

Luke 6:20-26
Blessings and Woes

Introduction: Division about Jesus has been slowly rising in 5:17-6:11. Every listener belongs in one of the two camps. The question is, which one?

- 1) ²⁰ *Then, having lifted up His eyes to His disciples, **He** (emphatic) said,*
 - a) Remember there was a large crowd who had gathered, but Jesus singles out His disciples to whom He speaks. The crowd listens in (cf. 7:1).
 - b) Remember also that not all disciples are genuine believers. One can be a disciple without being a believer, but one cannot be a believer without being a disciple.

Jesus invites people through some unexpected blessings—6:20-23 (these blessings are true from God's perspective)

- 1) "*Blessed* [μακάριος] *are the destitute* [πτωχός], (those who recognize they are bankrupt/vulnerable and dependent)
 - a) *because yours^{pl} is the kingdom of God.* (from God as God provides)
 - b) The believer is much better off being poor, following Jesus, and having a part of the kingdom of God than being rich and not having a part of the kingdom.
- 2) ²¹ *Blessed are those who hunger* [πεινάω] *now*, (those who recognize they are deficient and dependent) (this is a result of # 1)
 - a) *because you^{pl} will be satisfied* [χορτάζω]. (by God as God accepts)
- 3) *Blessed are those who weep* [κλαίω] *now*, (those who recognize they are despondent and dependent) (this is a result of # 1 & 2)
 - a) *because you^{pl} will laugh* [γελάω]. (because God welcomes)
- 4) ²² *Blessed are you^{pl} ...*
 - a) When people will do what?
 - i) *when people hate* [μισέω] *you^{pl},*
 - ii) *and when ...*
 - (1) *they exclude* [ἀφορίζω] *you^{pl}*
 - (2) *and verbally abuse* [ὀνειδίζω] *you^{pl},*
 - (3) *and reject* [ἐκβάλλω] *your^{pl} name (character) as evil,*
 - b) Why will people sin against you? *for the sake of the Son of Man.*
 - i) Plan on being ostracized and socially isolated because of your association with Jesus Christ.
 - c) What should be our response?
 - i) Two commands ... *in that day, ...*
 - (1) ²³ *Rejoice* [χαίρω]
 - (2) *and leap for joy* [σκιρτάω],
 - ii) Why? *because behold your^{pl} reward is great in heaven;* (as God rewards)
 - (1) *for in the same way their fathers did to the prophets.*
- 5) These reversals clearly indicate that God cares for those who turn to Him in faith. Mary has already referred to this reversal in 1:51-55.

Jesus warns people through some unexpected woes—6:24-26 (parallel to blessings; this describes one group with four characteristics)

- In contrast with the disciples who had given up everything to follow Jesus were those who would refuse to give up anything to follow Him. They refuse to follow the One who could bring them into the kingdom, and therefore Jesus pronounces woes on them.
- 1) ²⁴ *But woe* [οὐαί] *to you^{pl} who are rich* [πλούσιος], (opposite of destitute; misplaced treasure)
 - a) *because you^{pl} have received your^{pl} comfort* [παράκλησις].
 - b) i.e. no possession of the kingdom, no hope for or comfort in the future
 - c) They have satisfied themselves with too little.
- 2) ²⁵ *Woe to you^{pl} who are full* [ἐμπίμπλημι] *now*, (opposite of hungry; misplaced pleasure)
 - a) *because you^{pl} will be hungry* [πεινάω].
 - b) i.e. no satisfaction
 - c) Again, they have satisfied themselves with too little.
- 3) *Woe to you^{pl} who laugh* [γελάω] *now*, (opposite of weeping; misplaced joy)
 - a) *because you^{pl} will mourn* [πενθέω] *and weep* [κλαίω].
 - b) i.e. no joy
 - c) Again, they have satisfied themselves with too little.
- 4) ²⁶ *Woe when all people speak well* [καλῶς] *of you^{pl}*, (opposite of being hated; misplaced approval)
 - a) *because in the same way their fathers did to the false prophets.*
 - b) i.e. no reward in heaven
 - c) Again, they have satisfied themselves with too little.
 - d) NB, genuine disciples are not deliberately to seek a bad reputation.
- 5) These reversals clearly indicate God's pity toward those who do not turn to Him in faith and who will experience God's judgment. Mary already referred to this reversal in 1:53.
- Jesus' disciples should consider themselves "blessed" in situations that would otherwise produce sorrow (poverty, loss, persecution), for they knew that in the end they would have a reward in heaven. Likewise, they need to be wary of situations that produce temporal and temporary comfort, ease, and popularity.
- God's blessing is on those who humbly come to Him to receive what He generously offers.