Jesus Reveals True Blessings in a World of Woes

1. Read Luke 6:12-16. Here we witness a powerful moment in Jesus' ministry! We catch a glimpse of Him immersed in a full night of prayer as He prepares to make a monumental decision—selecting His disciples. What sets this moment apart from those earlier encounters with Peter and Andrew, James and John by the shoreline, or Matthew at his tax booth? What's the deeper significance behind this pivotal choice?

   This wasn't just a calling into discipleship. Jesus here calls these men to be his twelve apostles. These men will have the unique, never repeated calling to be the sent ones of Jesus who will bear the Gospel, plant the church, and even do healings, raise the dead, and have power over demons. They will be This is an office that isn't perpetuated. There were only and will only be twelve apostles. Today the church continues to raise up and call people for service in the kingdom. There are no self-appointed offices in the church.

2. Read Luke 6:17-19. Pay close attention to the geographic region Luke highlights. What does this reveal about Jesus's skyrocketing popularity? And think about the impact of His preaching and presence—how deeply does it resonate with the crowds? Just how far does His power extend? Now, picture the scene on that glorious last day when Jesus returns in all His majesty and glory. Can you even begin to imagine the excitement and awe that will fill the air? And what does Paul share in Philippians 2:10 about the impact this will have on everyone?

3. Read Luke 6:20-23. How do the Lukan beatitudes shake up our typical ideas about what it means to be blessed? And what does that say about how believers can find real spiritual fulfillment in their lives?

   The beatitudes in Luke offer a fresh take on what it really means to be "blessed," and it's quite different from what we often think in our everyday lives. When we talk about being blessed, most people tend to think about things like wealth, success, or social status. But Jesus flips that idea on its head. For example, when He says, "Blessed are the poor," (Luke 6:20), He's highlighting something deeper—things like spiritual poverty, feeling hungry, or even grieving can actually bring you closer to God.

   This idea shows us that true blessing comes from having a relationship with God through faith in Christ, rather than from our outside circumstances. For believers, this means that we can find spiritual fulfillment even when life gets tough—it's not about having the comforts or achievements that society values.

   The beatitudes remind us that God's blessings can often be found in unexpected places. They encourage us to seek joy and hope in our connection with Christ, even when we're going through difficult times. They also point us to a future hope—meaning we can trust that greater fulfillment is coming.

By embracing this perspective, we're invited to live differently. Instead of chasing after the traditional markers of success, we can foster a community filled with joy, mercy, and humility, even when the going gets rough. In short, the beatitudes challenge us to find our identity in the grace we receive through Christ, who is the ultimate example of what it means to be truly blessed.

4. Sometimes Matthew's beatitudes are called the "spiritualized" version of Luke's beatitudes. For example, where Matthew has "poor in spirit" (Mt 5:3), Luke has "poor" (Lk 6:20), and where Matthew has "hunger and thirst for righteousness" (Mt 5:6), Luke has "hunger now" (6:21). So are Jesus' words to be understood "spiritually" or "physically"? Are we to think of those who are spiritually poor or those who are physically poor? *(NOT: We can't know for sure if Jesus preached two different sermons on different occasions that might account for the differences between Matthew's and Luke's beatitudes. Or it could just be the difference in the hearer. While we call Jesus's words in Matthew 5,6, & 7 "the sermon on the mount" and sometimes refer to Jesus's words in Luke 6 as "the sermon on the plain," it doesn't mean they have to be understood as two different sermons. Remember that right before this, Jesus is up on a mountain praying. He then comes down to a "level place." But He could still be "on the mountain", just at lower, more level spot.)*

Since Jesus is both God and man, He understands our spiritual needs as well as our physical ones. He talked about both kinds of problems—like sin and sickness—because He came to help us with all of them. When we look at the beatitudes, we see that they apply to both our spiritual lives and our everyday experiences.

Jesus brought hope for the effects of sin, both in our hearts and in our bodies, but we won't see the full impact of that healing until He returns. Each beatitude tells us something about our relationship with God's kingdom, whether we're embracing it by following Jesus or turning away from it. It points to where we are now and what we can expect later. So, when we listen or read these beatitudes, we should think about how they relate to both our spiritual well-being and our physical lives.

5. Read Luke 6:24-26. Consider the sharp contrast between the blessings and woes. Now, let's flip over to Deuteronomy 11:18-28. How do you think God's word Deuteronomy relate to what Jesus is saying in His blessings and woes? Specifically, how does Deuteronomy 11 help us understand what it really means to live a blessed life compared to a life that's filled with woes?

Understanding Blessings and Curses:

In Deuteronomy, the blessings are tied to obedience to God's commands, emphasizing that following His law leads to prosperity and well-being. Conversely, the curses represent the consequences of disobedience. Similarly, in Luke, Jesus contrasts the state of those who live for worldly gain (woes) with those who embrace humility, spiritual poverty, and dependency on God (blessings). This suggests that true blessings come from a heart aligned with God's will, while woes come from pursuing temporary, worldly fulfillment.

Perspective on True Fulfillment:

Living a blessed life, according to both passages, revolves around a deeper spiritual fulfillment rather than material wealth or societal approval.

In summary, living a blessed life, as drawn from these texts, is about aligning with God's will, embracing humility, and finding joy and fulfillment in spiritual richness rather than worldly measures. On the other

hand, a life filled with woes reflects the emptiness of pursuing self-centered desires and the consequences of distancing oneself from God's commands.

6. In these early chapters of Luke, we see Jesus making a clear statement about who He is as the Messiah. He tells us through the beatitudes and woes that He's here to mend what's broken and heal what's sick. But it's not just about physical healing; it's also about spiritual restoration.

