

LIVING JUSTLY WITH OTHERS Sunday School- January 12, 2014

Unifying Topic: HOW TO LIVE AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Lesson Text

I. Whose Is The Kingdom Of God? (Luke 6:17-23)

II. What About Those Who Seem Blessed (Luke 6:24-26)

III. Who Is To Be Loved (Luke 6:27-31)

The Main Thought: But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you. (Luke 6:27, KJV).

Unifying Principle: People experience both love and hate from others around them. How are Christians to respond to those who hate them? Jesus teaches that justice does not always appear in the way people treat one another, but His followers are to love people regardless of what they do or say to them.

Lesson Aim: To help the Christian believer explore the difficult feelings associated with loving people who show total disdain for him or her.

Life aim: To develop a prayer life in a Christian whereby he or she can express love for enemies.

- 6:17 And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases;
- 6:18 And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed.
- 6:19 And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.
- 6:20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.
- 6:21 Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.
- 6:22 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.
- 6:23 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.
- 6:24 But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.
- 6:25 Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep.
- 6:26 Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.
- 6:27 But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,
- 6:28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.
- 6:29 And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also.
- 6:30 Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.
- 6:31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

HISTORY:

Chapter 6:12-16 After Jesus had healed the man with the withered hand. He incited madness within the Scribes and Pharisees in the synagogue. He then went into the mountain to pray, praying all night to God to the daylight hours. The day came and He called forth His disciples, choosing twelve of them whom were also to be called apostles. A "disciple" is a learner taught by their teacher and who follows their teacher, while an "Apostle" means to send out. "Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew," "Matthew and Thomas, James the [son] of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes," "And Judas [the brother] of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor." Jesus chose diverse personalities. Just to name a few:

- There were at least three businessmen: Peter, James, and John. All three were fishermen with rather large businesses. They were a rough breed with thundering personalities. Peter was rough and loud.
- Matthew, the tax collector. His house must have been an estate for it was large enough to handle a huge crowd for a large feast. He was wealthy, ostracized by the Jewish community, bound to be hard-crusted, non-religious.
- One was a political nationalist, an insurrectionist: Simon the Zealot. The Zealots were pledged to overthrow the Roman government, and to assassinate as many Roman officials and Jewish cohorts as possible.
- One was evidently deeply religious: Nathaniel (Jh.1:47).

LESSON:

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Luke 6:17-23 Whose Is The Kingdom Of God?

6:17 And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases;— Coming down from the mountain and standing on the level plain were many followers and a great multitude from Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear Jesus preach, and came to be healed of their diseases. Jesus had chosen his disciples and they would in turn learn to minister with Him.

- Their mission was to learn to minister to two distinct groups: the company of disciples and the multitude of people.
- Their mission was to learn to carry out a threefold ministry.
 1. The ministry of preaching to those who came to hear Jesus.

6:18 And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. Jesus' healing ministry was extensive, both in the number of people healed, the places from which they came, and the maladies of which they were relieved. The word "Vexed" means "to harass." "Unclean spirits" was another name for "demons." These demons caused particular types of sicknesses among the people.

2. The ministry of healing.

6:19 And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all. Multitudes were healed as they touched the power that came from Jesus!

3. The ministry of leading people to touch Jesus in order to receive His virtue.

6:20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. As the people had touched Jesus, His eyes are now lifted up on His disciples, teaching them and bestowing blessings upon the poor. Who were the poor? It could be the people that had come to be blessed and then it could be the disciples who were giving up everything to follow Jesus. He was letting them know that they are blessed. "Blessed" literally means happy; fortunate! In Matthew's Gospel (*Sermon on the Mount*) He promised the poor that they would inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. The "kingdom of heaven" and the "kingdom of God" refer to God's lordship and rule. Jesus came to give hope to the poor. By believing and receiving His message, the poor have access to the kingdom of God, which is synonymous to the kingdom of heaven, Christ's kingdom. The Word tells us to seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to them. They are blessed (happy) when they seek His kingdom. There are blessings for those in poverty. They will come out of poverty and no longer would be poor, but have the kingdom of God. Having the kingdom of God would be figuratively in us. The kingdom of God is not only God's rule in and over His obedient servants, but His kingdom's lordship and rule would be in us, causing the poor to be happy and having victory over spiritual enemies through Jesus.

