Sunday School Lesson
TOPIC: “Jesus Teaches His Followers”
Luke 6:20-31


Prepare

- This lesson occurs near the beginning of Jesus’ earthly ministry based around the area of Galilee. During this time, Jesus announces His ministry (Luke 4:16-22) and some sought to kill Him, and they rejected Him (Luke 4:23-30). Jesus freed some from spiritual afflictions (Luke 4:31-37) and physical sickness (Luke 4:38-41). Moving forth in His ministry Jesus begins to call His disciples to join Him (Luke 5:1-11, 27-29; 6:12-16), and performs more healings (Luke 5:12-26; 6:6-11). After these events, we arrive at the period where today’s lesson text begins with Jesus’ teachings on the Beatitudes.

- Prepare a chart on the board. On one side write DO and on the other side write DON’T. Have students go through chapter 6 together and look for things that can go under each category.

  Then say, as Christians, there is a right way and a wrong way to live. Jesus teaches His followers to mimic His life and His steps by following His teachings and chooses to make good choices like those seen under our DO category. The things under the DON’T category will take us out away from the teachings of Jesus and out of the will of God. These things will stop us from gaining our reward in heaven.

- Do an online search for Object Lessons based around the idea of the Beatitudes and use it as a lead into this lesson.

Explore – Full Lesson Available on pages 6-12

Verses 20-23: True Blessedness
The blessed life, I believe, can looks as different to each individual as the individuals themselves are. To some, if finances have improved, they tout they are blessed. Others may find a greater appreciation in family relationships being restored or loved ones returning to the Lord, and, of course, they are many, many other scenarios to consider.

While all of these are true and are great reasons to praise God for those blessings He has poured out in that individual’s life, Jesus, standing before the crowd that day, teaching, spoke
words about blessedness that would shake the foundation of people’s ideas and expectations about what it truly means to be blessed. His words may have been hard to swallow, but if heeded, they would reap something wonderful in the lives of His followers.

One of the translations for the word “blessed” is “happy.” In these verses the scenarios that Jesus lists are things people actively work against and avoid in order to live a rich and fulfilling life. The world tends to look down on those who find themselves listed in these verses: the poor, the hungry, those that weep, those that are hated. But Jesus doesn’t look down on them, nor does He disregard them. There is, in fact, something stored up for them.

For these believers, no matter what circumstances they may face today, there is coming a day for rejoicing. There is coming a time for joy. “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning,” (Psalm 30:5). When that morning arises for them, they will feel the complete joy of being in the kingdom of God.

Verses 24-26: Woeful Living
But “woe” to those who have much in the way of pride and wickedness; who have allowed the things they have to be their security and source of instead of humbly submitting to Jesus’ teachings regarding the kingdom of God. The love of things has a certain attraction to the human heart that causes one to trust in themselves and their riches instead of the God how has supplied for their needs (Philippians 4:19). Woe to you who fancy yourself to be something when He said, “Without me ye can do nothing,” (John 15:5).

Those of the world may be full of things and what looks to be good on the outside, but truthfully, they are empty and have nothing to look forward to in eternity. When they pass off this earth, they don’t wake up to the joy of that blessed morning as do His followers. Rather, they open their eyes and experience “woes.” That which was false has supported their selfish, earthly endeavors while they were alive, but when they stand before Him in that coming day, truth will demand an answer.

Verses 27-31: How We All Should Live
With these strikingly different comparisons on life, how should we live? With love and goodness to all, in service to all (praying for the spiteful and him who does you wrong, offering of your goods to those in need without expectation of return, and treating others how you yourself would want to be treated), approaching people, days, and circumstances with humility and integrity before the grace of God.

If in life you experienced a rough hand, live that hand out before God in righteousness, expressing His grace actively at work in your life. And, if in life you have experienced a favorable hand, the expectation for living in righteousness and manifesting His grace is the same. Don’t be proud or lifted up, but as a child of God, seek to do good and be a help.
Above all, no matter who you are and no matter your wealth or lack thereof – no matter your circumstances or background, remember: “As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise,” (Luke 6:31).

Activities

- Some days we may experience hard times and the things going in life don’t really seem to be a blessing. How can Jesus’ word about true blessedness encourage you? Write your thoughts on the Adult Journal Page found on site. Using the Kid’s Journal Page, students can write about living the Golden Rule principle out in their own lives.
- Younger students can draw a picture of Jesus teaching His followers in the Draw the Scene section found on site.
- One fun activity for students is play a game of Jesus Says (using the same method one would play Simon Says with).
- Alternate activity sheets are available on site for those who just want to work with printed materials such as Word Scramble, How Many Words, Beatitude Acrostic, and more.

Review

- Commit to memory the base verse from the lesson: “And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise,” (Luke 6:31).
- Fill out the review sheet provided (page 13)
- Hangman: Play a game of Hangman to review this lesson. Pick verses from the lesson and subtract words or phrases from the verse. Ask students to guess the missing words or phrases in order to win the game. Can be done collectively or have students break off into teams. My students always prefer to do teams.