   Take a look at the third beatitude and its corresponding woe (Luke 6:21b, 25b). Then, consider the story in Luke 7:36-50. Here, a sinful woman approaches Jesus, filled with sorrow for her past mistakes, weeping at His feet (7:38). Her tears symbolize the pain that comes from sin and its consequences. But what happens next? Instead of despair, she experiences joy, released from her burdens as she finds a place at Jesus' table.

   In contrast, we have the city of Jerusalem, represented by the Pharisees. Jesus highlights in Luke 7:30-35 that they didn't accept John the Baptist's message of repentance, leaving them unprepared for Jesus' arrival. Later in Luke 19:41-44, we see Jesus weeping over Jerusalem because, soon, their laughter would turn to sorrow as they faced destruction in A.D. 70.

   As Christians, we are confronted with two paths: one that leads to life and one that leads to death. We can choose to follow the example of those who repented and embraced fellowship in the church, like those who followed John, or we can go down the same road as Jerusalem, where rejection of God leads to destruction. What steps do you think are important for us to take in our own lives to remain open to repentance and spiritual healing, rather than becoming complacent or resistant like the Pharisees?

   Practice Self-_____Examination—Regularly reflect on our thoughts, actions, and attitudes. Engaging in personal prayer and meditation can help us identify areas in our lives that may need change. This practice of self-examination fosters humility and awareness of our shortcomings.

   Seek _____Accountability—Surrounding ourselves with trusted friends or mentors who are also on their spiritual journeys can provide us with support and honest feedback. Accountability helps us stay committed to growth and encourages us to confront areas of sin or complacency that we might overlook.

   Embrace _____ Vulnerability—Just as the woman in Luke 7:36-50 approached Jesus with vulnerability, we should be willing to bring our struggles to Him. This includes confessing our sins and seeking forgiveness with a genuine heart. Vulnerability opens the door to healing and allows us to experience God's grace more profoundly.

   Engage with _____ Scripture—Regularly reading and meditating on the Bible helps us to align our lives with God's will. The Word can reveal areas in our lives that need change and provide us with comfort and encouragement as we navigate the challenges of repentance and growth.

   Participate in _____Community Worship—Being active in a church community offers an environment where we can learn from others' experiences and share our own. Worshiping together reminds us of God's faithfulness and the joy found in fellowship, reinforcing our commitment to a life of repentance and growth.

Jesus Reveals True Blessings in a World of Woes

1. Read Luke 6:12-16. Here we witness a powerful moment in Jesus' ministry! We catch a glimpse of Him immersed in a full night of prayer as He prepares to make a monumental decision—selecting His disciples. What sets this moment apart from those earlier encounters with Peter and Andrew, James and John by the shoreline, or Matthew at his tax booth? What's the deeper significance behind this pivotal choice?

2. Read Luke 6:17-19. Pay close attention to the geographic region Luke highlights. What does this reveal about Jesus's skyrocketing popularity? And think about the impact of His preaching and presence—how deeply does it resonate with the crowds? Just how far does His power extend? Now, picture the scene on that glorious last day when Jesus returns in all His majesty and glory. Can you even begin to imagine the excitement and awe that will fill the air? And what does Paul share in Philippians 2:10 about the impact this will have on everyone?

3. Read Luke 6:20-23. How do the Lukan beatitudes shake up our typical ideas about what it means to be blessed? And what does that say about how believers can find real spiritual fulfillment in their lives?

4. Sometimes Matthew's beatitudes are called the "spiritualized" version of Luke's beatitudes. For example, where Matthew has "poor in spirit" (Mt 5:3), Luke has "poor" (Lk 6:20), and where Matthew has "hunger and thirst for righteousness" (Mt 5:6), Luke has "hunger now" (6:21). So are Jesus' words to be understood "spiritually" or "physically"? Are we to think of those who are spiritually poor or those who are physically poor?

5. Read Luke 6:24-26. Consider the sharp contrast between the blessings and woes. Now, let's flip over to Deuteronomy 11:18-28. How do you think God's word Deuteronomy relate to what Jesus is saying in His blessings and woes? Specifically, how does Deuteronomy 11 help us understand what it really means to live a blessed life compared to a life that's filled with woes?

6 In these early chapters of Luke, we see Jesus making a clear statement about who He is as the Messiah. He tells us through the beatitudes and woes that He's here to mend what's broken and heal what's sick. But it's not just about physical healing; it's also about spiritual restoration.

Take a look at the third beatitude and its corresponding woe (Luke 6:21b, 25b). Then, consider the story in Luke 7:36-50. Here, a sinful woman approaches Jesus, filled with sorrow for her past mistakes, weeping at His feet (7:38). Her tears symbolize the pain that comes from sin and its consequences. But what happens next? Instead of despair, she experiences joy, released from her burdens as she finds a place at Jesus' table.

In contrast, we have the city of Jerusalem, represented by the Pharisees. Jesus highlights in Luke 7:30-35 that they didn't accept John the Baptist's message of repentance, leaving them unprepared for Jesus' arrival. Later in Luke 19:41-44, we see Jesus weeping over Jerusalem because, soon, their laughter would turn to sorrow as they faced destruction in A.D. 70.

As Christians, we are confronted with two paths: one that leads to life and one that leads to death. We can choose to follow the example of those who repented and embraced fellowship in the church, like those who followed John, or we can go down the same road as Jerusalem, where rejection of God leads to destruction. What steps do you think are important for us to take in our own lives to remain open to repentance and spiritual healing, rather than becoming complacent or resistant like the Pharisees?

- ✞ Practice Self-_____
- ✞ Seek _____
- ✞ Embrace _____
- ✞ Engage with _____
- ✞ Participate in _____ Worship