



**CAPITOL[®]
COMMISSION**

Gospel Hope & Spiritual Strength for Government Leaders



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“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you?” Luke 6:46

Luke 6:20 - 49 - Jesus Authoritatively Teaches New Ways

Having designated 12 of His disciples as *apostles* (v 13), which means “sent messengers”, Jesus descended the mountain to a level plain and began to instruct all His followers. The teaching is very similar to the Sermon on the Mount, recorded in Matthew 5-7, but it is likely a repeat presentation in a different locale as Jesus repeated His teachings from place to place, instilling the lessons into the apostles’ hearts & minds by repetition. [Read vv 20-23]. The beginning of the address, known as the Beatitudes (from the Latin, “*beatus*”, meaning happy or blessed), announces a series of desirable conditions and outcomes for people. Matthew records nine of these, Luke only four. All who believe and follow Christ should desire all of these to be ultimately true of themselves. Jesus follows these blessing goals with four woes—perhaps why Luke only records four beatitudes, for parallelism—or undesirable outcomes which we certainly do not wish to be true of us. A woe is a distinctly biblical pronouncement of doom.

[Read vv 24-26]. As we read these woes, our initial response may be what is wrong with these to deserve a curse? Taken out of context, one may conclude that possessing riches, eating everyday, and laughing are all wrong. But we know elsewhere in Scripture that money itself is not evil, but the love of money is (especially when it replaces God and others, see 1 Timothy 6:10). A clue to understanding the context is found in v 22: “on account of the Son of Man.” Everything relates to Christ. In other words, when you follow Jesus and that causes you to lose your belongings, your food, your joy, and community, remember these are all temporary conditions replaced by permanent rewards, to include the kingdom of God, satisfaction of appetite, laughter and rejoicing. Ten of the 12 apostles He just appointed will be martyred for their faith; they need to hear this. But we also need to see the longer-range view of the cost of followership. Jesus is revaluing what we think important. E.g., later, He will tell us not to be anxious about food and clothing.

Make no mistake, those who have riches and all they desire but without regard to Jesus will be eternally doomed. Not because of their possessions but rather because of what they do with them. We in America typically have all we need and much of what we desire. If we hold such things with an open hand, ready to share with others, then we

Capitol Commission state ministers are pastor-missionaries who in session teach weekly verse-by-verse Bible studies for all those in our state capitols. The Bible studies are hand distributed to each legislative office, are available online at capitolcom.org, and shared across the Capitol Commission community. This ministry is an extension of the church seeking to proclaim the gospel message and help believers mature through Biblical expositional instruction. Prayer is foundational to this ministry, consistent with proper submission to governmental authority (Rom 13:1-7) and obedient to the command to pray for our appointed leaders (1 Tim 2:1-4).

Our desire is to witness God’s work in transforming hearts.

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have a kingdom of God mindset. If, however, we hold tightly to our stuff, thinking it belongs to us alone, we are missing a chance to bless others and invest in the eternal kingdom. We do well to remember the words of King David in Psalm 24, v1: “The earth is the LORD’s and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it.”

With a new value system established in their minds, Jesus then launches into the meat of His teaching with a series of practical commands for His followers. [Read vv 27-36]. This includes love for enemies, forbearance of wrong done to us, the Golden Rule, and a short treatise on whom we should show love and mercy. Some of the most powerful movements in history triumphed by a doctrine of peaceful resistance to power, turning the other cheek. But Christ’s personal example eclipses them all. Each of the commands given here was accomplished by Christ for us. He loved us when we were still His enemies. He was stripped and beaten severely and said nothing. He laid down His life for us while we could do nothing for Him. Also, do not miss what Jesus says about how “sinners” love: loving only those who love them, doing good only for those who reciprocate (vv 32-33). His call is to a divine love, something we (the sinners) are incapable of doing alone. Only by receiving His salvation can we do what Jesus commands, and for which we will receive great reward from the Father. By redefining the terms of the law, Jesus is setting up the need for the cross--redemption on His terms. None of us can meet these standards outside of divine spiritual intercession.

One of the most often-quoted verses, even by those who do not follow Jesus, is “Judge not, and you will not be judged.” This is a popular sentiment usually intended to quiet those who speak on spiritual things of life, especially the coming judgment of God. But Jesus’ intent runs deeper. [Read vv 37-42]. He is really telling them to stop being hypocrites and condemning others before taking care of their own issues. Thus we have this instruction to be gracious (vv 37-38), to be careful who we follow (vv 39-40), and get the speck out of our own eye (vv 41-42). After taking care of these needs we are then called to judge people by their fruit. [Read vv 43-45]. Only by being discerning in this way can we know a true teacher from a false one, for example (John 7:24). We are never to seek to condemn anyone, we all stand condemned already. But we should be able to discern people by their actions.

Jesus closes the sermon with a call to obedience. [Read vv 46-49]. This is a clear statement of His authority, as the crowd recognized when He closed the Sermon on the Mount with the same parable (see Matthew 7:28-29). When the people hear Him preach, He expects they will respond by doing what He says. Still true today. There is nothing worse than to give lip service to someone and then turn and ignore their orders or work against them. If Jesus is truly Lord, we have no choice but to obey. By doing so we secure a foundation on a rock, able to withstand all that life throws at us. If we hear Him and ignore Him we should expect our house to fall.

Applications

- 1. When you hear the word of God, are you inspired to obey it? Or do you question its authority instead? Remember that a mark of our love for Jesus is our obedience to His commands (John 14:15)**
- 2. In America, we are uniquely predisposed against kings and lords. In reality a true lord can do anything he desires to do, and that power has been abused by many. This Lord is not like that, however. What does it mean when Jesus is Lord of your life? Trust and obey!**

My desire is to continuously highlight Jesus Christ to you. Toward that end, I am available to discuss any biblical topic or question you may have. I especially want to ensure all who read the studies understand how Jesus Christ is distinctively important to the entire world and to each of us individually. Lastly, all Bible studies are available at Capitol Commission’s Alabama page: <https://capitolcom.org/state/alabama>.

Plan to attend our in-house Bible Study during session: Tuesdays at 11:00 a.m. in **Room 602 of the State House.**

A key facet empowering our ministry is prayer, especially prayer for our elected leaders. 1 Timothy 2:1-4 commands Christians to obediently pray for all in authority. A tool for America’s churches to help consistently pray for you, our elected leaders, is available to all via: www.Pray1Tim2.org - Select Alabama and sign up for daily email reminders, courtesy of Capitol Commission.

Share this link with your home church!