

The Story Church - 1.29.23

A Physician and the Facts: *Luke's Pursuit of the Truth*

Volume 3: *Son of God, Son of Man*

Part Three: *A Warning to Rich Christians*

SERIES INTRO: He was a doctor - a scientist trained to do meticulous research in pursuit of the truth. He was also an educated Gentile who became the only non-Jewish author of the Bible. And in the middle of the first century AD, this man devoted his life to answering one question: ***Can Christianity be trusted?***

His name was Luke, and after years of researching the extraordinary claims being made by a small, highly motivated sect called *The Way*, he became an unlikely disciple of Jesus. How could a reasonable researcher come to believe that a 1st Century Jewish rabbi who was executed by the Romans is the living Son of God? We'll explore this question and more at The Story Church throughout this 22-week series as we follow Luke's logic from the Christmas manger to Easter's empty tomb.

REFLECTION QUESTION: *What do you think is your biggest spiritual "blind spot"? In other words, what topic, temptation, circumstance, etc., tends to knock you off the godly path you're trying to walk?*

Today, we'll mine one of Jesus' most provocative and difficult teachings - especially for those of us who are relatively wealthy, well-fed, and comfortable. In this passage, Jesus gave us the good news, and the bad news. Let's start with the good news:

Luke 6:17-23 He went down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coastal region around Tyre and Sidon, who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those troubled by impure spirits were cured, and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all.

Looking at his disciples, he said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

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

Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets."

Why is it important to note that Jesus said "YOU who are poor...YOU who hunger now...etc.," (as opposed to "Blessed are THE poor...Blessed are THOSE who hunger...etc.")? Who, exactly, did Jesus declare as "blessed"?

How could things like poverty, hunger, sadness, and persecution be considered as blessings?

Have you ever experienced hardship or discomfort as a blessing from God?

Now, let's get to the "bad news" in this teaching from Jesus:

Luke 6:24-26 "But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort.

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.

Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.

The 4 areas of life that JESUS warned us about in this passage:

<p>1.) <u>AFFLUENCE</u></p> <p>Why did he warn us about this? (Jonah 2:8, 1 Tim. 6:10)</p> <p>To avoid this trap, we <u>FORFEIT</u>! (Matt 16:26)</p> <p>How has this area of your life been a struggle, and how would your life change if you chose to forfeit your affluence in favor of Christ and his kingdom?</p>	<p>2.) <u>INDULGENCE</u></p> <p>Why did he warn us about this? (Galatians 5:16-26)</p> <p>To avoid this trap, we <u>FAST</u>! (Matt. 16:24)</p> <p>How has this area of your life been a struggle in your faith journey, and how might regular fasting change the trajectory you're on?</p>
<p>3.) <u>INDIFFERENCE</u></p> <p>Why did he warn us about this? (Matt. 11:16-17, Rev. 3:15-16)</p> <p>To avoid this trap, we <u>FEEL</u>! (Rom. 12:15)</p> <p>How has this modern life jaded you or caused you to be indifferent, making compassion more difficult to come by? What changes do you need to make to soften your heart so you can begin to <i>feel</i> again?</p>	<p>4.) <u>AUDIENCE</u></p> <p>Why did he warn us about this? (Matt. 6:1 & 23:27)</p> <p>To avoid this trap, we <u>FIGHT</u>! (James 4:4)</p> <p>How do your convictions as a Christian create noticeable dividing lines between you and "the world"? If you struggle to come up with anything, what might that mean?</p>

This week's Daily Reading Plan:

1/30 - Luke 6:43-35

1/31 - Luke 6:46-49

2/1 - Luke 7:1-17

2/2 - Luke 7:18-35

2/3 - Luke 7:36-50

* Find the full January Reading Plan at thestory.church/resources

