

'Luke' - Extra Teaching Points #9

Luke 6:20-36 (NASB95)

Luke 6:20-26

And turning His gaze **toward His disciples**, He began to say, "**Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.**" ²¹ "**Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.**" ²² "**Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man.**" ²³ "Be glad in that day and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven. For in the same way their fathers used to treat the prophets." ²⁴ "**But woe to you who are rich, for you are receiving your comfort in full.**" ²⁵ "**Woe to you who are well-fed now, for you shall be hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.**" ²⁶ "**Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for their fathers used to treat the false prophets in the same way.**"

Similarities/Differences between the Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon on the plain:

- Each starts with 8 Statements.
 - Matthew has 8 beatitudes.
 - Luke has 4 beatitudes, and 4 woes.
- Matthew's beatitudes ([Matt 5:3-10](#)) seem to be more about *spiritual circumstances*.
- Luke's seem to include *social and economic circumstances*.

Q: In [vs. 20](#) it looks like Jesus is commending poor people. What is the advantage of being poor?

- Jesus is commending the poor people He was talking to... but not necessarily **all** poor people.
 - Jesus said, "**Blessed are YOU poor,**" not "**Blessed are THE poor.**"
- **Jesus is addressing His disciples.**
 - Jesus may be saying, "*Although you are poor, you are blessed because you have the Kingdom of God.*"
- Jesus is not saying that all poor people are blessed, or that all rich people are in trouble.
 - Poor people often realized they had no one but God to rely on, though not all poor people followed Jesus.
 - There were rich people who did follow Jesus ([Matt 27:57](#)), though it was rare ([Matt 19:23-24](#)).

Extra Info on the "Woes":

[Luke 6:20-26](#) could be a general statement of reversal of fortune, or it could be a targeted statement about the destruction of Jerusalem that was coming.

- Disciples of Jesus were openly discriminated against in Jerusalem.
 - They were often hungry and disadvantaged, but being followers of Jesus, they knew the Lord's prophesy about the destruction of Jerusalem ([Matt 24](#)), and left the city when the Romans came.
- The Jews who did not follow Jesus (many of whom were rich and influential) ran into Jerusalem for protection, vainly hoping to hang on to their wealth and status.
 - Josephus reports that starvation inside Jerusalem was so severe that people resorted to cannibalism before the Romans finally took the city.
 - The Romans slaughtered most of the old and very young who were left alive. Those who could be sold as slaves were taken back to Rome.
 - The money from the sale of Jews taken as slaves, and the wealth taken from the city and its inhabitants was used to build the Roman coliseum that still stands today.

Luke 6:27-36

*“But I say to you who hear, **love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,** ²⁸ **bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.** ²⁹ *“Whoever hits you on the cheek, offer him the other also; and whoever takes away your coat, do not withhold your shirt from him either.* ³⁰ *“Give to everyone who asks of you, and whoever takes away what is yours, do not demand it back. ³¹ **“Treat others the same way you want them to treat you.** ³² *“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ *“If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ *“If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners in order to receive back the same amount. ³⁵ *“But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. ³⁶ **“Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”**”******

The heart of this sermon is ‘the need for love’.

- Jesus stresses that his followers must love the unlovely as well as those who appeal to them.
- There were several words for ‘love’ in Greek.
 - Jesus was not asking for **storgē** (natural affection), or for **erōs** (romantic love), or for **philia** (the love of friendship).
 - Jesus was speaking of **agapē**, which means **love even of the unlovely**.
 - This is a love that is not drawn out of you because of something in or about the person causing or justifying your love.
 - **This is a love that comes from the fact that the lover chooses to be a loving person.**

*“But I say to you who hear, **love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,** ²⁸ **bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.**”*

In [vs. 27 -28](#) Jesus tells us how to identify our enemies and how to respond to them.

- An enemy is one who **hates** you.
 - The word “hate” is the Greek word **miseō**, which means: *to regard with less affection, love less, or esteem less,*
- An enemy is one who **curse**s you.
 - The word “curse” is the Greek word **kataraomai**, which means: *to wish evil to and/or call down evil upon.*
- An enemy is one who **mistreat**s you.
 - The word “mistreat” is the Greek word **epēreazō**, which means: *to harass, insult, or abuse.*

Q: How are we supposed to love our enemies?

