

# Inheriting the kingdom (pt.1)

## a. The twelve, the disciples & the multitude (6:12-19)

### 6:12-16 How does Luke emphasize the seriousness of this stage in Christ's ministry?

[1] [6:12] ... more than the other Evangelists, Luke stresses the importance of prayer in the Lord's ministry. The Baptism, the choosing of the Twelve, the confession of Peter, the transfiguration, the betrayal – all are preceded by Christ in prayer. **E. Earle Ellis** *The Gospel of Luke* p. 110

[2] [6:12-19] These twelve are distributed in the four lists into three groups of four each, and no individual of either of these groups is transferred to another. We may conclude from this that the apostolical college consisted of three concentric circles, of which the innermost was in the closest relations with Jesus. The same three apostles are found at the head of each quaternion, Peter, Philip, and James. Besides this quaternary division, Matthew and Luke indicates a division into pairs, at least (according to the received reading, in Luke, and certainly in Matthew) for the last

eight apostles. In the Acts, the first four apostles are connected with each other by *kai*; the remaining eight are grouped in pairs. **Frederic Godet** *Luke* p. 193

"It is vain to look for perfection in visible churches. We shall never find it." – **J. C. Ryle**

[3] [6:12-19] Finally, our Lord's choice of Judas was meant to teach the whole Church, that it must not expect to see a perfectly pure communion in the present state of things. The wheat and tares, the good fish and the bad, will always be found side by side, till the Lord comes again. It is vain to look for perfection in visible churches. We shall never find it. A Judas was found even among the apostles. Converted and unconverted people will always be found mixed together in all

congregations. **J.C. Ryle** *Luke* Vol 1 p. 173

### 6:17-19 Is the healing art of Christ dependent on discipleship? (Acts 5:16)

## b. The higher happiness – Alas!, not for all (6:20-26)

### 6:20-23 How are the world's standards blasted by the Beatitudes? (Matt.5:1-12; 1 Cor.15:30-34)

[4] [6:20-21] Matthew begins in the same way; but there are two important differences between him and Luke: 1<sup>st</sup>. The latter has only four beatitudes; Matthew has eight (not seven, or nine, as is often said). 2<sup>nd</sup>. To the four beatitudes of Luke are joined four woes, which are wanting in Matthew. **Frederic Godet** *Luke* p. 199

[5] [6:20-23] Four Beatitudes; which correspond to the first, second, fourth, and eighth in Matt. 5:3-12; those relating to the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, and the peacemakers being omitted. In the four that Luke gives the more spiritual words which occur in Matt are omitted, and the blessings are assigned to more external conditions. *Actual* poverty, sorrow, and hunger are declared to be blessed (as being opportunities for the exercise of internal virtues); and this doctrine is emphasized by the corresponding Woes pronounced upon wealth, jollity, and fulness

of bread (as being sources of temptation). **Alfred Plummer** *The Gospel According to St Luke* p. 179

[6] [6:22] Excommunication from the congregation as well as from social intercourse is here meant. The usual sentence was for thirty days, during which the excommunicated might not come within four cubits of any one. Comp. John 9:22; 12:42; 16:2. Whether there was at this time a more severe form of excommunication is uncertain. **Alfred Plummer** *St Luke* p. 181

### 6:24-26 Just in case we miss the point, a negative restatement of the beatitudes! (NOTE: Christ does NOT say, *Slightly disadvantaged are you who are ...!*)

[7] [6:24] The 'beatitudes' and 'woes' are not blessings or cursings

## ‘... the only measure of organization which [Christ] ever took’

[8] [6:12-8:56] Up to this time Jesus had been satisfied with gathering converts about Him, calling some of them to accompany Him habitually as disciples. Now He saw that the moment was come to give His work a more definite form, and to organize His adherents. The hostile army is preparing for the attack; it is time to consecrate His own forces; and consequently He begins, if I may venture to say so, by drawing up His list of officers. The choosing of the Twelve is the first constitutive act accomplished by Jesus Christ. It is the first measure, and substantially (with the

sacraments) the only measure, of organization which He ever took. **F. Godet** *Luke* p. 189

[9] [6:13] Jesus never set up an organization. These twelve men represent the total of His administrative machinery. Some of them were clearly outstanding men, but on the whole they seem to have been no more than average. Most have left very little mark on church history. Jesus preferred to work, then as now, through perfectly ordinary people. **Leon Morris** *Luke* p. 124

upon those groups but are insights into their true condition. To one group the kingdom will come as salvation, to the other as a destroying flood. By their present conduct and attitudes the disciples show to which group they belong (35). **E. Earle Ellis** *The Gospel of Luke* p. 112

**[10]** [6:24-26] Woe does not convey the exact force of Jesus' *ouai*. It is more like 'Alas' (NEB) or 'How terrible' (TEV). It is an expression of regret and compassion, not a threat. **Leon Morris** *Luke* p. 127

