



Road Trip: On the Road with Jesus in Galilee

Week 13: Sermon on the Plain

THE TEXT: Luke 6:17-49

¹⁷ When they came down from the mountain, the disciples stood with Jesus on a large, level area, surrounded by many of his followers and by the crowds. There were people from all over Judea and from Jerusalem and from as far north as the seacoasts of Tyre and Sidon. ¹⁸ They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those troubled by evil spirits were healed. ¹⁹ Everyone tried to touch him, because healing power went out from him, and he healed everyone.

²⁰ Then Jesus turned to his disciples and said, “God blesses you who are poor, for the Kingdom of God is yours.

²¹ God blesses you who are hungry now, for you will be satisfied. God blesses you who weep now, for in due time you will laugh.

²² What blessings await you when people hate you and exclude you and mock you and curse you as evil because you follow the Son of Man. ²³ When that happens, be happy! Yes, leap for joy! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, their ancestors treated the ancient prophets that same way.

²⁴ “What sorrow awaits you who are rich, for you have your only happiness now.

²⁵ What sorrow awaits you who are fat and prosperous now, for a time of awful hunger awaits you. What sorrow awaits you who laugh now, for your laughing will turn to mourning and sorrow.

²⁶ What sorrow awaits you who are praised by the crowds, for their ancestors also praised false prophets.

²⁷ “But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. ²⁸ Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you. ²⁹ If someone slaps you on one cheek, offer the other cheek also. If someone demands your coat, offer your shirt also. ³⁰ Give to anyone who asks; and when things are taken away from you, don’t try to get them back. ³¹ Do to others as you would like them to do to you.

³² “If you love only those who love you, why should you get credit for that? Even sinners love those who love them! ³³ And if you do good only to those who do good to you, why should you get credit? Even sinners do that much! ³⁴ And if you lend money only to those who can repay you, why should you get credit? Even sinners will lend to other sinners for a full return.

³⁵ “Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for he is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked. ³⁶ You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate.

³⁷ “Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn others, or it will all come back against you. Forgive others, and you will be forgiven. ³⁸ Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back.”

³⁹ Then Jesus gave the following illustration: "Can one blind person lead another? Won't they both fall into a ditch?" ⁴⁰ Students are not greater than their teacher. But the student who is fully trained will become like the teacher.

⁴¹ "And why worry about a speck in your friend's eye when you have a log in your own?" ⁴² How can you think of saying, 'Friend, let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,' when you can't see past the log in your own eye? Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye.

⁴³ "A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit. ⁴⁴ A tree is identified by its fruit. Figs are never gathered from thornbushes, and grapes are not picked from bramble bushes. ⁴⁵ A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. What you say flows from what is in your heart.

⁴⁶ "So why do you keep calling me 'Lord, Lord!' when you don't do what I say?" ⁴⁷ I will show you what it's like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching, and then follows it. ⁴⁸ It is like a person building a house who digs deep and lays the foundation on solid rock. When the floodwaters rise and break against that house, it stands firm because it is well built. ⁴⁹ But anyone who hears and doesn't obey is like a person who builds a house without a foundation. When the floods sweep down against that house, it will collapse into a heap of ruins." (Luke 6:17-49 NLT-SE)

THE SERMON LESS STUDIED

Everyone knows about the **Sermon on the Mount** in Matthew, Chapters 5 through 7. This teaching by Jesus is considered one of the most important and challenging teachings on Godly Character in the Bible. When people read what is called **The Sermon on the Plain** in Luke 6:17-49, they easily come to the conclusion that this teaching sounds so similar to Matthew's Sermon on the Mount that it must simply be Luke's version of the same story. Because both stories start out the same, ("Blessed are the poor in Spirit...") and Matthew's Sermon on the Mount is so well read, Luke's Sermon on the Plain is virtually ignored.

Bottom line: Though they sound similar, These two messages are coming from very different perspectives.

- ☑ The **Sermon on the Mount** looks at the condition of the people from a **spiritual perspective**. and
- ☑ The **Sermon on the Plain** looks at the people from a **social perspective**.

The Sermon on the Mount probably took place early in Jesus' Galilean ministry, before the "The Twelve" were chosen. The Sermon on the Plain obviously took place later on. The Sermon on the Plain takes about 4 minutes to read, the Sermon on the Mount takes about 12 minutes.

- The **Sermon of the Plain** falls under four basic headings, the first two being almost exactly the same length as the last two. They can be summarized in the following way:

- **6:20-26...Blessings for the Poor, Woes for the Rich**

- One of the great problems for us in America is that **we are a nation built on the pursuit of happiness** and not the pursuit of blessedness. Happiness is contingent on **circumstances**, blessedness is contingent on **God**. Happiness is temporary and blessedness is permanent. One bible teacher put it this way...
 - For those whose **identity is rooted in this world** and all it has to offer, *this is as close to **heaven** as they will ever get.*
 - For those whose **identity is rooted in Jesus**, and he is their King, and their citizenship is in His kingdom, *this is as close to **Hell** as they will ever get!*
- Luke reports these **blessings** more plainly and straightforwardly than Matthew does in the Sermon on the Mount (*simply "poor" rather than "poor in spirit" and "hunger" rather than "hunger and thirst for righteousness," for*

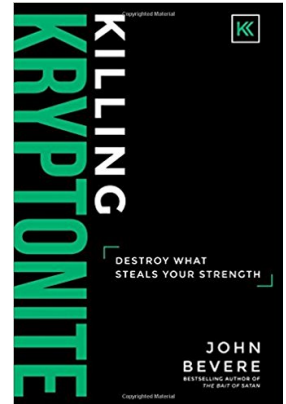
example). Luke also includes a counter list of **woes** on those who are well fed, laughing now, and spoken well of (Luke 6:24-26) which Matthew did not include.