6:21 Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. There was now a blessing to those that were hungry. To "hunger" means to crave ardently, to seek with eager desire. In Matthew there is a hunger and thirst after righteousness. When you seek for God, He will fill you with abundant life. This hunger was to fill their spiritual need, not a hunger of missing a meal or two. Oh yes, you can't be filled unless you are empty!

6:21b Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh. When you weep, you are sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn to laughter. The laughter comes from seeing the end of sin and shame, sorrow and suffering, tragedy and trauma. The One that will bring this need to the hungry and sorrowful was there now to give it. Therefore, you want to continue attending places where that hunger can be satisfied; you want to spend time in Bible study; and you want to keep yourself from the things that rob and distract you of that hunger by staying under the power of God's Spirit. He is there to bring laughter!

6:22 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. The Pharisees hated; they were filled with madness. Remember the man with the withered hand in the synagogue? Jesus had healed him. ¹Even now, to take a stand to live for Jesus may cost you your so called friends and many times your family, as well. They do not want to be around you, because you talk about Jesus. They label you as a fanatic, and they speak evil of you. But, remember, it's all for

¹ <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/luke/15.html>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>

Christ's sake. Whatever you go through you grow through!

6:23 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets. Joy comes in the morning! Jesus says you should be happy and rejoice when men hate and separate themselves from you and cast out your name as evil. Why? - For the Son of man's sake. He let the disciples know this because this was going to happen to them, but to overcome this He wanted them to know that they were to rejoice; they were doing something right. This was the evidence that they were being loyal to Jesus. This is not how the world would act, but this is how they were to react as believers.

Luke 6:24-26 What About Those Who Seem Blessed

6:24 But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation. You might have thought those listings were some woes going through the things for Christ's sake, but oh no, there are four woes for those that lead a different way; the ungodly way. "Woe" means unfortunate happenings; oncoming judgment. Jesus had given the promises and now He begins with the judgments. The warning is strong to the rich. Why? - Because wealth pulls a person away from the kingdom of heaven. Money is not evil, but the love of money is (1Tim.6:10). Fortune often causes one to live independently of God, and to believe in his own self-sufficiency. Riches tend to make a man selfish by sometimes hoarding what he has. The more we get, the more we want. If the rich are relying on their money now, they have their own happiness and comfort now. This does not last forever. There are few that are rich who give to Christ to meet the needs of the world.

6:25 Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. The second woe is to those who are full. This is the opposite of those who hunger for righteousness. The full are those who are filled with all that the world has to offer; full of themselves, their own desires, urges, and cravings.

- fill their bellies with the husks of the world Lk.15:16.
- serve their own bellies and not the Lord Jesus Christ Rom.16:18.
- indulge in the meats (things, sins) of the world (1Cor.6:13)
- make their god their belly (1Cor.3:19).
- (are) filled with all unrighteousness, (such as)...: who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them (Rom.1:29-32).

They are only interested in their own welfare; fill their bellies to overflowing, knowing that their neighbor is hungry and not doing anything about it, for they shall always hunger for true satisfaction; for Christ in the end. They have their reward; their judgment, if they don't change.

6:25b Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep. The third woe is to those who laugh now for they shall mourn and weep; the opposite of verse 21b. This means three things:

1. *Laughing now* refers to those who have no sense of sin; no sorrow or regret over evil and suffering; no brokenness over the cross and their own sin, Their joy is carnal and sensual.
2. Laughing now refers to those who are laughing it up in the world with all its, comfort and ease, pleasures and stimulations, recreations and past-times. Their joy is in the indulgence and entertaining of their flesh.
3. *Laughing now* refers to those who pay little or no attention to the reality of the world, a world suffering under the weight of the evil and disaster, greed and selfishness, sin and death. Their joy is found in denying and ignoring the truth of the Word which helps to ease their conscious.

