

Lectionary Gospel Commentaries

By the Rev. Dr. Harry Wendt, Founder of Crossways International
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Based on the Lectionary Pericope Covering:

SOLA-LSB (Lutheran Service Book):
RCL (Revised Common Lectionary):

Luke 6:17-26

Year C - Epiphany 6, Text: Luke 6:17-26
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This and the next pericope study (Luke 6:27-38) focus on some of the contents of Luke, Chapter 6.

A similar section in Matthew Chapters 5-7 is referred to as “The Sermon on the Mount.” The contents of Luke 6:17-49 are referred to as “The Sermon on the Plain.” In his “sermon” Luke shares a number of Jesus’ sayings found in Matthew’s Sermon on the Mount. Luke’s account contains fewer of Jesus’ teachings than Matthew’s. The list of “woes” in verses 24-26 are without parallel in Matthew.

Each Gospel distinguishes between Jesus’ address of the crowds in general and Jesus speaking to his disciples/followers. In the lead up to this section, Luke 6:12-16, Jesus had just called His disciples. Now in verses 6:17-49, he gets back to teaching.

In these verses, Jesus radically reinterprets many of the cherished notions of Judaism. For example, Jesus reinterprets the terms “blessed” and “woe” in ways that differ greatly from the way that they were interpreted in His day (see Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28).

Although Jesus’ followers were prone (as are people today) to interpret blessedness as “Blessed are those who are rich, full now, laughing, and well-spoken of,” Jesus responds that the rich have received their consolation; the well-fed will be hungry; those who laugh will mourn and weep, and those well-spoken of are to remember that their ancestors also spoke well of the false prophets. By way of contrast, Jesus says:

Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets. (v.20-23).

Jesus never links “being blessed” to what a person acquires and enjoys. He links it only to reflecting His own mind and manner.

Some thoughts on Faithful Stewardship

Many who live in today’s more affluent nations are confused. Many people think that they are “so blessed” because they live in a big, well-furnished home, because they own and drive one or two quality cars, because they also own a “cabin” (sometimes another “mansion”) and an expensive boat on a lakeshore — and have a lot of money in their bank account. However, Jesus never links “being blessed” to what people “possess.” We do well to remember the old saying, ‘You never see a U-Haul behind a hearse!’

A colleague who has served as a financial advisor for Crossways International shared with me the standard practice in his large church. For every dollar that his congregation spends on expanding or improving their church facility, they must give a matching dollar to mission churches in poor countries.

Jesus tells us to remember, at all times, that there are (in a sense) only two people on Planet Earth — Me and Jesus. But Jesus is all around me, in disguise! He is the hungry one, the thirsty one, the one who lacks clothing, the nearby stranger, the sick one, the nearby prison inmate. In short, we need to ask, “Jesus, where are You? How can I serve you?” — and hear Him reply, “I am all around you in disguise. When you serve those in need, you serve me!”

Please give some thought to the contents of Acts 2:43-47 and 4:32-37, The message is: “None of us owns anything. We are merely managers and sharers of God’s property.” God has provided abundantly. However, we humans have not shared compassionately! Jesus never links “being blessed” to what we acquire and enjoy. He links it only to reflecting His caring servant lifestyle!