- If they **hate** us, (*look down on us, dismiss us, or ignore us*), we are to **do good to them**.
- If they **curse** us, (*say bad things about us, or hope bad things happen to us*), we are to **say good things about them, and hope good things happen to them**.
- If they **mistreat** us, (*harass, insult, or take advantage of us*), we are to **pray for them**.

²⁹ *“Whoever hits you on the cheek, offer him the other also; and whoever takes away your coat, do not withhold your shirt from him either.”*

Jesus Illustrates How To Love Our Enemies In 2 Different Ways:

1. How to love someone who hurts you (*hits you on the cheek*)

- The parallel verse to this is [Matt 5:39-40](#). However, Matthew uses the word “slap” where Luke uses the word “hit.”

- In Luke, Jesus is speaking of a punch to the side of the jaw rather than a light slap in the face.
 - The natural reaction to such a blow is to strike back hard.
- Jesus is commanding us to avoid our instinct to retaliate, not our instinct for self-preservation.
 - When Jesus tells his followers to *offer the other* side of the jaw, **He is speaking about an attitude.**
 - A *literal turning* of the other side of the face is not always the best way of fulfilling this command.
 - **When we receive injury to our pride, we must not seek revenge, but be ready to accept another such injury to our pride.**

2. How to love someone who wants to take advantage of you (*takes away your coat*)

- Instead of fighting it out in court, give your adversary what he wants... give him more than he wants.
 - **There may be times when this could literally be what you should do; but Jesus is again speaking about an attitude.**
 - You should be more concerned about him and his claims than you are about yours.

³⁰ *"Give to everyone who asks of you, and whoever takes away what is yours, do not demand it back.*

Q: In vs. 30 we are told to give to everyone who asks. Is this a literal command?

- In [2Thess 3:10](#) we are told not to give food to someone who will not work.
 - If Jesus' command to give to whoever asks you is literal, then we have a contradiction between Jesus and Paul.
 - If we gave to everyone who asks, we would squander God's resources and be poor stewards.
- In [vs. 29-30](#) it seems obvious that Jesus is using hyperbole to teach us about having a loving attitude toward our enemies.

³¹ *"Treat others the same way you want them to treat you.*

Q: Why is this called the golden rule?

- It is the gold standard of behavior for those in Christ!
 - We can all get caught up in the details and have trouble knowing what to do in a given situation.
 - But if we can remember to **treat others** the way we would want to be treated, instead of focusing on **how we are treated**, we will usually find the right path.

³² *"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.*

³³ *"If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.*

³⁴ *"If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners in order to receive back the same amount.*

Q: If you only love those who love you, only do good to those who do good to you, only lend to those you know will pay you back, what kind of reward should you expect?

- Probably the same reward sinners who don't love God receive!

³⁵ *"But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men.*

Q: Why should we behave so contrary to human nature in regard to those who choose to be our enemies?

- Because Jesus greatly rewards those who act like children of God!
- **God is kind to the ungrateful and the evil... Are you?**

³⁶ *“Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”*

Q: The parallel verse to [Luke 6:36](#) is [Matt 5:48](#). What is the connection between being perfect like God is, and being merciful like God is?

- Being perfect is about being complete, comprehensive, or mature.
 - Jesus is calling us to be complete, comprehensive, and mature in our love... because that is how God is.
- For us to be complete or comprehensive in our love we will have to become merciful like God is.
 - **To be merciful is to not insist on getting your rights!**
 - For us to be like God, we have to choose not to insist on our rights, and at the same time, choose to honor the rights of others.

Q: Does Jesus really expect us to live up to these high standards?

- Some people claim Jesus' standards here are too high for humans.
 - They claim that Jesus wants us to see how high the standards are, and just accept our unworthiness and be grateful for His mercy.
- [Matt 7:21-27](#) makes it very clear Jesus expects us to actually live this way!

Follow Up Assignment

Q: In [vs. 27-28](#) Jesus tells us how to identify our enemies and how to respond to them. Do you know someone who hates you, curses you, and/or mistreats you?

- Write down the name of each of your enemies, and why each one is your enemy.
- Next to each name, write down how you respond to each one.

Q: Do you identify enemies differently than Jesus does?

Q: Do you respond to your enemies the way Jesus commands?

- If not, what needs to change?
- Share the list you just created with your discipleship group, and ask for help and encouragement to love your enemies.

Q: How merciful are you?

- What is one thing you can do to start being merciful like God is?