

Luke 6:20-26

The Blessed Life

Well Good morning church.

Those Christmas songs are so nice, this is such a wonderful season, of remembering the birth of Christ.

Now most of us come into this season on a note of reflection, looking back a year, and contemplating the ups and downs we had.

We count our blessings and even consider the painful lessons we learned over the year.

Now if we are not careful, we can look to this world to set our standard on which we scale our life's blessings.

But as we will see this morning, this world's scale is greatly out of balance in terms of what true blessings are.

Now what would you consider a blessed life this morning?

One of the definitions for Blessed, is "Blissfully happy or contented."

What do you need in this life, right now that would make you happy?

Some might say, "Just a little more money, or a lot more money."

"If I just lost 12 more pounds, then I would be happy."

Oh, some of you ladies might be saying, “That’s easy pastor, a shopping spree, guilt free, that would make me happy.”

A new job, a new car, a new purse?

What makes you happy or what would you consider the Blessed life?

According to one prominent television pastor today.

He believes all you have to do is “Start calling yourself healed, happy, whole, blessed, and prosperous. Stop talking to God about how big your mountains are, and start talking to your mountains about how big your God is!”

— Joel Osteen, [Your Best Life Now: 7 Steps to Living at Your Full Potential](#)

Is Mr. Osteen correct, is health and prosperity the blessed life?

Well, this morning, we will begin to look at the Greatest Preacher to ever live, and we will look at the beginning of one of Jesus’ Greatest Sermons.

This recorded writing has altered the course of History.

As Jesus takes this world’s philosophies, the fallen and prevalent ideas of our world, and He completely reverses it all.

This sermon is so profound, that we will be spending a few weeks unlocking the uncomfortable Truths that are found within it.

I must warn, scripture is very provocative when we hold it up against our lives, and our hearts.

We will see Jesus will challenge every aspect of our motives.

We will be in Luke 6:20-26 this morning...

But let's pray, before we set the setting of this great sermon.

So let us remember what has just taken place.

Jesus has just called His Twelve Apostles, and they have been set apart for a unique calling.

Last time we were together, we saw their beginning in the ministry in their new capacity.

Luke 6:17-19 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.

So the Twelve are thrust into the thick of ministry, with really no training or special instructions.

Now the Apostles are also surrounded by a multitude of other disciples here, and some suggest over a

hundred such learners and followers of Jesus have gathered to Him.

We also see in this crowd those from the port cities in the North, and from the villages in the south.

These are people who are searching, curious about the teaching, and even some here are hoping to be healed.

Even the unclean and vial spirits were releasing their hold on their captives and fleeing from Jesus.

And this was an electrifying moment, as we see that even at Jesus' touch these suffering people were instantly healed.

This is a high moment in the ministry of Jesus and His Twelve Apostles.

And it will be here, on the plain, that Jesus will teach His disciples about the correct understanding of the blessed life.

Kent Hughes calls this "The Sermon on the Level."

Because here on this flat piece of land, Jesus levels with His followers.

Now Matthew has a similar sermon, referred to as "The Sermon on the Mount."

Where Matthew will record three chapters of a similar teaching.

Some think they are the same sermon, however, there are some great differences, and it is more likely, Jesus

teaches in two different locations, and it is even more likely that Jesus preached this very sermon in many different settings, and in different ways, with only two unique accounts recorded for us.

Jesus was an itinerate Preacher, going through Israel preaching the message of His Kingdom that was at hand.

So the differences are not contradictions, just evidences of two separate sermons.

It is clear this sermon is preached on the plain, whereas Matthew records.

Matt 5:1 He went up on a mountain,

Matthew will have 9 Beatitudes, whereas Luke records only 5, Matthew includes some positive Blessings, whereas Luke deals with only the negative Beatitudes.

And Luke also includes 4 Woes, that Matthew does not have.

It is likely that Jesus used many different occasions to teach and impress upon His disciples the code of conduct that they are to live by here in this world.

These Kingdom Laws will set them apart from this world drastically, as they are directly opposed to the basic understanding of this world, that is ruled by Satan.

So let's read through our text this morning, and we will come back through and discuss what it means for us today, being Jesus' disciples in our own generation.

