

Luke

See Jesus

The Sorrows of Right-Side Up Living

Luke 6:17-26

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / March 28, 2021

In His sermon, Jesus is doing some basic boot camp training for His twelve disciples. He does it in front of a large crowd because He also wants the crowd to know what the kingdom of God is all about and how people in that kingdom live.

I. Jesus Said Kingdom People Prize What the World Would Despise

“In the life of God’s people will be seen first of all a remarkable reversal of values. They will prize what the world calls pitiable, and suspect what the world thinks is desirable.”

~ Michael Wilcox commentary

Jesus declares 4 blessings (vv. 20-22) and 4 woes (vv. 24-26) that sound absolutely backwards to how we would naturally think.

II. Jesus Says It’s a Tragedy to Build Your Life on the Things of This World

Everything in our culture pushes you to live as if now is the only thing that matters.

The Greek word for “woe” is actually a word of lamentation more than condemnation. It’s a word that expresses compassion and regret more than a threat.

In other words, Jesus was saying “How incredibly sad and tragic it is to live for these things.”

What did He call dreadful that our world calls wonderful?

A. How Dreadful to Be Living for the Riches of This World

Luke 6:24 “But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.”

He’s talking about people who have made money their very identity and reason for living.

How freely and how often do you give away the money that God brings into your life?

What will be seen first of all in the “kingdom people” of God is a remarkable reversal of values. There is nothing more radical or remarkable than giving away money!

“...All the money you earn, all the stocks you buy, all the mutual funds you trade—all of that is mostly smoke and mirrors. Sooner or later things will begin to go wrong with the only three things you have that you can really call your own: your body, your spirit, and your mind. So, I want you to consider making your life one long gift to others. And why not? All you have is on loan, anyway. All that lasts is what you pass on. A life of giving—not just money, but time and spirit—repays. It helps us remember that we may be going out broke, but right now... we have the power to do great good for others...”

~ Stephen King, Vassar College Commencement Speech

It’s not how much you have. It’s what you do with what you have and how much you trust God with what you have.

Kingdom people handle money in a way that the world would call crazy!

B. How Dreadful to Be Living for the Satisfaction and Comforts of This World

Luke 6:25 “Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry...”

The Greek word for “full” in v. 25 is a word that means to be filled up and satisfied.

In other words, Jesus is saying, “If you think the things of this world can truly fill you and satisfy you, you’ll end up so, so hungry!”

“Most people, if they really learn how to look in to their own hearts, would know that they do want, and want acutely, something that cannot be had in this world. There are all sorts of things in this world that offer to give it to you, but they never keep their promise. The longings which arise in us when we first fall in love, or first think of some foreign country, or first take up some subject that excites us, are longings which no marriage, no travel, no learning can really satisfy. I am not speaking of what would ordinarily be called unsuccessful marriage or trips and so on; I am speaking of the best possible ones. There is always something we grasped at, in that first moment of longing, that just fades away in the reality. The spouse may be a good spouse, the scenery has been excellent, it has turned out to be a good job, but “it” has evaded us.”

~ C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

C. How Dreadful to Be Chasing After the Fame and Popularity of This World

Luke 6:26 “Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.”

“...They worked, they pushed and the morning after each of them became famous, they wanted to take an overdose. Because that giant thing they were striving for, that fame thing that was going to make everything OK, that was going to make their lives bearable, that was going to provide them with personal fulfillment and happiness had happened and they were still them. The disillusionment turned them howling and insufferable.”

~ Cynthia Heimel, “Tongue in Chic,” *The Village Voice*

If you head down the path of fame and recognition, you will end up howling and insufferable. Some of the most miserable people are famous people who finally have what they thought they wanted, but it didn’t do for them what they thought it could do.

D. How Dreadful to Be Focused on the Triumph and Success of This World

Luke 6:25 “...Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.”

The word “laugh” in v. 25 is a Greek word that means to gloat over or to triumph over someone in scorn. It’s an attitude of superiority or scorn over someone else.

If you live the way Jesus has called His Kingdom people to live, they will call you crazy and even masochistic, saying you must somehow love being miserable.

[Read Psalm 2:1-12]