## THE WORLD'S PROPAGANDA AND PRIORITIES:

### ***Blessed [happy] are you rich***

**[11]** [6:12-7:50] Only once earlier in Luke (4:43) does the phrase 'kingdom of God' occur. In this and the two following sections it occurs seven times. **E. Earle Ellis** *The Gospel of Luke* p. 109

### ***Blessed are you who eat regularly, whose basic needs are met***

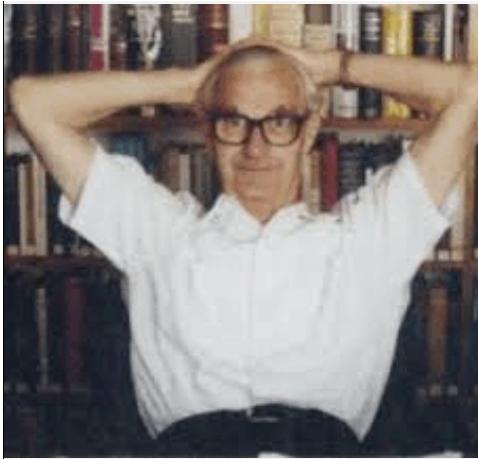
**[12]** [6:25] This received a partial and literal fulfilment when Jerusalem was reduced to starvation in the siege: but the reference is rather to the loss of the spiritual food of the Kingdom. Comp. Isaiah 65:13. Hillel said, "The more flesh one hath the more worms, the more treasures the more care, the more maids the more unchastity, the more menservants the more theft. The more law the more life, the more schools the more wisdom, the more counsel the more insight, the more righteousness the more peace." **Alfred Plummer** *The Gospel According to St Luke* p. 182

### ***Blessed are you who laugh, have fun, pleasure & the 'good time'***

**[13]** [6:22,23] Jesus promised His followers that they would be absurdly

happy; but also that they would never be out of trouble. **Leon Morris** *Luke* p. 127

### ***Blessed are you if you are accepted, if you 'fit in' with the crowd***



**Leon Morris**

Christ promised us that we would be 'absurdly happy [but] ... never be out of trouble'! How are we doing with both descriptions ... happiness married to tribulation?

**[14]** [6:24-26] It refers rather to the expunging of the name from the synagogue roll of membership. There is not, on this account, any tautology of the preceding idea. *To separate, to insult*, indicated acts of unpremeditated violence; *to erase the name* is a permanent measure taken with deliberation and coolness. ... Instead of *for the Son of man's sake*, Matthew says *for my sake*. The latter expression denotes attachment to the person of Jesus; the former faith in His Messianic character, as the perfect representative of humanity ... This idea of submission to persecution along with, and for the sake of, the Messiah, was so foreign to the Jewish point of view that Jesus feels He must justify it. **Frederic Godet** *Luke* p. 202

### ***Blessed are you who become famous, who 'make a name' for yourself***

## Ryle: Testing 'the reality of our Christianity'

**[15]** One mighty lesson stands out plainly on the face of these verses. May we all lay it to heart, and learn wisdom! That lesson is the utter contrariety between the mind of Christ, and the common opinions of mankind, the entire variance between the thoughts of Jesus, and the prevailing thoughts of the world. The conditions of life which the world reckons desirable, are the very conditions upon which the Lord pronounces "woes." Poverty, and hunger, and sorrow, and persecution, are the very things which man labours to avoid. Riches and fulness, and merriment, and popularity, are precisely the things which men are always struggling to attain. When we have said all, in the way of qualifying, explaining, and limiting our Lord's words, there still remain two sweeping assertions, which flatly contradict the current doctrine of mankind. The state of life which our Lord blesses, the world cordially dislikes. The people to whom our Lord says, "woe unto you," are the very people whom the world admires, praises, and imitates. This is an awful fact. It ought to raise within us great searchings of heart. Let us leave the

whole passage with honest self-inquiry and self-examination. Let us ask ourselves what we think of the wonderful declarations that it contains. Can we subscribe to what our Lord says? Are we of one mind with Him? Do we really believe that riches and worldly enjoyments, and popularity among men, when sought for more than salvation, or preferred in the least to the praise of God, are a positive curse? Do we really think that the favour of Christ, with trouble and the world's ill word, is better worth having than money, and merriment, and a good name among men, without Christ? These are most serious questions, and deserve a most serious answer. The passage before us is eminently one which tests the reality of our Christianity. The truths it contains, are truths which no unconverted man can love and receive. Happy are those who have found them truths by experience, and can say "amen" to all our Lord's declarations. Whatever men may please to think, those whom Jesus blesses, and those whom Jesus does not bless will be cast out for evermore. **J.C. Ryle** *Luke* Vol 1 p. 179