The Beatitudes

(Matt 5:1-12)

6:20 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.

Jesus Pronounces Woes

24 "But woe to you who are rich,

For you have received your consolation.

25 Woe to you who are full,

For you shall hunger.

Woe to you who laugh now,

For you shall mourn and weep.

26 Woe to you when all men speak well of you,

For So did their fathers to the false prophets.

So in verse 20, we see the intended audience of this sermon.

The Beatitudes

(Matt 5:1-12)

6:20 Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples,

This is very important to point out here.

This teaching was for the disciples; however, the others were invited to listen in.

So often, we hold the world up to the standards of this sermon, and we expect unbelievers to live according to what we are called to live out.

But please make a very important note if you are a note taker.

This is for the believer in Jesus Christ, the unbeliever must first be regenerated to understand fully this code of conduct.

There is no Gospel message in the Sermon on the Plain or the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew.

This is not a message for salvation, this is a message to Jesus' disciples, it is a detail of what our conduct should be while here on this earth.

Now, remember Jesus has just called His disciples from their jobs, from their livelihood, from their sources of income.

We read in the chapter prior, that **Luke 5:11 they forsook all and followed Him.**

So now, Jesus looks at these very, what might be considered, irresponsible disciples and Jesus says in verse 20...

and said:

"Blessed are you poor,

For yours is the kingdom of God.

This is radical preaching!

The teachers of the day associated material wealth and comfort as a sign of God's blessing.

Now, that isolated most of the Hebrews, because only a small percent lived comfortably under the Roman Oppression.

The religious elite were fat and corrupt, and had many indulgences.

Maybe the traitors within the Jewish Nation, who were willing to sacrifice loyalty and honor to their own

nation, they found favor with Rome in their compromise.

But most in Jesus' day were suffering in poverty and were struggling day to day to get food on their families table.

And Jesus against all popular belief asserts here that it is the poor that are blessed!

What is Jesus trying to say here, doesn't the Old Testament record, the scriptures that He knows so well, promise material blessings to an obedient Israel.

If Israel obeyed the Lord's Law, they were assured victory on the battlefield, they were assured houses they did not build, they were promised fruitful crops, and many children.

They were given the promises of security and safety if they remained loyal to the Lord.

Now for those of you who have been journeying with us on Wednesday Night through the Old Testament you have seen the perilous ups and downs of the Nation of Israel under the Law.

You see God did bless them in times of devotion to Him, but it gets so heartbreaking, because every time those blessings came to Israel, they became complacent in their commitment to God.

Their material comforts and blessings in the end would be their downfall, it was in those seasons of well-being, that they would fail to see their own need for God.

There is an Old Testament writer, Agur, who in Proverbs seen the plight of abundant blessing, and he sought a more balanced path, he wrote his prayer in

Prov. 30:7-9

7 Two things I request of You

(Deprive me not before I die):

8 Remove falsehood and lies far from me;

Give me neither poverty nor riches —

Feed me with the food allotted to me;

9 Lest I be full and deny You,

And say, "Who is the Lord?"

Or lest I be poor and steal,

And profane the name of my God.

This man understands the pitfall of material wealth and the empty pursuit it brings about.

But he also understands the pain of poverty.

There is an element of aching, and hopeless struggle in poverty.

And it is usually the rich, that exploit the poor because of the power of their wealth.

I marvel at how people can be so blind, that the very politicians that declare they are the champions of the poor, they fly around the world in private jets, and charge unheard of amounts to give a speech on their ideals.

It is an exploitation of the poor, and this world's poor usually know nothing of being blessed or happy with such oppression.

But here we are reading this incredible statement by Jesus, "Blessed are you poor, For yours is the Kingdom of God."

Jesus for the first time, has given the bulk of humanity a hope that they have never had prior to His coming.

Remember Jesus' mission here on earth was as recorded in... [Isa 61:1-2](#)

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me,
Because the Lord has anointed Me
To preach good tidings to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,

Jesus was the hope for impoverished humanity.

In fact, Jesus came to this earth to live in poverty, to touch the pain of the poor.