Life

Take special note of the Beatitudes listed in Matthew 5 and compare with these written in the Luke 6 lesson text. After reviewing them, ask, “How am I living out these Jesus taught truths in my life today? What parts do I struggle in? What can I do to strengthen those parts?” Ponder the answers to those things that challenge you the most and write them down. Then, write possible ways to handle situations that you need help in the most.
Our goal is to learn to apply Jesus' teachings in every area of life. Some things are revealed to us during times of self-reflection (compare 2 Corinthians 13:5). Once we examine and reflect, we can work to correct and strengthen those things that were brought to light.
TOPIC: “Jesus Teaches His Followers”
Luke 6:20-31

What does Christianity look like? To some, it may seem to be a list of dos and don’ts. To others, it may seem the religious thing to carry a certain righteous air about them, separateness from the common man, so to speak. But, as was becoming custom, Jesus’ view of what it really means to be His follower and God’s people differed from what most preconceived ideas believed. And the awesome thing about Jesus’ view, He didn’t just teach it, He lived it.

TRUE BLESSEDNESS

Luke 6:20 “And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.”

In the verses prior to this lesson, Luke 6:12-19, there it records that Jesus drew away into an all-night prayer meeting with God the Father. The Son and the Father communed together on an intimate level that no one else was privy to; just they by themselves, one on one. Oh, to be a fly on that wall.

Following that, Jesus chose His twelve disciples and began to heal the multitudes that have already begun to gather and follow Him.

The first words He spoke to them when coming down in the plain is so similar to the words He spoke in the Sermon on the Mount that many Bible students are unable to decide if these two messages are one and the same, or are they separate occasions.

He said, “Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.” When someone says something is “yours” it means they are passing ownership of said item to you. They are giving you the right and the privilege to operate in what was given.

NOTES:
It’s the “poor,” the impoverished who truly appreciates what is given to them both in the physical and in the spiritual. One who is “poor” realizes they have nothing in and of themselves. They are totally dependent. They agree with the Apostle Paul when he wrote, “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God,” (2 Cor. 3:5); but these are “blessed;” who are happy and find joy and acceptance in God’s kingdom. They are appreciative because they know before Christ, they lacked spiritual vitality and were “poor.” Now, in Him, they enjoy a new experience of blessedness.

Luke 6:21 “Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.”

Jesus’ followers, God’s people, live with an expectation of being “filled.” These verses really hone in on our life with and without Christ. Without Him, it is truly a life of lack compared to being spiritually satisfied and complete in Him.

One that “hungers” has not yet retained enough to turn over the plate and say, “That’s it, I’m done.” Spiritually speaking, he that “hungers” has a need for more of Him. His soul doesn’t rest until it finds that “ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power,” Colossians 2:10. This is where the malnourished soul is embraced and filled with the satisfaction of the Savior.

“Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.” Many of us have been well acquainted with tears on more than one occasion. Tears or weeping are most often shed in times of sorrow; during times of hardship and anguish. Crying gives one an opportunity to release those pinned up emotions that stress the body and soul of man.

Whether this weeping is associated with sorrow of sin or because of adversity of the wicked, those that endure through it now will find a time when “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying…” (Revelation 21:4).

“For ye shall laugh.” Where there is laughter, joy has replaced the sorrow that was once felt. Where there is laughter, release is felt from the oppression of the wicked. David once wrote, “Fret not thyself because of evildoers…” (Psalm 37:1). If they are the source of tears, forget about it. He goes on to say, “The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is
coming,” (Psalm 37:13). When God laughs, as His followers, we will share in the same joy as our Savior.

The Bible says, He will “appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness…” (Isaiah 61:3), and they will be able to “laugh!”

Luke 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.”

Acceptance, a lot of people live for it. Being a people pleaser has drained the efforts of some to no avail. When we live for Christ, as God’s people and His followers, it brings contentions and misunderstandings in relationships. It draws a line in the sand between two lifestyles and those lifestyles are always in a battle against one another: those that live for the Spirit and those that live for the flesh.

Others may not understand why you can’t run with the old lifestyle that you used to. They don’t understand that things one used to run after to satisfy the flesh is not precedent any longer. This brings a backlash of ill-feelings toward the Christian. They experience hatred, separateness and reproach; three words that describe being “cast out.” You don’t live like them anymore. You are not part of the status quo or the normal clique, and they count your name as “evil, for the Son of man’s sake,” because you are working to line your life up with Him, and not them.

Luke 6:23 “Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.”

God loves His people and we can receive of His blessings while here on this earth. That fact is sprinkled through His Word. But, a Christian’s permanent “reward” will never be found on this side of glory. Jesus said, “Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven.”

It may not feel like it at the present moment but the day when they cause you harm, the day when they come against you, is a day for rejoicing because God sees and knows, and God will repay. “Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble
you; And to you who are troubled rest with us…” (2 Thessalonians 1:6-7). No, we do not wish ill-will on another, but God’s Word still stands true. Your “reward” is coming! “Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth,” (Psalm 58:11). This life doesn’t hold what we are permanently seeking for! But, our “reward” is coming! “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning,” (Psalm 30:5).

