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Commentator Kent Hughes suggests that chapters four to six are a demonstration of Jesus' authority. Satan offered Jesus an easy way to have authority over the kingdoms of the world which Jesus refused (4:6-7ⁱ). Jesus' authority in teaching was rejected in Nazareth (4:28-29ⁱⁱ) but welcomed in Capernaum. "They were amazed at His teaching, because His message had authority" (4:32ⁱⁱⁱ). Then in 4:38-44 we see Jesus' authority over all illness and demons. In the opening of chapter 5 we read of His authority over nature as the fish filled the nets. That was followed by His authority to call Peter, James, and John to leave all and follow Him. In 5:12-26 the healing of the leper and the paralyzed man demonstrated His authority to forgive sins. In 6:5^{iv} He claimed authority over the Sabbath by saying He is Lord of the Sabbath. I would add that in 5:27,28^v He showed His authority to turn even a despised tax collector into a disciple. The word "authority" is used four times in these passages, and it will come up again in Luke.

¹² In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God. ¹³ And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles: Luke 6:12,13 In our passage for today Jesus shows His authority to select official representatives who will be His ambassadors. The word apostle is from the word "sent" so it refers to a sent one. Herodotus used it for an official envoy. Josephus used the word to refer to an embassy. (Of course Jesus would have been using the Hebrew or Aramaic equivalent *malakh or mevaser*). Calling them apostles means that Jesus saw them as envoys for His kingdom. I asked on an information site if anyone had ever heard of a sage or rabbi calling his disciples envoys or ambassadors, and no one had. This shows us that Jesus saw His mission as establishing the kingdom of God in us.

The amazing thing is that those He called are ordinary people, no degrees, no super talents, and in fact one is a despised tax collector. How can laborers who are uneducated represent the King of the Universe? He will transform them. Their names will endure forever on the foundation of New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:14^{vi}). **Jesus transforms those whom He calls, all of us ordinary imperfect people.** He uses the weak, imperfect, and broken that He might demonstrate His glorious grace and mighty power (1 Corinthians 1:26-28^{vii}).

Jesus saw the anger of the Pharisees when He healed on the Sabbath. The day would come when their plan to get rid of Him would succeed. What was He to do? Pray! Luke has already pointed out that Jesus depended on direction from the Father (4:42^{viii}; 5:16^{ix}). He spent the whole night in prayer, and therefore we can be sure that it was at God's direction that He picked those twelve apostles to carry on after Him. Disciples were learners who tried to retain everything their rabbi taught them so that they could be like Him. Twelve and its multiples are the numbers of governmental authority. The choice was critical. Of all those following Jesus, He chose the ones who would faithfully convey His message.

Prayer was everything to Jesus. Through dependent prayer Jesus lived a life of flawless perfection, so that he could say, "I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I

always do what pleases him" (John 8:28,29*). Hughes, Kent - Preaching the Word – Luke, Volume I: That You May Know the Truth.

Scoffers today claim the disciples distorted the message. They choose to ignore this passage. If Jesus was such an astute person, why would anyone suppose He would choose the wrong individuals to carry His message? He chose those God showed Him to choose because they would convey the Gospel accurately and faithfully to their deaths.

¹⁴ *Simon, whom he named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew,* ¹⁵ *and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot,* ¹⁶ *and Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.* Luke 6:14-16 Only Luke adds at the end of the disciple list that Judas became a traitor. Iscariot means 'man of Kerioth', thus he was the only disciple that did not come from Galilee. Perhaps Jesus intentionally chose the one who would betray Him from another area. You will notice the lists of the apostles is slightly different in the Gospels. That is because some of the disciples had several names. An example is Judas son of James who is called Thaddaeus in Matthew (Matthew 10:3^{xi}).

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,* ¹⁸ *who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured.* Luke 6:17,18 This would be the case even today if there was someone who could cure anything. Imagine the demand in that day or even today if someone was able to heal every illness, physical, mental, or spiritual. They would find it difficult to ever get any rest.

¹⁹ *And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power came out from him and healed them all.* Luke 6:19 Jews believed the *karspadon* (Gr) or *tzitzit* (Hb) of the Messiah, the tying together of the strings that made up the end of the tunic and dangled by one's side, could heal someone who touched it. That was what the woman with the issue of blood touched (Luke 8:43,44^{xii}). But Luke is emphasizing that *all* He touched or who touched Him in faith were healed. Power emanated from Him to cure every malady and rid people of demons. That is evidence that He is more than just a new King David. **Exodus 15:26^{xiii} declares that the LORD (the eternal God of Israel) is the one who heals us.** By healing all who came to Him in faith, He showed that He is God and that He has the power to heal the spiritual as well. Remember the Hebrews saw the physical and spiritual as being linked. Every Jew who witnessed this or read Luke's Gospel should have realized that Jesus was showing Himself to be the God written about in the Law.

²⁰ *And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.* Luke 6:20 Blessed means happy or blissful. Is this the Sermon on the Mount? Some believe it is the same, but there are many differences. The Greek description of the location simply means a level place, which may have been on a mountain side. Verse twelve says He went up to a mountain to pray. It appears that the disciples were there with Him and they came *down* together to a plain. Matthew says the Beatitudes were preached as Jesus went *up* to a mountain. The traditional sight is a level area on a mountain side between Capernaum and Bethsaida. There is a parallel with Moses coming down from Mount Sinai to deliver the Law to the twelve tribes.

