**The Gospel of Luke**

**Witness to the Gentiles - #14**

**Jesus Heals, Teaches and Preaches**

**Luke 6:17-19, 20-26**

**Luke 6:17-19 - Jesus heals a crowd**

***17****And He came down with them and stood on a level spot with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon,* ***18*** *who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed.* ***19****And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all.*

**Notes and studies:**

1. From verse 17, we understand that Jesus was no longer on a high place but a kind of plain near a mountain. This is more detailed than the Beatitudes in Matthew 5 where Jesus gave his sermon on the mountain; here it is on a plain.

2. People came from all over Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast (verse 17). This makes sense why we have two different accounts:

a. Matthew gives an overall picture of the Rabbi Jesus setting to teach.

b. Luke calls Jesus the physician who heals and then teaches. This is certainly the personal touch of Luke the Physician.

c. No contradiction at all between Matthew and Luke. The more detailed overall picture in Luke is Luke’s way of recording, while Matthew focuses on giving us the detailed teaching.

3. The crowd came to Jesus for healing and to touch him as in Luke 5:13. Here Jesus was not touched, for by his being there was “*a power went out from Him and healed them all.”* This is one of the unique revelations of the divine presence of Jesus.

**Different Revelations of Jesus**

1. Good shepherd………… *who gathers the lost*
2. Rock…………………… *to confirm the hesitant*
3. Physician………………. *to heal body and soul*
4. Bread of life…………… *to nourish the mortals with life*
5. Fire of love…………….. *to purify us from false love*
6. Lord……………………. *who sustains us by his power*
7. Son of God…………….. *who gives us adoption*
8. Life…………………….. *that will never perish*
9. Brother and first born…..*who grants us to be co-hairs his kingdom*
10. Savior…………………...*who is free from sin*
11. Redeemer………………. *who forgives all sins*
12. Intercessor………………*who labors to re-create us and make us like him*

Please add more to this list because it is not final.

**The Sermon on the Plain (Part 1) - Luke 6:20-26**

***Luke 6:20****Then Jesus fixed His eyes on His disciples, and said: “Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.*

***21****Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall have your fill. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.*

***22*** *Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they outlaw you, and denounce you, and reject your name as evil, for the Son of Man’s sake.*

***23*** *That is the time to rejoice and leap for joy, for indeed your reward is great in heaven, for in just the same way did their fathers treat the prophets.*

***24****But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.*

***25*** *Woe to you who are well fed now, for you shall go hunger. Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.*

***26*** *Woe to you all when all men speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets.*

**Notes and Studies**

1. We must not miss the important words in verse 20, for the address was to the disciples, who will preach the Gospel here in Judea and in Galilee.
2. This is sermon is about 30 verses. Matthew’s is about 109 verses.
3. Verse 20 needs some attention. The Greek ***makarios***, “Blessed (are)” does not mean something that will grow and increase as in Genesis 24:1, “*the Lord had blessed Abraham in everything*.” It’s used in the LXX (Greek OT) in Psalm 137:7-8:

*“Remember, O Lord, against the sons of Edom. The day of Jerusalem, Who said, ‘Raze it, raze it to its very foundation.’ O daughter of Babylon, you devastated one, How blessed will be the one who repays you with the recompense with which you have repaid us. How blessed will be the one who seizes and dashes your little ones against the rock.”*

This “blessed” does not mean “happy” but refers to someone will have a favor bestowed on him. This is confirmed by the favor that any one has good children:

*“like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one’s youth. How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them; they will not be ashamed When they speak with their enemies in the gate.”*  Psalm 127:4-5

1. In the LXX book of Wisdom (26:1), a blessing is a good life as in the case of Job who was blessed after his ordeal *“As soon as the ear heard these things, it blessed me, and when the eye saw them, it bore witness to me.”* (29:11)
2. At the second “appearing” of our Lord Jesus Christ, appearing as “*the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, will reveal at the right time”*

(1 Tim 6:15) is when the old life will be finally changed into the eternal destiny.

1. In the OT there are many verses that can be translated to “bless’ or “praise” or “exult,” e.g., the Hebrew ***baruk*** in“*blessed be Yahweh*” (Ex 18:10).

**The Poor or “the Poor in Spirit”**

1. Poverty was never regarded as a blessing in the OT. As the book of Proverbs says, “*your poverty will come like a robber, and your need (scarcity) like an armed man”* (6:11), or *“he one who neglects discipline ends up in poverty and shame, but the one who accepts reproof is honor”* (13:18).
2. The Poor, in Hebrew, were called the ***anawim***, or, “those who actually suffer.” This is what Matthew meant by “poor in the spirit” – the broken who have nothing when they appear before God, like those in Isaiah 66:2:

*“Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?" declares the LORD. "These are the ones I look on with favor: those who are humble and contrite in spirit, and who tremble at my word”*

**A note from Philemon**

**On the difference between Matthew and Luke**

Last week a young man came from Alexandria to visit us. He was full of doubts. I usually don’t discuss any doubt but look at the root of any doubt. It is hard to talk to anyone who doubts and believes his doubt. I have treasured your words: “doubt is good if it remains a question but becomes a vice if it becomes the final answer.” There is no final answer here in this life other that Jesus who has the final answer – if not here, it will be when he comes in glory.

