungry for Forgiveness and Righteousness

Only One Retuned Home Forgiven

C. YOU WHO WEEP —> THE BLESSING OF SORROW

1. How Can Sorrow Be a Blessing? —Because Sorrow turns us back to God!

- a) The Sorrow We Experience from the GUILT our Sins—turns Us back to God
- b) The Sorrow We Experience for the CONSEQUENCES of Sin Turns us to God
- c) The Sorrow We Experience for God's Suffering People Turns Us to God

2. Sorrow turns us back to God in way Nothing Else Can.

Tears of Repentance and Tears of Sympathy.

D. YOU WHO ARE HATED —> THE BLESSING OF REJECTION

1. Have you ever thought of Rejection as being a blessing?

- a) There is a Blessing in Being Rejected by Toxic People
- b) Your Body Rejects Toxins that are harmful to you to keep you healthy
- c) Rejection by the World is a Boundary that keeps us healthy and safe

2. Even Jesus - the Greatest Teacher in Human History was Hated

- a) Jesus: "The world... hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil." (Jn 7:7)
- b) And Jesus is Still Hated by many today.
- c) Jesus said we would be hated as well (**John 15:18–20**)

3. Most Compromises in the Church are an effort to Be Loved by the World

- a) Some Christians are not missionaries to bring the truth to the lost World
- b) They are Trying to Convert the Church to the World!
- c) Those Who Stand For Truth Will Be Rejected, Hated & Persecuted (**2 Tim 3:12–13**)

II. THE WOES – The Perils of Pride and Prosperity

A. WOE TO YOU WHO ARE RICH

1. Jesus Gives 4 Woes... But What Does this Word Mean?

- a) Some Believe this is not in an expression of anger, but of sadness and warning.
- b) Others Say it is a Declaration of Judgement & Condemnation....
Either Way it's NOT GOOD!
- c) It was often used by the O.T. prophets when announcing coming destruction.

2. He is speaking of those who TRUST in Riches rather than God (Mk 10:24)

- a) NIV: **woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort.**

3. Riches give us the Illusion of Power and Control as if we are Self-Sufficient

- a) Blinding us to our Desperate need for God. – Like the Rich Man & Lazarus.

4. Jesus Became Poor So You Could Become Rich! (2 Corinthians 8:9)

B. WOE TO YOU WHO ARE FULL

1. This speaks of those who are full of their own importance...

- a) They Don't Need God—They Are Already Self-Satisfied—Comfortable
- 2. **(Proverbs 30:8) shows the request of someone who is Honest w/ himself**
 - a) We have all daydreamed of what we would do if we won a million \$
 - b) But if you Look at the Lives of those who have won the Lottery,
 - c) most of them loose everything, including their family and marriage and loved ones
 - d) Even Admitting that their life would've been better if they had never won the lottery.
- 3. **When we are full of our own importance—we stop trying to seek the Lord**

C. WOE TO YOU WHO LAUGH NOW

- 1. **Those who are rich & full of their own importance, also make light of the Truth**
- 2. **They mock the Humble who seek the Lord b/c they have no fear of the Lord**
- 3. **Scoffers are those who Scorn, Ridicule and Mock the Righteous**
- 4. **They are in Denial of their Guilt and their Need for God's Forgiveness.**

D. WOE TO YOU WHEN ALL MEN SPEAK WELL OF YOU

- 1. **Jesus said the Pharisees already had their reward →The praise of men**
- 2. **To live for the praise of others— is To live as an Approval Addict...**
 - a) Every day is a treadmill that never ends because the Need is Insatiable and the approval of people is fickle and never lasts.
- 3. **If You Live by the Sword You Die By the Sword...**
If You Live For Other People's Acceptance—Then You Die By Their Rejection

III. THE IMPLICATIONS

A. A KINGDOM NOT OF THIS WORLD...

- 1. **In the Kingdom of God a Complete Reversal of Fortunes Taking Place:**
 - a) the poor will become Rich! — and the Rich will be left empty.
 - b) The Hungry will be Filled — and the Full will go hungry
 - c) Those Who Sorrow will have Joy — and Those Who Laugh Now will Sorrow
 - d) The Hated Will Be Blessed — While the Popular will be Rejected
- 2. **If You are a Child of God you are Blessed...**
Even though the World Would Consider You Poor and Wretched
- 3. **If You Follow the World You Are Miserable and Lost...**
Even though the World would consider you a success!
- 4. **They're So Completely Opposite That There's No Place for Compromise**
Even though we are still tempted to Merge them (James 2:1-5)
 - a) Whoever Exalts Themselves Will Be Humbled,
but if you humble yourself before the Lord, He will lift you up.

B. FALSE VALUES OF THE WORLD GIVE A FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY

- 1. **We Call This DENIAL – It's not just a River in Egypt...**

2. Being in Denial of our need for God — Gives The Illusion of Control...

—> D.E.N.I.A.L. has been used as an Acronym²

- ❖ **D: DISABLES OUR FEELINGS.** To maintain this Illusion of control—we have to Deny our Guilt, Shame, loneliness and pain to pretend we are fine without God.
- ❖ **E: ENERGY LOST.** A Side-effect of Living in Denial is Worry and Anxiety. By Denying our Need for God we tryouts to fill that God-Shaped Void in our Heart with the praise and admiration of the world. So we wear ourselves out by worrying about what others think about us and the constant performance to gain their approval.
- ❖ **N: NEGATES GROWTH.** By Living in Denial We Have to Hide Our Secrets and Pretend We Don't Need God so We Carry our Sin Like an Anvil on our Back.
- ❖ **I: ISOLATES US FROM GOD.** Our Denial Keeps us in the Dark When Forgiveness is Available in the Light. (1 Jn 1:5-7)
- ❖ **A: ALIENATES US FROM OUR RELATIONSHIPS.** Living in Denial We Think We Are Fine and We Don't Need God Or Anyone Else. We Hide Our Sin and Think No One Knows. But We Only Alienate Ourselves Within Our Own Denial (**Eph 4:25**)
- ❖ **L: LENGTHENS THE PAIN.** We have the False Belief that Denial Protects us from the Pain By Ignoring it. In Reality We Are Only Lengthening the Pain.

3. Denial Keeps Us From Turning to the Only One Who Can Save Us! (Ps 40:1-4)

C. WE FACE AN ETERNAL CHOICE

1. These Two Value Systems Are in Such Conflict to One Another—

That There Can Be NO COMPROMISE Between the Two!

2. We Are Forced to Make a Choice—What Value System will we live by?

"We stand at the crossroads, each minute, each hour, each day making choices. We choose the thoughts we allow ourselves to think, the passions we allow ourselves to feel, and the actions we allow ourselves to perform. Each choice is made in the context of whatever value system we've selected to govern our lives. In selecting that value system, we are, in a very real way, making the most important choice we will ever make." - Benjamin Franklin

3. We Are Forced to Make a Choice—the Value System of the World? or God?

And That Choice Will Determine Our Destiny! (**1 John 2:15-17**)

- a) The Pharisees Tried to Serve God and the World... but Jesus said,
"They Have their Reward." —Their Reward was the Praise of Men

CONCLUSION:

1. If You Are Forgiven—Then You Are Blessed!

The blessing of being approved and accepted by God!

2. Jesus Became Poor So You Could Become Rich!

3. Your Self-Worth and Value is No Longer Based on Worldly Standards— —but on Heavenly ones! (**Romans 8:18 > 2 Corinthians 4:17**)

² 'Stepping Out of Denial Into God's Grace', John Baker, Celebrate Recovery part 1, p.17-19