

The Gospel of Luke

Blessings and Woes

Luke 6:20-26¹

Suggested Memory Verse: Prov 1:10

1. The Beatitude and the Gospel of Christ.

Those who have much in this life find it difficult to receive the gospel (Matt 19:24) while those who lack much in this world more readily receive the gospel (1 Cor 1:26ff; James 2:5). Jesus' message to His disciples (cf. Matt 5:1) not that poverty inherently sanctifies or that riches innately condemn, but that lasting riches and satisfaction follow a time of spiritual poverty and hunger.

2. Know What is Really Important. (vs.20-26a)

A. Blessing to the Poor, Woe to the Rich (vs.20, 24)

Both poverty and riches give opportunity to sin against God (cf. Prov 30:7-9). The important thing is not to focus on your material welfare, but on your spiritual poverty (cf. Matt 5:3). Jesus had proclaimed that His message of salvation was for the poor, the prisoners, the blind, and the oppressed (Luke 4:18-19).

B. Blessing to the Hungry, Woe to the Well Fed (vs.21a, 25a)

Daily bread is a common concern for all people (Matt 6:25ff), and one about which we are to pray to God (Matt 6:11). We must trust God to provide for our physical needs, and we are to be those characterized by a hunger for God Himself (cf. Matt 5:6, 20).

C. Blessing to those Weeping, Woe to those Laughing (vs.21b, 25b)

Laughter or weeping are consequences of one's own spiritual poverty or riches. Those who weep and mourn over their own sin (cf. Matt 5:4) will find their comfort in God (Matt 11:30), whereas those who laugh with contentment now will find themselves without hope (cf. Luke 12:19)

D. Blessing to those Maligned, Woe to those Well Spoken Of (vs.22, 26a)

It is a good thing to seek and to obtain a good name (Prov 22:1; Ecc 7:1), but not at the cost of righteousness. For is much better to be maligned and mistreated for the sake of Jesus Christ (cf. Col 1:24; 1 Pet 2:12, 20; 4:13).

3. Understand How You Will Be Received (vs.23, 26b)

The godly of every age have endured the scorn and animosity of their contemporaries. Every true follower of Jesus must be equipped with the truth that we will not be received well by our culture (John 15:20; Matt 10:24-25).

¹ Matthew's Gospel is the only other gospel to include the beatitudes (Matt 5:1-11)