 This young man told me that Matthew and Luke do not agree about reporting the extract words of our Lord. I asked him if he was the first person to notice this. He nodded and seemed to be so conceited to the extent that he would not hear anything. But the Lord gifted me a wave of compassion, so I asked him if the Gospel is a verbal message. He nodded. Then I asked him if Christianity is like Islam, which has a message from God written in words. He was silent. My next question was, “Do you believe that Jesus is God Incarnate and that his life is the very revelation of all truth? And that this truth is not the words of Jesus but is Jesus himself and the words are the ‘witness”?

He said he never heard this question before. I added, “When you become a Christian, do you believe in what was said about Jesus, or in the words of Jesus, or do you believe in Jesus himself the Person of God Incarnate?” He said that this way of making differences between the Person of Jesus and the different words in the Gospels is his problem. I asked him if he had ever had to add words to something he said to make those who listen understand him. He agreed. So, the “poor in the spirit” in Matthew and just the “poor” in Luke must have been for the listeners, for the Gospels were written in order to be read and understood.

This young man is like many who analyze the words and the sayings of Jesus but forget the Person who came to give us eternal “blessing.”

Jan 9, 1959

**Those who “hunger now”**

1. Verse 21 is addressed to the disciples of Jesus who were standing and on whom Jesus has “fixed his eyes.” Matthew 5:6 has hungry and thirsty “for righteousness.” The word “now” is added giving us “hunger now” and is about what will happen to the disciples: “*blessed are you who are hungry now*” – they will be cast out by their own friends. This is the fate of those who follow Jesus. Matthew put it differently, where “the hunger and the thirst” echoed Isaiah 49:10; 65:13.
2. The audience of Matthew must have been Jews and the old tradition that Matthew wrote in Aramaic gives us a good hint for the use of the word, “righteousness” that it means God’s truth, the truth of God’s kingdom, his reign as the King.

**Those who weep**

This corresponds to Matthew 5:4. Mourning for Zion will end with consolation (Isa 61:2). The coming of the Messiah will end the mourning. Laughter is a very rare verb in the NT but common in the OT (e.g. [Ecclesiastes 3:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ecclesiastes+3%3A4&version=NASB) – *A time to weep and a time to laugh; A time to mourn and a time to dance*).

**Verse 22** – *Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they outlaw you, and denounce you, and reject your name as evil, for the son of Man’s sake.”*

Here it is no longer rejection but hatred. Disciples are:

- Hated

- Outlawed

- Denounced

- Rejected

We can see that this is what Jesus himself will face in his ministry and later in the book of Acts when Stephen was stoned. Jesus says the reason is, “for the son of Man’s sake”, that is, the rejection of the teaching of Jesus.

**Time to rejoice**

In verse 23. the literal meaning is “ rejoice in that day and leap with joy.” “That day” is like “now,” when in the ministry of the apostles, they will see the “signs” of the kingdom.

The use of the Greek verb ***skirtan*** which was used early in Luke (1:41, 44) is not just “rejoice” but “leap.”

**Reward**

The Greek word ***misthos*** is widely used in the NT and mean literally payment or salary. Here the figurative meaning is obvious, for “heaven” Is not a payment.

**Changing the Discourse – ‘Woe to the Rich’**

1. Such a saying made Clement of Alexandria (150-215AD), write a book “*Who is the Rich Man who is Saved?”* to explain the encounter of the rich young man with the Lord (“*It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.*” – Mark 10:25).

2. Richness is not an obstacle but putting richness as the source of life to the extent that the new life in the kingdom has no place.

3. Richness can become the center of our life and with richness, more worries.

**A Note from Philemon**

**Where is the center of your life?**

Jesus is the Center of true life that is where the eternal is preferred to the earthly. From the center that is Jesus, we have to reach a ring. We create this ring or the circle by our dreams, our plans, our attitude, our convictions and our expectations.

But when Jesus becomes the center, we create with him a new center.

When there is a center other than Jesus we gravitate to it by our ego toward this self-created ring. But the ring changes if Jesus becomes the center.

I was told that some draw a circle first and then look for a center, but our love for Jesus changes the center and Jesus become the center and with Jesus we draw a different circle from that of the society.

**The Woes in verses 24-26**

 The woes are too many in the OT. They are all a warning of:

1. Having the opposite of what is expected – hunger rather than enough to eat, weeping rather than laughter.

2. More important is the woe if people speak well for they have tried to do the same with the prophets. A prophet is expecting to say the truth, but truth is not what many want to hear. They like false prophets.

***Pope’s Notes***

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