Jesus says in another place... **Luke 9:58 ..."Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."**

Jesus was a homeless Preacher while He lived here on earth.

Jesus came to give hope to the poor, we are told in **2 Cor. 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.**

Jesus is the true champion of the poor.

Now notice here in Luke, Jesus explains that the poor person is blessed not by a change of circumstance here in this life.

He points His impoverished disciples to a future Kingdom.

And each of them would give his life for the ministry of the Gospel.

They would forsake this world, and accept poverty in this world and live for the hope of the next.

They gave all they had in this life, for the hope of a coming Kingdom.

Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the Kingdom of God.

Now, is this monetary poverty only Jesus is talking about?

What is the extent of what Jesus is saying, well Matthew gives us a little more insight when he records Jesus' words as **Matt 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit,** Now spiritual poverty has only a little to do with our material possessions.

I have conversed with a homeless person on many occasion, they have nothing materially, and I have even dragged them out of pushes, and rescued them from ants eating their flesh as they are passed out from a night of debauchery.

And as they come too, I mention our Lord Jesus' Name, and in that materially poor man, comes welling up the pride of a multi-billion dollar business mogul.

And their spirit is so full of pride and self-worth, they begin to mock me and my God.

That man is spiritually rich, he has no need of a Savior.

And at the opposite side of the scale, I have seen an extremely wealthy businessman broken and in tears over his spiritual state without Jesus.

And Jesus has used that man greatly in his humble state.

That man was spiritually poor, and he saw his need for Jesus very clearly.

You see our economic status only has a little to do with our true spiritual poverty.

Blessed are you, when you look at this world, and see no hope in it or its system, when you realize this world is empty and hopeless.

Blessed are you when you are spiritually bankrupt and you can clearly see your need for a Savior.

You see, Jesus has no dealings with the prideful man, the spiritually wealthy, that believe they have no need of help in this life, those types are cast out in the end.

Jesus assures those listening that day, and even us today, when we have nothing to offer in ourselves, when we come to Him empty, when we come broken, then and only then will we find true blessings in this life and more importantly the next.

Now, we live in a prosperous culture, and this is extremely more difficult for us to understand.

We are self-sufficient, capable of working hard, making our own way, we live in a land of opportunity and great comfort.

We must honestly assess ourselves in the light of scripture.

We are rich, comparatively, to the rest of the world.

And those riches, if we are not careful can be our own handicap.

We must continually check our motives and if we are solely making decisions in this life to gain more for

ourselves, to better ourselves, to gain more comfort and ease for ourselves.

We can easily dull our senses to our need by our abundance.

Jesus shows us here that we must continually be reminded of our great need, even if we have much in this life.

We must guard our hearts from being proud of what we have done or what we have, from taking credit for our own temporary comforts.

We must earnestly pursue the humble life.

Jesus the true champion of the poor reminds us, that this life is not the place to make ourselves comfortable.

He says now in verse 21

21 Blessed are you who hunger now,

For you shall be filled.

Once again Matthew gives the fuller, **Matt 5:6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,**

Jesus both physically hungered in the beginning of His ministry, where He pushed His body through starvation, at the 40-day trial from Satan, and He also knew physical thirst upon the cross at the end of His ministry. John 19:28.

But the focus here once again is on a spiritual hunger.

Think of the way the Psalmist spoke in

Ps 42:1-2

As the deer pants for the water brooks,

So pants my soul for You, O God.

2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

When shall I come and appear before God?

We see the picture here of a passionate need for God, His soul thirsts, he has a spiritual hunger.

This hunger comes from the understanding that a life apart from God is no life at all.

Jesus says when we hunger and thirst for righteousness, God will fill us.

The prophet Jeremiah explains God's response to such a soul in need of Him.

Jer. 29:13 And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.

Again, we find this as an affront to our condition today, we are so full physically, we are so content with the status quo, and we usually go no further than our comforts in our seeking God.

We must continually be in this state of hungering and thirsting for His righteousness.

Again Jesus is getting His disciple's hearts and minds off this temporary world, and teaching them heavenly wisdom.

He is challenging the status quo, and challenging their understanding.

This school of thought was radical.