“For in like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.” It’s so hard amid trials and troubles to see that you are not the only who has ever gone through this or are going through this now. Jesus reassured His disciple that those that have gone before them had to endure the same controversy of people not understanding their relationship as God’s people.

The book of Hebrews holds a treasury of people who have endured in the faith despite their adverse circumstances, and yet held on and believed God every step of the way. Hebrews 11 is what some refer to as the Hall of Fame of faith. Immediately, crossing over into chapter 12 we are told, “Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses,” (vs.1). “Prophets” and people who have gone before us can testify that the road wasn’t easy. They can tell their story of how they tried to do the work of God and people did not respond the way they had hoped. They can let the cat out of the bag about how they were mistreated, used and abused because their desire was to fulfill the call of God on their lives. They already experienced in “like manner” what Jesus is preparing His followers for.

**WOEFUL LIVING**

Luke 6:24-26 “But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.”

“Woe” and “for” are the markers to pay close attention to in these verses. Remember how I quoted 2 Thessalonians 1:6 which said, “Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you?” Here is the undeniable truth that those who inflicted harm to God’s people will have the same troubles come back on them. Did not Galatians 6:7 warn, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also
reap?” However one treats the people of God, the same will come back on their heads. They will receive their just deserts.

“Woe” is not a word that you want to hear the Lord Jesus Christ speak over your life. Nothing good ever follows a “woe.” “Woe” to me means you better watch out now, calamity is sure to follow. This will not be the last time Jesus uses the warning of the “woe.” Later, during His earthly ministry He tries to shake the scribes and the Pharisees out of their ways to listen to what the Father is now establishing using the word “woe” (see Matthew 23). When we travel even farther in the future, there are even stronger “woes” that appear in the book of Revelation. The point is, if Jesus is saying “woe,” one better watch their step and get it right.

**HOW WE ALL SHOULD LIVE**

Luke 6:27-30 “But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.”

Now Jesus presents a responsibility shift to those who would live and walk as His followers and as God’s people. It is not only the evildoer that needs to mind his step, but the Christian must live and love people as God Himself does.

When someone has been hurt and broken the last thing on their mind is the benefit of the one who has inflicted the harm. Jesus, knowing what He was going to accomplish on the cross was teaching His disciples to operate in this world as if He would. Years ago, the WWJD movement became very popular. It was based off the original book written by Charles M. Sheldon titled “In His Steps.” The base of the book was that every thought and action was to be filtered through the question of What Would Jesus Do?

All these things that He speaks of in the above verses were things that He did; they were things that Jesus demonstrated in His own life. “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth,” (Isaiah 53:7). Jesus was teaching His
followers that to live as God would have them to live, to live as He Himself did, you will not only have to go against the status quo and cliques of society, but you will also have to fight against your own natural inclinations that don’t want to seek the good of those who cause harm.

“Love your enemies.” The words love and enemies do not coincide with one another according to human standards. But Jesus is calling us to use God’s Spirit within us to operate on a supernatural level that surpasses our view of the natural world.

When one is an enemy that means that they are against us. Yet, Jesus’ command is to love them anyhow. Show them the same compassion as He did when He allowed them to drive the nails through His hands and feet. He told His disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane, “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matthew 26:53). He could’ve taken care of His enemies with one swoop of prayer, yet love compelled Him to offer Himself for their release from sin instead.

They cursed Him, yet He prayed for them, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do,” (Luke 23:34). They struck Jesus on the “cheek” (John18:22, see also Matthew 5:39) and they divided His clothes (Luke 23:34). He went through it all and never sought His own revenge but continued forth in love.

Luke 6:31 “And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.”

This is the Golden Rule, as we call it today. God’s people should know how to treat people in any circumstance, whether the times are favorable or in times of adversity. God’s people must respond the same way Jesus did. Philippians 2:5 tells us, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” The way we view things, people, and situations are to be filtered through thinking on how Jesus Himself would respond. How did He handle adversities? What was His attitude like toward those who mocked Him and so forth? All in all, if we were to take inventory and compare our response to Jesus’, would they match up. After all, in order to be a Christian, it means we are of Christ, we are His followers, and we are Christ-minded. If we’re not, can we truly call ourselves Christians?

The greatest commandment that Jesus taught was, “The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

NOTES:
*There is none other commandment greater than these,*” (Mark 12:29-31, emphasis mine). Loving people, treating people as one would want to be treated is a priority for being a follower of Christ! It is one of the greatest commandments and it cannot be ignored!

What does Christianity look like to you now? Are you following Jesus’ teachings for His followers?
1. T or F. Jesus teaches His followers to hate their enemies. (Luke 6:27)

2. “________ be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.” (Luke 6:20)
   A. Cursed   B. Helped   C. Blessed   D. None

3. What are some of the “Woes” Jesus pronounced in this lesson? Why are they important to pay attention to?
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

4. What does the word “Blessed” mean?
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

   A. Reward   B. Clouds   C. Thrones   D. None

6. T or F. Jesus teaches His followers they that weep shall laugh. (Luke 6:21)

7. Our lesson reminds us, “As ye would that men should to do you, do ye also to them likewise,” (Luke 6:31). What is the meaning behind this verse and why is it important?
   ____________________________________________________________
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