The warning and judgment is to those that are merry now, shall later mourn and weep. They are doomed because they refused to face the reality of a world lost in sin and evil, a world that needed their attention and help. They refused to help the needy, those who suffered and wept so much in this world. Therefore, they shall be left alone in the next world to mourn and weep over their great loss.

6:26 Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets. The fourth woe speaks to men that speak well of them and the illustration Jesus gives is that it was done of the false prophets by their fathers. This is the opposite of the persecuted for Christ's sake. The worldly speak well of those who live worldly:

- who live as they live
- who speak as they speak
- who compromise
- who seek their company and approval
- who never point out the truth of sin and death, judgment and hell.

Worldly men want attention and esteem, position, and place, honor and praise, recognition and applause. Men honor such ambitions and rewards. The false prophets were those of whom the world spoke well of and this was their reward; all that they would ever receive. They coveted worldly recognition and honor and they received it. If we do that, the world will speak well of us, but we will lose our reward. What the believer must do is tell the truth to all men. All men need a Savior and their eternal fate depends upon their coming to Christ for salvation, seeking Him only.

Luke 6:27-31 Who Is To Be Loved

6:27 But I say unto you which hear, **Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,**— After the disciples have heard the blessings and the woes, Jesus says to them, and to those who would hear (*those standing around*), if you've heard anything, I want you to hear this...; the other things are not cancelled out, but hear this... "*Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you...*" Love is an action word! ²The Jews knew God's commandment to love their neighbours (Leviticus 18:18). Their teachers had added the words "*and hate your enemy.*" Who is your enemy? – Anyone who turns against you. But Jesus says love them... This concerns principles governing human relationships.

1. *Love your enemies.* For a Christian to love it means that you act for the benefit of the other person; show respect and honor all men. Loving one's enemies is against human nature, but a believer can have mercy and compassion for enemies, only done through God's Spirit. You can't choose to hate, and then love God! If a believer does not have compassion for those who hate him, he has not gained anything of the Spirit of Christ.
 - a. ³*Greet your enemies* instead of avoiding them. You're on your way to forgiving. It might take awhile for some!
 - b. *Disarm your enemies* by doing the very thing they least expect. God will give it to you.
2. *Do good to them which hate you.* It goes beyond words; it goes beyond your pain and their meanness toward you. God shows you how to do things for the people who hate. The Spirit searches for ways to do good to him, (only you can do) realizing that he needs to be reached for God. ⁴The idea is that you make the first move. You send the e-mail. You pick up the phone. You make the contact. You bridge the gap. You set up the appointment. It is the Spirit of God pursuing that person through you.

6:28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

3. *Bless them that curse you.* People do curse, and you might find yourself in that predicament. The believer is to bless his curser and not rail back; speak back softly, using kind and reconciling words, and within asking God to bless him.
 - a. ⁵*Refuse to speak evil of them.* It means you refuse to think evil thoughts and you refuse to speak evil words against those who have wronged you. At some point, we have to stop talking and start forgiving.
 - b. *Thank God for them.* Behind your enemy stands the hand of God. And God would never permit it, if he did not intend to bring something good out of it.
4. *Pray for them which despitefully use you.* This not only speaks of those who speak despitefully but those who use us despitefully. It is an attempt to shame, dishonor, disgrace, and hurt both your name and body. It goes further when they mistreat, abuse, attack and persecute you. Jesus says pray for them. The believer can't help but pray when someone is set to do harm to bring them down to their level.
 - a. Pray for God to forgive those that curse you.
 - b. Pray for peace between one's self and those that curse you.
 - c. Pray for salvation for those that curse you.

Prayer will greatly benefit you, the believer as well as them. It will keep you from becoming bitter, hostile, and reactionary. Praise God! In the end you're doing God's Will, not your own.