I mean what do we teach our children today, above all else?

To get an education, to get a career, to be successful in this world, to find a comfortable life here.

We train them to chase worldly success.

We teach them that being overwhelmed, over stressed, and medicated with anti-depressants, is the normal way to gain a life that is full meaning.

We teach them to chase the carrot we have been chasing all these years to no avail, we think they will have different results.

And we call this success.

Jesus, is challenging here our version of success, the world's version.

In fact, through all of His teachings, we will find one common theme that He is trying to engrain into His followers, that we must lay down our lives in this world.

We must forsake selfish pursuits, and worldly gains, for the Kingdom that is coming.

Blessed are you when you hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Paul says it this way... Col 3:1-4

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

This is a good scripture to remind yourself of as you leave your house in the morning, “this day should be lived for Him.”

When we gave our lives to Christ, the “Self-god” was put to death, and our minds are to be set on serving Christ, wherever we are.

Jesus continues on...

Blessed are you who weep now,

For you shall laugh.

These disciples will watch their beloved Teacher hang on a cross, and they will be destined to carry His message across the rejecting world.

They will have enormous trials ahead for them in this life.

Great sacrifices will be made, many tears will be shed for the Christian cause.

But once again, they are promised an eternity of joy and praise.

In fact we read of our future inheritance... **Rev 21:4**
That God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

There may be tears in the offering now, but soon, there will be joy, unspeakable joy.

We are told in...

Romans 14:17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

I know many of you who serve here have experienced sorrow, health issues, extreme trials, and you have shed many tears, but know there will be a day when we experience a time without end that is full of joy and rejoicing.

Jesus says you are blessed...

Now He goes on to explain in verses 22-23 of Luke chapter 6...

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.

A sign of a true convert is this world's rejection of you. Our world today hates to hear that God is displeased with their lives.

The world is vicious in its assault and attack against the Truth.

But we are told in...

1 John 3:13 Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.

Persecution should not take us by surprise; we were told it would happen.

I don't know if you remember the first time it happened to you, when this world starting associating you with Jesus, and in turn coming against you for it.

I will never forget the day it happened for me.

I was framing a house there in Lake Havasu with a crew.

I had been sharing with a co-worker.

We called him Lupe D. – You know, he was sharing with me how he and his girlfriend were living with each other.

I expressed to him, the blessings Jessica and I found when we finally got married, and tried to explain that

he was missing out on an greater relationship with his girlfriend.

He claimed he was a Christian, but was very defensive when I told him he was living in sin according to the Bible.

And I'll never forget this moment, because this was the first time in my life, someone else identified me with Christ in a derogatory way.

He said, "Hey man, I believe in God, but I am not a Jesus Freak like you."

Now he was taken back, because he tried to cut me down, he tried to insult me, and make me feel foolish.

And I thought about his words and his tone, and a big ol' smile came over my face as I realized what was happening.

I started praising God right there.

You see I had been called so many horrible names in my life, all of which were true.

And this was the first time I was called something because of my faith in Jesus.

Lupe, was so confused, and he wanted to say more, to get his point across.

I stopped him, "wait a minute bro."

I called my father, while Lupe was appalled at my reaction to his words.

My dad answered, “Dad, guess what? I was just called a Jesus Freak.”

You know, I was in a different state, and he really did not know if I was truly converted, I used to say I changed all the time, and he got skeptical over the years.

But I believe this was the moment, my father was finally convinced I was a Christian.

He said, “Son, that is great!”

Now, that day Lupe was angry with me, but he left that day chewing on the truth he heard, and you know it was not long after that day, that he and his girlfriend went to the courthouse and got married.

I seen him right after this, and the first thing he said was, “Gary, you were right, for the first time in our relationship we feel we have the Lord’s blessing, we have peace now.”

He rejected the truth at first, I could have softened it for him.

I could have told him it was not so bad, I could have downplayed the sin in his life, for the sake of his feelings, this would definitely make it to where I would not be persecuted.

But instead, Lupe heard a Truth that day, that at first offended him, but in the end helped him.

But Jesus says rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, the day when they revile and exclude you, when men hate you, when they laugh at you, for the Son of Man's sake, you are to rejoice.

