

Adult Sunday Bible Study Lesson

January 17, 2021

The Gospel According to Luke

The Kingdom Contrast

Situational Context: Luke 6:17 (ESV) ¹⁷ **And he came down with them and stood on a level place,** with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon,

This phrase accounts for the sermon being called "The Sermon on the Plain." Luke describes a ministry of teaching and healing that had wide appeal. There are many similarities to the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5), and some see this as a variant account of the same sermon. But this sermon is much shorter, and Luke has parallels to other parts of Mt 5 elsewhere. It is more likely that Jesus used much the same material on a number of occasions, a practice common among preachers. Jesus had the same theme in His preaching. Luke does not record the sections in the Matthew 5 incident because He was preaching in a gentile area and they would not grasp the peculiarities of the Law.

Lesson Theme: Luke 6:27-32

Jesus teaches on the transformation that radically changes the way citizens of the Kingdom live as opposed to the general way of living by the standards of the world. Jesus describes what practical righteousness looks like. **This is where our sanctification is taking us!** This of course is impossible apart from regeneration and a God righteousness and was meant to lead the people to seek this from Him.

1. Love Differently: Luke 6:27-32 (ESV) ²⁷ **“But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,** ²⁸ **bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.** ²⁹ **To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either.** ³⁰ **Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back.** ³¹ **And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.** ³² **“If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.**

Interpretation: The heart of Jesus' teaching is love. While the Golden Rule is sometimes expressed in negative form outside the Bible (see note on Mt 7:12), Jesus not only forbids treating others spitefully but also commands that we love everyone—even our enemies. These enemies are those in our personal lives that seek our harm? This obviously does not classify criminal behavior nor does our Lord want us to tolerate and assist evil. We are not to return hate for hate, ill will for ill will, and evil for evil. We are not to have a retaliatory attitude.

Supporting Texts:

Romans 12:17 (ESV) ¹⁷ Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.

Romans 12:20-21 (ESV) ²⁰ To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.”

²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

1 Thessalonians 5:15 (ESV) ¹⁵ See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.

1 Peter 3:9 (ESV) ⁹ Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.

Discussion Starters:

What does the truth that all human beings are made in God's image have to do with these commands?

How is this command relevant to abortion, the elderly, the child and adolescent?

How has the word here for love (agape) help us?

How is the Christian to fight evil?

2. Give Differently: Luke 6:33-36 (ESV) ³³ And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. ³⁵ But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. ³⁶ Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.

Interpretation: Christ's kingdom followers are not to allow our responses to others to be governed by what they can do for us. We are to do good not expecting anything in return. We do good as those who appreciate that God has blessed us and that everything we have is from Him.

Supporting Texts:

John 3:27 (ESV) ²⁷ John answered, "A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven.

Proverbs 19:17 (ESV) ¹⁷ Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his deed.

Matthew 5:42 (ESV) ⁴² Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.

Discussion Starters:

How does John 3:27 change our view of money and resources?

How is treating others according to their usefulness to you a violation of love and is manipulation?

3. Judge Differently: Luke 6:37-38 (ESV) ³⁷ "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; ³⁸ give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down,

shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”

Interpretation: Jesus elsewhere teaches that His disciples must sometimes judge what others do, and that the character of a person’s heart can be recognized from the actions that flow from it. What He warns against here is the hypocrisy of those who condemn others for what they themselves are guilty of, and the failure to show mercy. Such forgiveness is not a reward, but unless we forgive others, we do not have genuine repentance and faith, and so exclude ourselves from forgiveness.

Supporting Texts:

Matthew 7:15-16 (ESV) ¹⁵ “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?”

Matthew 18:15-16 (ESV) ¹⁵ “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. ¹⁶ But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.

Luke 6:41-42 (ESV) ⁴¹ Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? ⁴² How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother’s eye.

Discussion Starters:

How would this apply to judging young people?

How would this apply to judging the elderly?

What is the difference in judging fruit as opposed to the person?