- **6:27-36...Love Your Enemies...**God saved us while we were still his enemies. We are to love people while they are still our enemies. Anything will lead us to question not only God's love for our enemies, but his love for us as well.
- **6:37-45...Forgiveness Trumps Judgement...**Approach everyone with love — non-judgmentally and with an open heart — whether family, neighbor or stranger, friend or enemy, whether you think they're worthy, find them grateful, or even know them to be sinners.
- **6:46-49...A Final Word on Obedience...**Why do you keep calling me 'Lord, Lord!' when you don't do what I say?
 - We have a proclivity to **wrestle with God** over the issue of "**LORDSHIP**." This statement from Jesus could really rock you, in a negative way, or in a positive way if you let it.
 - **Simply turn the verse around.** Our obedience opens the door for him to become "Lord" in our lives. The power of obedience is that it invites God to have influence in our lives at a level no man can rival!
 - We tend to have **two major points of contention** when it comes to **lordship**:
 - **God's love...**Even though we know the truth, **we too easily slip back into thinking that our relationship with God is performance-based**. We forget that he loved us **while** we were still sinners...
 - ¹⁸ The Lord watches over those who fear him, **those who rely on his unfailing love...**²⁰ We put our hope in the Lord. He is our help and our shield. (Psa 33:18, 20 NLT-SE)
 - ⁵ **We know how dearly God loves us**, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love...⁶ **When we were utterly helpless, Christ came** at just the right time and died for us sinners...⁸ God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us **while we were still sinners**.⁹ And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation. ¹⁰ For since **our friendship with God was restored** by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son. ¹¹ So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because **our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God**. (Rom 5:5, 8-11 NLT-SE)
 - **Our need...**We need a Savior, a Redeemer, a Rescuer, a Friend, a source of Freedom and Hope! Let's talk about the "**R**" word for a moment. **Without it, we will have an anemic relationship with the One we call Lord.**
 - "Therefore, I will judge each of you, O people of Israel, according to your actions, says the Sovereign Lord. **Repent, and turn from your sins. Don't let them destroy you!** (Ezek 18:30 NLT-SE)
 - **"Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near."** (Matt 3:2 NLT-SE)
 - ⁸ If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth. ⁹ But **if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from**

The image shows a screenshot of the Merriam-Webster online dictionary entry for the word "repent". The header includes the Merriam-Webster logo, "SINCE 1828", and navigation links for "JOIN MWU", "GAMES", "BROWSE THESAURUS", "WORD OF THE DAY", "VIDEO", and "WORDS AT PLAY". The word "repent" is entered in the search bar, with "DICTIONARY" and "THESAURUS" tabs below it. A note says "Examples: REPENT in a Sentence". The entry is divided into two main sections: "intransitive verb" and "transitive verb". Under "intransitive verb", there are two numbered definitions: 1. "to turn from sin and dedicate oneself to the amendment of one's life" and 2. "a: to feel regret or contrition b: to change one's mind". Under "transitive verb", there are two numbered definitions: 1. "to cause to feel regret or contrition" and 2. "to feel sorrow, regret, or contrition for". On the left side of the definition area, there are social media sharing icons for Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and Email, along with a "CITE" button.

all wickedness. ¹⁰ If we claim we have not sinned, we are calling God a liar and showing that his word has no place in our hearts. (1 John 1:8–10 NLT-SE)

- **Perspective:** How “**the world**” makes choices vs. how a **Believer** make choices (John Bevere, author of **Killing Kryptonite: Destroy What Steal Your Strength** ~ 10/17/17)
 - **World**...“I choose what is good, right or best for me.”
 - **Believer**...“I choose what God says is good, right or best for me.”
- **Repentance** (*metanoia*...changing the way you think or feel)
 - “A change in the **whole personality** from a sinful course to God.” *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*
 - **Less biblical!**...“I invited Jesus into my heart” or “I accepted Jesus”
 - **More biblical!**...“I’ve lived as the one who judges what is best for me. No more! From this moment forward, no matter what God says is best, I will believe and embrace it with all my heart, mind and behavior.”
 - ⁹ Now I am glad I sent it, not because it hurt you, but because the pain caused you to repent and change your ways. It was the kind of sorrow God wants his people to have, so you were not harmed by us in any way. ¹⁰ For **the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There’s no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death.** (2 Cor 7:9–10 NLT-SE)



THE MILLENNIAL’S DILEMMA

- “**Millennials are commitment averse.** They (we) don’t like to be pinned down or locked into anything, whether a career or dwelling place or church. We are the FOMO (“fear of missing out”) generation, preferring to keep our options open rather than committing to something or someone and foreclosing other possibilities. We are the generation that has rendered RSVP-based party planning a futile endeavor...**If the Church is going to thrive in the 21st century, she needs to be willing to demand more of her members.** She needs to assert the importance of covenants over comfort, even if that is a message that will turn off some. She needs to speak prophetically against the perversions of cultural and consumer Christianity, seeker unfriendly as that will be. She needs to call Christians away from an **individualistic, “just me and Jesus” faith**, challenging them to embrace the costliness of the cross and the challenge of life in a **covenantal community.**” ~ **Nobody Said Christianity Should Be Comfortable**, by Brett McCracken, Relevant Magazine, September 13, 2017
- **It starts and ends with how we think of God**
 - “What comes into our minds when we **think about God** is the most important thing about us.” ~ A.W. Tozer
 - Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but **let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.** Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. (Rom 12:2 NLT-SE)
 - “**If we are to better the future we must disturb the present.**” ~ Catherine Booth, Co-founder of The Salvation Army, along with her husband William Booth.