

CONVERSATION GUIDE

1. Take 5-10 minutes to discuss last week's sermon.

READ Luke 6:12-16**DISCUSS and REFLECT**

In verse 12 we read that Jesus "spent the night praying to God" before he made the decision to choose the 12 apostles.

What is your regular practice of prayer?

While living in a busy world, what practical steps can we take to increase the amount of time that we are in prayer?

READ Luke 6:17-28**DISCUSS and REFLECT**

"These verses are called the Beatitudes, from the Latin word meaning "blessing." They describe what it means to be Christ's follower, give standards of conduct, and contrast Kingdom values with worldly values, showing what Christ's followers can expect from the world and what God will give them" (LASB). These verses are part of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount which many believe is not one sermon but "the essence of all that Jesus continuously and habitually taught his disciples" (Barclay).

When we combine the blessings and woes from this passage, it presents an interesting and thought provoking contrast.

²⁰ Looking at his disciples, he said:

"Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

²⁴ "But woe to you who are rich,
for you have already received your comfort.

Matthew Henry writes that "you are blessed in your poverty, it shall be no prejudice at all to your happiness; nay, you are blessed for it, all your losses shall be abundantly made up to you, for yours is the kingdom of God, all the comforts and graces of his kingdom here and all the glories and joys of his kingdom hereafter; yours it shall be, nay, yours it is."

Here we have a blessing to the poor or "poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3), and "a woe to them that are rich, that is, that trust in riches, that have abundance of this world's wealth, and, instead of serving God with it, serve their lusts with it; woe to them, for they have received their consolation, that which they placed their happiness in, and were willing to take up with for a portion" (Henry).

How should Christian believers act differently from the world as it relates to riches?

Do most believers behave in a manner that is different from people of the world as it relates to riches?

²¹ Blessed are you who hunger now,
for you will be satisfied.

²⁵ Woe to you who are well fed now,
for you will go hungry.

In Matthew 5:6, we read "blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness," which may provide some clarity to this teaching.

Is righteousness something that is valued in society today?

Are you seeking goodness and righteousness in your life?

²¹ Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

²⁵ Woe to you who laugh now,
for you will mourn and weep.

Here the blessing is to those that weep and a warning to those "that know no other joy than that which is carnal and sensual, and know no other use of this world's good than purely to indulge that carnal sensual joy that banishes sorrow, even godly sorrow, from their minds, and are always entertaining themselves with the laughter of the fool" (Henry).

²² Blessed are you when people hate you,
when they exclude you and insult you
and reject your name as evil,
because of the Son of Man.

²⁶ Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you,
for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.

In these verses, we can take comfort in knowing that when we suffer for Christ, He is with us. On the other hand, believers are warned against making "it their great and only care to gain the praise and

applause of men, who value themselves upon that more than upon the favour of God and his acceptance” (Henry).

Have you ever suffered for your faith?

Did this suffering bring you closer to God?

APPLY

The beatitudes make it clear that “position, authority, and money are not important in his Kingdom—what matters is faithful obedience from the heart” (LASB). This view is extremely counter-cultural and sets Christians apart from the world.

Since we are called to be different, discuss whether or not you typically feel different from those around you.

What specific steps can we take to adhere to these values and prevent the world’s values from bleeding into our lives?

“Each beatitude tells how to be blessed by God. Being blessed means more than happiness. It implies the fortunate or enviable state of those who are in God’s Kingdom. The Beatitudes don’t promise laughter, pleasure, or earthly prosperity. Being “blessed” by God means the experience of hope and joy, independent of outward circumstances. To find hope and joy, the deepest form of happiness, follow Jesus no matter what the cost” (LASB).

MEMORIZE

Luke 6:23

Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.

Reference Sources:

Life Application Study Bible (LASB)

Barclay The Gospel of Matthew

Barclay The Gospel of Luke

Matthew Henry Commentary on the Whole Bible

John Piper Sermons