6:29 And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; —If someone hits you, you probably want to hit them back, perhaps twice as hard. This is a natural way to behave in the flesh; however, people who follow Jesus are to behave in a different way. It takes true strength to restraint yourself when others insult you

5. *Offer the other cheek.* ⁶Its one thing to give your life for the sake of preaching the gospel, but it's another to not

² <http://www.easyenglish.info/bible-commentary/luke-lbw.htm>

³ <http://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/2003-06-08-The-Final-Step-Blessing-Your-Enemies/>

⁴ <http://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/2003-06-08-The-Final-Step-Blessing-Your-Enemies/>

⁵ <http://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/2003-06-08-The-Final-Step-Blessing-Your-Enemies/>

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use common sense and save your own life from another person's sin of anger and abuse. We are not to be passive in the face of a physical assault, yet, Jesus means we should not defend our self in the face of a grievous insult; dealing with honor. In Jewish culture, the greatest insult, the most demeaning and disapproving action possible, was a slap on the cheek. It was an ultimate and deliberate gesture of disrespect. Our honor is always in God's hand.

Turning the other cheek is also not saying anything to retaliate against someone who has said something that offends you. It's like in the movies when you see the person get hit and they say: That's all you got? Well, turn the other cheek and say, That's all you got?

6:29b ...and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also. This new principle is talking about governing property. The Jews wore both an inner and an outer garment. The cloak was a very important part of their clothing. If a man took the outer garment, the believer was to offer his inner garment as well. Jewish law allowed the inner garment to be taken as a debt or pledge, but never the outer garment. Giving one's cloak is difficult. It means the believer does not defend, stand up, or dispute the taking of his property. He forgives, and he gives more to the person who takes. We can only practice this kind of sacrificial love when we know that God will take care of us.

6:30 Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. I think the idea that Jesus was stressing was as long as it was in our power to help the needy, we should not be selfish. Give to every man, but not give everything, unless it ruled you. We have to remember that we are to be good stewards over what God had endowed unto us. When goods are taken away it must mean that it's borrowed. The believer is not to ask for them back if the person needs them and is going to be deprived and hurt if they are taken back.

6:31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. Everyone always wants to be treated well, as they would treat others well. The Golden Rule says, *"Do to other people what you would like them to do to you."* It simply shows us what love really is, and that believers are to be examples of that love. The very reason Jesus is asking Christians to do these things is because He did them all Himself. He is our best example!

SUMMARY:

In Luke, this is sometimes called the Sermon on the Plain and Jesus had chosen His disciples. However, in Matthew Jesus gives the Sermon on the Mount, but He had not chosen and called His disciples yet. But, there are similarities.

- Jesus gives four blessings... (to the godly) (**vv.20-23**).
 1. If poor, yours is the kingdom of God.
 2. If hungry, you shall be filled.
 3. If sorrowful, you shall laugh.
 4. If men hate you...rejoice...your reward is great in heaven.
- Four woes... (to the godless) (**vv.25-26**).
 1. Woe to the rich, you shall have your comfort now.
 2. Woe to the full, you will hunger.
 3. Woe to those that are merry, you shall mourn and weep.
 4. Woe when men speak well of you, you shall have earthly approval only.
- Five principles governing human relations (**vv.27-29a**).
 1. Love you enemies.
 2. Do good to them that hate you.
 3. Bless them that curse you.
 4. Pray for them which despitefully use you.
 5. If someone strikes you, turn the other cheek.
- Four principles governing property (**vv.29b-31**).
 1. If they take your shirt, give them your jacket too.
 2. If a beggar comes to you, give him something.
 3. If someone is needy, do not demand it back.
 4. Treat others as you would like to be treated—The Golden Rule.

As Jesus speaks to all that had ears to hear, He was defining the life principles of Christian behavior.

APPLICATION:

There are those that are blessed and there are those that seem to be blessed. Jesus' mission impacted multitudes that sought Him for healing, but He also taught and described a standard of conduct and attitude to live by. As believers we will come up against many things but Jesus desires us to love our enemies; do good, pray, and turn the other cheek developing life principles to follow even when others appear to treat us wrongly. Ask for help when you can't seem to behave in the godly way. Jesus is always there to help.