



A Guide for Spiritual Formation

Text for the Week: Luke 6:17-26

Message for the Week: "Blessed Are You...or Not!"

Sunday, February 5

Opening:

What is one low (a bad thing) and one high (a good thing) that happened to you this past week? Write them down and take turns sharing them with the others in your group.

Where have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life this past week?

Who in your life tells you to "be careful" or to "stay out of trouble?"

Preparation:

Spend 1-2 minutes in silence with God to center and prepare yourself for your time with God today.

Read:

Read / Have two people in your group read Luke 6:17-26 out loud.

(Clicking this link will bring you to multiple translations.)

As you read and/or listen to the text being read, circle, take note of, highlight, or underline what words, phrases, or ideas grabbed your attention and heart in these verses?

Write them down below and/or share them with those who are with you.

Respond / Reflect:

Consider each Beatitude: what is the meaning of each characteristic Jesus is describing?

What is Jesus warning us about through his list of “woes” in verses 24-26? What is Jesus asking us to value through this list of woes?

Compare and contrast Matthew 5's list of Beatitudes and Luke 6's list--they are almost but not quite identical. What differences and similarities do you notice in each list?

Matthew 5

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Luke 6

Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.
Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied.
Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.
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.

What are some ways in which we as 21st century disciples might display the traits that Jesus talks about in these Beatitudes?

What does the word “blessed” mean in these Beatitudes?

Try It:

Choose a Beatitude and consider how you can live it out this week. Then do it.

Prayer:

Spend time in prayer with/for the other people who are with you. Pray this prayer together:

Faithful God, source of every blessing: teach us to love our enemies, to bless those who curse us, to pray for those who persecute us, to turn the other cheek, to share our possessions, to give to those who are in need, and to do to others as we would have them do to us, so that we may join that company of blessed saints who feast with you in heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Missional/Spiritual Practice for February: Holy Curiosity for the Other

During the month of February, you are invited and encouraged to engage in the missional practice of [Holy Curiosity for the Other](#). By engaging in this practice, we seek to create safe and inviting space in meaningful conversation with others. This involves us risking new and deeper relationships with the people we meet in the context of their lives, developing a holy curiosity that transcends your own needs for affirmation or expression and calls you into full attentiveness and discovery of another person's life and story. When we provide safe, inviting, and prayerful space for another to share, transformative encounters with God and one another occur over time

Luke 6:17-26

New International Version

¹⁷ He went down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coastal region around Tyre and Sidon, ¹⁸ who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those troubled by impure spirits were cured, ¹⁹ and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all.

²⁰ Looking at his disciples, he said:

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

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

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

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.

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.

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

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

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

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

The Message

¹⁷⁻²¹ Coming down off the mountain with them, he stood on a plain surrounded by disciples, and was soon joined by a huge congregation from all over Judea and Jerusalem, even from the seaside towns of Tyre and Sidon. They had come both to hear him and to be cured of their diseases. Those disturbed by evil spirits were healed. Everyone was trying to touch him—so much energy surging from him, so many people healed! Then he spoke:

You're blessed when you've lost it all.

God's kingdom is there for the finding.

You're blessed when you're ravenously hungry.

Then you're ready for the Messianic meal.

You're blessed when the tears flow freely.

Joy comes with the morning.

²²⁻²³ “Count yourself blessed every time someone cuts you down or throws you out, every time someone smears or blackens your name to discredit me. What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort and that that person is uncomfortable. You can be glad when that happens—skip like a lamb, if you like!—for even though they don't like it, I do . . . and all heaven applauds. And know that you are in good company; my preachers and witnesses have always been treated like this.

²⁴ But it's trouble ahead if you think you have it made. What you have is all you'll ever get.

²⁵ And it's trouble ahead if you're satisfied with yourself. Your *self* will not satisfy you for long.

And it's trouble ahead if you think life's all fun and games. There's suffering to be met, and you're going to meet it.

²⁶ “There's trouble ahead when you live only for the approval of others, saying what flatters them, doing what indulges them. Popularity contests are not truth contests—look how many scoundrel preachers were approved by your ancestors! Your task is to be true, not popular.