

Luke's Gospel: Son of Man, Seeker of Men.

Part 14: The Blessed Life



Today's Big Question: What kind of person does God truly bless?

Luke 6:17-23 (NKJV): Jesus Heals a Great Multitude¹⁷ And He came down with them and stood on a level place 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, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases,¹⁸ 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.

The Beatitudes

²⁰ Then He lifted up His eyes toward 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 be filled.

Blessed *are you* who weep now,
For you shall laugh.

²² Blessed are you when men hate you,
And when they exclude you,
And revile *you*, and cast out your name as evil,
For the Son of Man's sake.

²³ Rejoice in that day and leap for joy!
For indeed your reward *is* great in heaven,
For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

Let's jump into the message:

The Blessed Life. What kind of life does God bless?

What does the term blessed mean? It means to be spiritually fortunate, experiencing joy and happiness, enjoying the favor of God. It means that you are worthy of a "congratulations!"

The Prologue of the Blessed life: Being made _____ again (v. 17-19).

- The disciples vs the crowds—what is the difference between the two groups?
- Following Jesus means being made whole again (v. 17b-19). What types of things were keeping the people from experiencing the blessed life?
 - 1) **Disease**-physical sickness was never part of God's original design. One day Jesus will completely take away all sickness and suffering. Jesus' healing ministry was a preview of the coming Kingdom of Heaven. One day, all believers will be completely healed of all sickness in the presence of the Lord.
 - 2) **Demonic Activity**-While Christians cannot be demon possessed, they can be demon oppressed. Jesus did come to cast out demons from those who were lost. He wanted to strip away all evil influences that would keep His followers from experiencing God's love and goodness.

Biblical Insight: Many are familiar with the Hebrew word shalom or "peace." The common western definition of peace is — the absence of conflict or war — but in Hebrew it means so much more. "Shalom" is taken from the root word shalam, which means, "to be safe in mind, body, or estate." It speaks of completeness, fullness, or a type of wholeness that encourages you to give back — to generously re-pay something in some way. True biblical shalom refers to an inward sense of completeness or wholeness. Although it can describe the absence of war, a majority of biblical references refer to an inner completeness and tranquility. In Israel today, when you greet someone or say goodbye, you say, Shalom. You are

literally saying, "may you be full of well-being" or, "may health and prosperity be upon you."¹

1. God blesses those who realize their true spiritual _____ (v. 20).

Scripture Insight: 6:20-23 See Mt 5:3-12 and notes. In Matthew's account Jesus speaks of poverty "in spirit" (Mt 5:3) and hunger "for righteousness" (Mt 5:6). Luke places a greater emphasis on material poverty as well. Those who are poor tend to look more strongly to God to meet all their needs.²

- The word poor here can mean two different things: _____ poverty or _____ poverty (see Matthew 5:3).

Scripture Insight: 6:20 *you poor*. Christ's concern for the poor and outcasts is one of Luke's favorite themes (see Introduction: Historical and Theological Themes). Luke used a personal pronoun ("you") where Matt. 5:3 employed a definite article ("the"); Luke was underscoring the tender, personal sense of Christ's words. A comparison of the two passages reveals that Christ was dealing with something more significant than mere material poverty and wealth, however. The poverty spoken of here refers primarily to a sense of one's own spiritual impoverishment.³

2. God blesses those who stay _____ for God (v. 21a).

- **Hungry NOW**-Notice that this hunger is present and also temporary.
- Do you remember a time in your life where you were on fire for God and hungry for Him? What happened to that hunger?

James 4:8-Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded.

3. God blesses those who presently _____ for God (v. 21b).

- **Weep NOW**--Notice that this sorrow is present and also temporary.
- Have you ever shed tears because you were a Christian? Has anyone ever considered you an enemy or a nuisance because of your faith?
- Notice that this suffering is for the Son of Man's sake...it doesn't count to your credit if you are presently suffering for simply being a

¹ Quote from Doug Hershey, <http://firm.org.il/learn/the-meaning-of-shalom/>.

² Quote from NIV Study Bible.

³ Quote from John MacArthur Study Bible.

jerk or because you have poor people skills. God doesn't bless unkindness on our part.

- Did you know that God sees every tear that you shed?

Psalm 56:8-You number my wanderings;

Put my tears into Your bottle;

Are they not in Your book?

- The blessed life realizes this truth: Tears may be my lot for Today, but Treasure awaits my tomorrow!

Weeping may endure for a night, but joy...comes in the morning! Tears may be my lot for Today, but Treasure awaits my Tomorrow! Don't give up...let up...shut up...but keep it up...until Jesus takes you up!

4. God blesses those who experience _____ because of the _____ of Jesus (v. 22).

- Okay, so what do you do when... all because you are a Christian?
- You remind yourself that you are already blessed...

The Epilogue of the Blessed Life: _____ your reward in _____ before you get to heaven (v. 23).

- Rejoice now in your suffering—
- Leap for joy—It's time to throw a dance party in the midst of all my drama!

Take Home Truth: The blessed life is one that focuses on the joy of heaven above the sorrows of this world.

Action Steps:

- *Going through pain right now? Memorize 2-3 verses that will remind you to God's promises to you in the midst of your pain.*
- *Struggling with depression right now? Start a spiritual journal and record your struggles and the Scriptures that you are clinging to.*

Make a decision this week? Please let us know on your Connection Card.

Preview for next Sunday: "The Disciples' Playbook!" from Luke 6:24-36.