

Jesus Selects the Twelve (6:12-16)

12 Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. 13 And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles: 14 Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; 15 Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot; 16 Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor.

- Here Jesus’ prayer life is on display again, marked by solitude – and length!
- Related to fasting is the concept of “watching,” spending the night in prayer to God. Paul practiced this also (2 Cor. 11:27).
- The number 12 speaks of Divine government and order in Scripture.
- “For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called” (1 Corinthians 1:26).
- This will be the Lord’s inner circle; he had many other disciples who were not chosen as apostles.
- Part of what this shows us is that the mission of Jesus was changing. It was time to begin training those who would follow Him.
- Rabbis would: teach, train, model, observe, supervise, and release.
- An apostle is someone who is sent, an emissary.

- These 12 men have a unique, non-repeatable ministry. God has honored them and will honor them greatly in the ages to come.
- However, there are other apostles in the New Testament, men such as Paul, Barnabas, and James the Lord’s brother.

The Sermon on the Plain; Blessings and Woes (6:17-26)

17 And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, 18 as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. 19 And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all.

- In v. 19, Jesus kept healing until they were all healed!
- Note the continued geographic spread of the Lord’s ministry.
- Our best teachings and messages and revelations must come from above!

20 Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said:

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

21 Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be filled.

Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. (cont’d)

*22 Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you,
And revile you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake.*

23 Rejoice in that day and leap for joy!

For indeed your reward is great in heaven,

For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

24 But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.

25 Woe to you who are full, for you shall hunger.

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

26 Woe to you when all men speak well of you,

For so did their fathers to the false prophets.”

- Some think the “Sermon on the Plain” is the same as the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7), but we can note some differences.
- The Lord warns the entire society that it will be overturned (another reversal)!
- It is not being poor or wealthy per se that determines our state – consider that these are *Kingdom* blessings and *Kingdom* woes. Those who receive the woes are those who have rejected His grace and who are oppressing the righteous.
- God is working in several different dimensions: (1) the Kingdom reversals we see throughout Luke; (2) the coming destruction of Jerusalem and Israel (70 AD); and (3) the eternal rewards and punishments that await us.
- Many who came to believe that Jesus was the Christ were indeed put out of the synagogue, and would be excluded from much of Jewish life (see John 9).

Kingdom Living (6:27-36)

27 "But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. 29 To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either. 30 Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back. 31 And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.

32 "But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. 35 But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. 36 Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

- It's only by Christ's power and indeed by Christ Himself living within us that we can live in this fashion. We don't live "transactionally" as Christians, but we do treat people as we would want them to treat us, even if they are **not** kind to us!
- Observe the sets of positive and negative demands from the Lord.
- Pagan philosophers and others had said, "Don't do to others what you yourself find distasteful." Jesus gives us a positive command!

Judgment and Hypocrisy (6:37-42)

37 “Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. 38 Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”

39 And He spoke a parable to them: “Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? 40 A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher. 41 And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? 42 Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother’s eye.

- The command not to judge is serious, but what does it mean? Obviously, there are things we have to judge, or else society would grind to a halt. What we seek to avoid is **unrighteous** judgment. Jesus said, “Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment” (John 7:24).
- Remember that we cannot read people’s minds and motivations.
- In context, this reciprocity also applies to giving to people.
- Believers need a self-examined life. Be careful that you examine your teachers!
- We also need a self-examined life when it comes to straightening people out, or **thinking** that we can.
- You may not be responsible to correct others, but the Word teaches those who are in responsible positions to correct people in a spirit of meekness.

The Fruit Test (6:43-45)

43 *“For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. 44 For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. 45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.*

- The fruit of our lives always reveals what kind of tree we are.
- The real contents of our hearts cannot be hidden, because our mouths will express what is within the soul. Christians are like teacups!
- Quote from J. C. Ryle: “Let us not give way to the vulgar notion, that no one can know anything of the state of another's heart, and that although men are living wickedly, they have got good hearts at the bottom. Such notions are flatly contradictory to our Lord's teaching. Is the general tone of a man's communication carnal, worldly, irreligious, godless, or profane? Then let us understand that this is the state of his heart. When a man's tongue is extensively wrong, it is absurd, no less than unscriptural, to say that his heart is right.... Conduct is the grand test of character. Words are one great evidence of the condition of the heart.”

A Secure Foundation (6:46-49)

46 *“But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say? (cont’d)*

47 Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: 48 He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. 49 But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.”

- Ultimately, we can risk expressing our hypocrisy to Jesus Himself! It’s essential to establish our lives upon the rock, because storms are coming for all of us.
- The firm foundation is not knowing Jesus’ words but DOING them!

Healing the Centurion’s Servant (7:1-10)

1 Now when He concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum. 2 And a certain centurion’s servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die. 3 So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant. 4 And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, 5 “for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue.”

6 Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, “Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof. 7 Therefore I did not even think (cont’d)

myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. 8 For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

9 When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" 10 And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick.

- Centurions were the highly respected backbone of the Roman army.
- Luke takes pains to show that the Lord held Gentiles in high esteem.
- The lifestyle and ethics of Judaism were very attractive to Gentiles. Many sought a compromise position of being so-called "God-fearers."
- The delegation wanted to let Jesus know that the centurion was "deserving." Jesus turns the tables by recognizing and honoring the man's great faith.
- The man not only had real faith, but he also showed a keen perception of the spiritual realities involved in this encounter.
- Luke continues to show us the Lord's absolute mastery over sickness and disease in this amazing healing.