Because your reward is great!

Look at the end of that verse, Jesus gives the persecuted disciple the same honor as the mighty prophets of old.

Church, if the world around you is getting along with you this morning, then something is greatly wrong with your form of Christianity.

You will not be liked, this world hanged the Holiest Man who ever lived on a brutal cross, and murdered Him heinously.

Why would you think the world should get along with you?

Unless we are compromised.

Do we talk the same way as the world, do we hope for worldly things, do we try to attain worldly comfort?

Jesus said in another place... **John 15:18-20** "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to

you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.

Our message will be counter the prevailing message in this fallen world.

You will stand out, and you will be targets of persecution if you choose to walk with God in this life.

2 Tim 3:12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

Expect it Christian, and understand Jesus told you it would happen beforehand...

He says rejoice, look to your reward in heaven, when they do these things, you know it is Jesus in you they are coming against.

All the way back to the first brothers, the history of the human race has shown persecution against the godly.

Cain being the first persecutor, and Abel being the first Martyr in human history.

And this has been the story ever since.

Well, now Jesus will continue on, and He will turn to pronouncing Woes.

There is nothing more terrifying than Jesus directing a Woe at our lives.

Church, understand the severity of Jesus Word's here.

It is to our great detriment, that our comfortable church culture gives these next verses nothing more

than a short glance, and a gentle amen, without considering the depth of what Jesus is saying.

With each Beatitude Jesus gave, He will now give a corresponding Woe.

Jesus Pronounces Woes

24 "But woe to you who are rich,
For you have received your consolation.

Now, once again, we must be careful not to condemn all who are wealthy.

It is when those riches become the place of our security and well-being, that the human heart is in trouble.

We see in Mark, another time that Jesus speaks on this issue, and it brings a little more clarity to this Woe.

Mark 10:23-27 Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" 24 And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, "Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God! 25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." 26 And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, "Who then can be saved?"

27 But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible."

It is this trusting in riches, this focus on gaining security in this life that is the issue.

When earthly wealth becomes a person's sole ambition, that person is doomed.

And in this world, many have chased this endless pursuit and fallen for its allure.

And some find success, and when they do, Jesus says they have received their payment in full.

And their riches will be their only consolation.

But in eternity, they will have nothing of real value to look forward to.

Paul even reveals this pursuit has even blinded some in the church, he says in **1 Tim 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.**

You see it is not money in itself, it is the love of money that is the issue.

When greed and selfish gain become your motivation, then you have become blinded to what really matters.

And we see throughout the scriptures, that there are believers who have money, but what separates them

from those who have no eternal reward, is their generosity.

Greed is the hallmark of the degenerate, whereas generosity and giving are the hallmark of the redeemed.

God does entrust wealth to His children, but they are only stewards, and I have seen those with much in this life be so generous, and God uses them as a funnel for His good, and they have joy and happiness in their wealth.

I have also seen the miser, who hoards it all to himself, and his wealth makes him miserable, and his reward is his gain in this life.

And this Woe is directed at the miser indeed.

Jesus says next in verse 25

25 Woe to you who are full,

For you shall hunger.

When faced with the reality of eternity, those who have placed their trust in earthly goods, will suddenly discover how desperately poor they are.

Those who have set their hearts on earthly delicacies, are going to discover they have been stuffed so full here, that they had no desire to think of higher virtues.

These gluttons will face an eternal agonizing hunger that will never be satisfied.

Those who fattened themselves with no acknowledgment or thanksgiving toward God will pay an eternal price.

The torment will be unimaginable.

Then Jesus says...

Woe to you who laugh now,
For you shall mourn and weep.

We see the same eternal damnation comes to those who choose now to “revel in silly merriment, while they reject God and His Word and never weep about their sinful condition.” Hendrickson

In eternity, their weeping will never cease.

This is contrasted with, Blessed are those who mourn now, we will be comforted.

Now it is interesting when you become a Christian, when the Holy Spirit takes up residence inside you.

One of the things I noticed early on in my conversion, was the new emotions I had.

I was touched by things I had never cared for before, I was moved to action toward needs I never cared about before, I mourned over lost souls.

