

“Living the Blessed Life”

NBC Chapel Service Wed. Eve. Feb. 7, 2007

Prayer

Scripture Reading: Luke 6:17 – 26

Reader 1 – 17 – 20a

Reader 2 – 20b – 23

Reader 3 – 24 - 26

INTRODUCTION: We are so blessed? What went through your mind as we sang those words? (Video that projected it up on the screen?)

Oh yeah, man things are going well... work, family, kids, school, finances...

Oh sure... have you seen my check book? Have you any idea how frazzled my family is... do you have any idea how close I am to quitting school? Well I am glad somebody is blessed. You know it seems like I just go from one crisis and one trial to another... you call that blessed?

What was going through your mind as we sang?

If either of these thoughts describe what you were thinking... that is not at all what Jesus means by the blessed or the unblessed life.

These are familiar words... when Jesus talks about the “Blessed” our minds tend to jump to the Sermon on the Mount. But this is the Sermon on the plains, and there are some subtle differences, mainly because the place and the people are different. It is a different crowd, a different context... but the same challenging truth.

Here Jesus is speaking in the plains of Galilee. Our first thought is that he is speaking to an agricultural community... country folks, not the highly educated city folks... but that are not exactly accurate. For the truth is Galilee was the garden spot of the area. It is known for its beauty, climate, and restful atmosphere. It is where wealthy folks came to get away from the hustle and the bustle. It was a regular tourist route which also brought special commerce. The audience was more than likely a combination of rural folk, Jews and Gentiles on vacation, folks from the seaport cities of Tyre and Sidon and business persons – Jews and Gentiles alike. How fitting that the first sermon Luke records for us immediately reaches a cross-cultural audience.

After spending the night in prayer, Jesus comes down from the mountain in the power of the Holy Spirit and preaches with a spiritual fervor and passion that literally turned the world upside down. The principle audience is the disciples... but He intentionally includes the crowd, who has gathered to hear this new healer/prophet.

NOW... LET'S KEEP THE FOLLOWING IN MIND... Jesus has come to declare the "Kingdom of God." The Kingdom of God is in the hearts and lives of men and women whose sole and singular passion is to live as Christ lives!" Jesus calls us to live a radically different lifestyle than the way the world lives...Different allegiance Different values.... Different priorities... Different Results.

When Jesus used the word we translate as blessed... it brought some immediate things to mind in the hearts and minds of the audience.

I. WHO ARE THE TRULY BLESSED PEOPLE ON EARTH?

Greek Word: μακάριος

Transliteration: makarios Meaning: Extremely blessed, very fortunate, joyous
—Strong's Talking Greek & Hebrew Dictionary (Classical – belonging only to the gods)

The Galileans would have considered themselves to be makarios

²⁰ Looking at his disciples, he said:

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

The Kingdom of God is NOT just for the rich, famous, and powerful, even if you have none of these things God loves you and you are welcome.

Even if your church never qualifies you to be a K church pastor or if your church never becomes a mega-church... you and your ministry are included in the kingdom!

Will you believe that and be faithful or suffer professional envy which will eat you alive!

²¹ Blessed are you who hunger now,
for you will be satisfied.
Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

There is more to life than the here and now... I offer you hope of a better future. You will find satisfaction and joy if you follow me

and live in the Kingdom of God.

—Barclay's Daily Study Bible (NT)

Jesus had no doubt which way in the end brought happiness. F. R. Maltby said, "Jesus promised his disciples three things--that they would be completely fearless, absurdly happy and in constant trouble." G. K. Chesterton, whose principles constantly got him into trouble, once said, "I like getting into hot water. It keeps you clean!" It is Jesus' teaching that the joy of heaven will amply compensate for the trouble of earth. As Paul said, "This slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison" ([2Cor 4:17](#)). The challenge of the beatitudes is, "Will you be happy in the world's way, or in Christ's way?"

²² Blessed are you when men hate you,
when they exclude you and insult you
and reject your name as evil,
because of the Son of Man.

What I am telling you is NOT popular wisdom, theology, or practice. As a matter of fact people will reject, ridicule and hate you if you embrace what I am telling you today, because they hate truth that challenges their thinking

Will you preach the truth in love or will you choose that which is popular and tickles the ears and fancies of men ... will your sermon substance be that which makes you popular or will you declare the Kingdom Principles of God?

²³ "Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their fathers treated the prophets.
Luke 6:20-23 (NIV)

Have hope... this is nothing new, you have seen it before in the way your ancestors treated the prophets of God. The lie of the world hates the truth of God.

II. WARNING TO THOSE WHO THINK YOU ARE BLESSED ACCORDING TO THE STANDARDS OF THE WORLD!

Greek Word: οὔαι

Transliteration: ouai Meaning: Great lament, alas!, tremendous grief
—Strong's Talking Greek & Hebrew Dictionary

²⁴ "But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort.

Those of you who have the wealth of the world and trust in it as your blessing... it is all you get! It is good only for the here and now.

²⁵ Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry.
Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep.

Alas... What you have now will do you no good in eternity. You will end up empty, dissatisfied, and full of grief. You laugh now... but you will be weeping and in torment for eternity.

²⁶ Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets.
Luke 6:24-26 (NIV)

Alas... the shallow praise you receive from the world will avail you nothing before Almighty God. It is as false as the false prophets who came before you. "You are fine, you are doing great... look at your wealth.. It proves you are right with God." Don't believe that for one minute! It is a lie!

The people you and I minister to are caught in the tension of these two perspectives.

The world values possession and comfort.

The Kingdom values character and holiness and service.

III. WILL YOU CHOOSE TO AMONG THOSE JESUS CALLS BLESSED?

Will you dare to be happy in Jesus and let it become contagious?

THE APOSTLE PAUL GIVES US A VIVID DESCRIPTION OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE BLESSED.... Eph 1:3-14 (NIV)

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

JESUS THE SOURCE OF OUR BLESSING

⁴ For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

CHOSEN, LOVED, ADOPTED, MADE HOLY BLAMELESS
GIVEN GRACE UPON GRACE

⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

REDEEMED – BLOOD BOUGHT AND BLOOD WASHED
FORGIVEN

⁸ that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. ⁹ And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, ¹⁰ to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment--to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

¹¹ In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, ¹² in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.

UNDERSTANDING, WISDOM, PURPOSE

¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory.

ASSURANCE, ETERNAL INHERITANCE, HEAVEN

It is true... we are so blessed!