

## LUKE 6:20-26 - THE JOYS OF BEING POOR, HUNGRY AND HATED

Here in Luke, Jesus begins explaining the radical difference between Kingdom Life and secular life. His point is that if we're going to be God's children we must be properly instructed as to what God desires from each one of us. To be a part of God's Kingdom means that His subjects live differently than the secular world around them. We must have a God centred worldview. God has different priorities and purposes than the world has. Jesus knows that living for God's glory and by His standards doesn't happen automatically or come naturally. We all must be taught what God desires from His people and then begin the hard work of conforming and submitting our lives to His sovereign rule.

In this first lesson, Jesus pronounces a blessing on those people who are poor, hungry, weeping, and hated. Our culture would say that the rich, full, happy and liked are those who have been blessed.

He says the same thing in a negative way to make sure we get the point. What He does is declare woes on the ones who are rich, full, happy, and liked. Ultimately, the question is...Will you be happy with the world's riches or will you hold out for a greater treasure, namely, Jesus Christ?

**1. Christ Centred Poverty** The first thing we should understand is that Jesus is not saying that all poor people are blessed. What He is saying is that His poor disciples are blessed. This is poverty accompanied by grace. This is being poor in worldly possessions but being rich toward God. This is forsaking an earthly treasure and laying up treasure in heaven. This type of poverty is making wise investments in eternity.

Jesus is speaking to His disciples and declaring a blessing on them because they have made certain sacrifices from a worldly standard to be one of His students. From a monetary perspective they have given up much to follow Christ. So Jesus is encouraging them to continue because while they may be poor now on earth, in heaven they're rich.

Jesus also doesn't say, *poor in spirit* as He does on the Sermon on the Mount. He has a different purpose here and a different point to make. Here, He is speaking about money. He is speaking in terms of wealth. One can be wealthy while on earth and one can be wealthy in heaven. Rarely does one receive both. So, we must ask ourselves, are we rich toward God? Have we laid up treasure in heaven? Have we made wise investments? Or are our investments of a temporal nature, only for here and now?

To His disciples, He passes eternal blessing. He declares them blessed because they are genuine and giving up everything to follow Him is proof that their treasure is not to be found in earthly riches but in heavenly riches.

In the same way, Jesus passes eternal judgment on all who find their treasure in earthly things and not in Him when He declares a woe on them. Literally, cursed are you if you seek happiness in monetary wealth.

**2. Christ Centred Hunger** Luke is dealing with physical hunger. Where in Matthew's report of the Sermon on the Mount, he writes, *hungers for righteousness*. In the first century to follow Christ meant often times one would be hungry.

Jesus is encouraging the disciple to keep going. Don't cave in because you're doing so well. Remember, you may be hungry

now, but there is coming a day when God will forever satisfy you with riches untold and you will never be hungry ever again.

**3. Christ Centred Sadness** Jesus knew that these disciples would be put to the test. He is building strong persevering men and women. He is getting them ready because poverty, hunger, and weeping are coming their way and He doesn't want them to be surprised when it does.

When events in our lives cause sadness remember this life is only a vapour compared to eternity and this life is lived in the realm of sinfulness and in the realm of the curse.

Think biblically about sadness and even use it to remind yourself that in heaven no one will ever be sad again. Always remember, Jesus is not saying everyone who weeps is blessed; only those who weep and are in Christ are blessed.

**4. Christ Centred Affections** Jesus is using the secular world as the litmus test for kingdom blessings. If the lost world hates you because of the Gospel then you have a great reward coming your way in the kingdom. God will reward you.

Remember, Jesus isn't saying that everyone who is hated will receive a reward, only those who are hated because of Jesus and the Gospel. When the day comes when people hate you because of the Son of Man, leap for joy because your reward is great in heaven.

We should pause and consider how we're doing. Are we poor, hungry, and hated because of the Gospel or are we rich, filled, and liked?

Let's get to the heart of what Jesus is getting at as we consider these issues. The **truth Jesus taught is we must be willing to give up everything if need be for the sake of Christ and the Gospel.** It is possible to have this attitude if we understand that in reality we're not giving anything up at all. We are trading temporal comfort for eternal joy.

Jesus wants us to learn that while things of this world look really good they are not really good. He really wants us to see what the good life looks like vs. what looks like the good life but really isn't.

Jesus is building a Kingdom army that is ready for the struggles of this world. He is amassing a people who will not fall for the schemes of Satan. He is putting together genuine disciples who when given the choice between riches now or riches later are wise investors and hold out for real riches and don't fall for the fake stuff Satan has.

Remember, as believers this is not our real home. Our real home is in heaven. Our citizenship is in the Kingdom of God and God's ways are not the ways of this current fallen, cursed world.

I pray that we're living by kingdom realities now even though its fullness is yet to be seen.

AMEN