It was a radical thing that took place in my heart, I had spent much of my life, living passionately for myself, my own pleasures, my own happiness, my own comfort.

I was always on the look for a good time to escape to. I wanted to party, laugh and get lost in the noise and celebration of the world.

But you see that passion dies when you are converted...

You see this world for what it is, empty.

We are now called to weep over the lost souls around us, our hearts should ache at the reality of the eternal flame that awaits those without Christ.

We should see this world's misery, how the weak are victimized and exploited, how the children are forsaken and abused, over the woman who are mistreated... adultery, divorce, betrayals, depression, the lonely condition of our youth.

The church is called to act to be moved into a response.

We should be burdened down by the reality of those who laugh now, because unless they find Christ, they will suffer God's wrath for all eternity.

Their tears will never be wiped away.

And finally, Jesus says in verse 26...

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

When all men speak well of you than surely you are not taking a stand on truth.

John Philips says “We can be sure if all men praise us, we have not touched the raw places in their conscience. We have not denounced their favorite sins. We are in danger of endorsing their sins by our silence.”

This is surely most difficult in our society where pluralism reigns, where there is no absolute truth.

Our world today holds feelings above truth, and we live in fear of pleasing people.

It is getting so ridiculous and out of control, I was just informed, at one of our local high schools, a young girl believed that she was a cat.

And the faculty must now give her a special education, that is geared for her identity as a cat.

They cannot tell her she is a little girl, they are forced to lie to her, to avoid offending her.

Her teachers must treat her like a cat.

Now, you may think this is ridiculous this morning, and if you do, you are in the minority.

Because most support these kinds of things, especially those in power.

This is the absurdity that our society is reaching, there is no absolute truth.

Understand you will not be popular if you hold that our God is the One True God, you will be hated, you will be mocked, and you will be ridiculed.

But, Woe to you, Jesus says, when all men speak well of you.

The key word here of course is “all.”

A person cannot be pleasing to everyone without sacrificing some principle here or there.

The false prophets were people like this, they uttered words that were pleasing to the people.

They were praised by the kings, because they predicted prosperous times, and spoke exactly what people wanted to hear.

Understand popularity is not an assurance that a person is speaking truthfully.

Human flattery does not please God, although some can fill up whole arenas of people to hear such flattery.

Troubles lay ahead for a person who chases after the crowd's praise rather than being concerned with God's truths.

Church, understand something, I know we did not choose to be born in this time, and in this affluent culture.

I understand from the moment we were born in this society, we have been bombarded with materialism, and taught to look out first for number one.

We are taught to chase success, fame, and notoriety.

We idolize movie stars, music icons, sports heroes, and the wealthy.

And it is easy to say that there is a greater challenge for us today in our particular society to see the truth of what really matters.

Jesus just dismantled our culture today, and maybe it seemed offensive to some, or convicting for others.

But understand this, the heartbeat of Christianity, is laying down our lives, taking up our cross and following Jesus.

This entails a life of sacrifice, a life lived for God and for others.

The problem with those Jesus pronounced His Woes toward, is they closed their eyes to the needs of others, and lived for the temporary pleasures of this world.

Understand something, we all have a destiny and an appointment that cannot be avoided.

One thing is for certain for everyone in this room this morning, will one day meet death.

We get one life to live, that will affect our eternity.

C.T. Studd wrote a poem that captured the heart of what matters here in this life.

It has a final stanza that reads....

Only One Life, Twill Soon Be Past.

Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.
And when I am dying, how happy I'll be,
If the lamp of my life has been burned out for Thee

The heart of Jesus' sermon as we will see in the weeks to come, is to show that a life lived with eternity in focus, is truly the blessed life.

And Jesus tells His disciples, that His true followers, even if poor, hungry, weeping, or rejected, they will be blessed in the end.

We are challenged to live for Him, for Truth, no matter the cost, because the reward is great...

A life lived for Christ is the Blessed Life.

Let's pray...

These men are here to minister to you this morning, please come up and get prayer, if the pursuit of this world has left you empty this morning, come to Jesus this morning, you will find in Him, the peace you are looking for.

These men desire to minister to you this morning.