The content is also different though somewhat similar with the Sermon on the Mount. When people preach spontaneously, they will often speak on a topic that has been impressed on their spirit using different words and applications at different times. Since

this sermon only has four beatitudes all of which include hardship, followed by woes, and is specifically said to be on a level place following the choosing of the disciples, we might look at it as the first telling of the beatitudes to the disciples to help them see things from God's perspective. That is to see things without the distorting influence of sin.

Matthew wrote "poor in spirit" meaning the humble who know their *spiritual* need is great. Luke has Jesus speaking to His disciples who had given up all to follow Him (Luke 14:33^{xiv}). However, it can apply to the financially poor which was much of the nation at the time. Laborers such as Jesus before His ministry began and even after as a teacher had barely enough to buy their daily sustenance. Farmers, masons, those working in guilds of one kind or another could rarely save any money for emergencies. This caused them to seek something more than the world had to offer and rely more heavily upon God. In this regard, Luke's account is not so different from Matthew's poor in spirit.

The contrast is the woe pronounced on the rich. ²⁴ *"But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.* Luke 6:24 Jesus said they have their comfort/consolation. Remember at the beginning of Luke we saw that there were those who were waiting for the consolation of Israel (Luke 2:25^{xv}). They would be the poor who were hoping for change. Most of the rich weren't looking for the Messiah because they felt their financial abundance was their consolation.

Many of us would be extremely wealthy compared to the average person in that day. We must ask ourselves if Jesus and His promises are our comfort or if our finances our consolation? Agur gives us the right attitude regarding wealth in Proverbs 30:8b,9. ^{8b} *...feed me with the food that is needful for me,* ⁹ *lest I be full and deny you and say, "Who is the LORD?" or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God.* The Apostle Paul describes the Spirit led life explaining that he learned to be content in all situations in Philippians 4:11-13. ¹¹ *Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.* ¹² *I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.* ¹³ *I can do all things through him who strengthens me.* Paul experienced times of abundance, but he did not find his comfort in wealth. His contentment was in the Lord even when he was physically hungry or spending a night trying to stay afloat in the ocean (2 Corinthians 11:25^{xvi}).

What Luke recorded as a blessing on the poor disciples is the way they continually sought the Lord for their daily physical and spiritual bread. That is another way of saying they were presently in the kingdom seeking the King's orders and assistance.

When I was called to ministry I asked the Lord to provide so that I could keep my mind focused on ministry rather than providing for the family. He always did, whether I was underpaid, and He provided additional work, or when the demand of ministry kept me occupied so that I could not do additional work. He has been faithful to answer that prayer. I'm sure the Apostle Paul would say God was faithful even when he was hungry. It's not that we never question why God has allowed difficult times, but that we trust that He will see us through until our service to Him in this life is done. In the process we will learn more of His faithfulness.

²¹ *"Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied. "Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.* Luke 6:21 Again we see the parallel with the Sermon on the Mount being the spiritual reality represented by the physical condition. The Apostle Paul was hungry at times and without sufficient food, but His spiritual

hunger was even greater. That hunger was met to complete satisfaction by the presence of the Lord in His life. It is a satisfaction the world cannot provide.

The Rolling Stones big hit was "Satisfaction". The lyrics you probably know. "I can't get no satisfaction, I try, and I try, and I try." It is a declaration that the world will not satisfy. The writer had a hunger, but he tried to satisfy it with the world. The world's satisfaction is fleeting at best (Hebrews 11:24^{xvii}).

Jesus was hungry at the end of His forty day fast, and the devil offered him different means of satisfaction. He offered food, power, and recognition, but Jesus turned them all down (Luke 4:3^{xviii}; 5,6^{xix}; 9-11^{xx}). He knew His spiritual hunger was only met in the Father and worshipping Him alone.

Some of you have probably never experienced physical hunger. I would encourage you to fast unless you have a medical reason not to. Go thirty-two hours with just water. The first days of a fast you will find your mind constantly turning to food. The extent to which our minds are focused on food will surprise you. That illustrates how we are to be constantly longing for the Word of God and the voice of the Spirit (Matthew 5:6^{xxi}).

The counter point in verse twenty-five is a woe to those who are full. ²⁵ *“Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry. “Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.* Luke 6:25 Those who are full now with this world and all it offers will be hungry. If this world is enough for you and you keep finding that temporary satisfaction in the world, you’ll try and try and try. If finances and entertainment, and relationships are enough, you will end up hungry in the end and eternally hungry in the hereafter.

Blessed are you (the disciples) who weep now. What are they weeping over? As they understand more of this upside-down world of the Kingdom, they will weep to see the world reject the message of Jesus and the true consolation He offers. They will see Him crucified. They will see many people refuse to believe even after the resurrection. They will weep over the hardness of hearts. They weep because they truly love others and aren’t just focused on themselves. But the day will come when God will wipe away every tear from their eyes (Revelation 7:17^{xxii}) They will laugh then, and so will all who weep now over the world's sins and the consequences of those sins.

²² *“Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! ²³ Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.* Luke 6:22 ,23 Here we have an exact parallel to the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:11,12^{xxiii}). Followers of Jesus will be hated, excluded, reviled, and spurned as evil just because they are associated with Jesus. Why? How could those whose main attributes are love, joy, peace and patience be so despised? It's because our lives declare that the Lordship of Jesus and His forgiveness are the only answers for our sin. Those who are too prideful to admit their need for a Savior and so self-centered that they want to be their own lord are threatened by that message. They will distort it, ridicule it, fight against it with all their might because they feel threatened by it. In a way, they should be. Our message includes judgment upon sin being inevitable, and that you can't remain your own lord in eternity (Luke 9:10-12^{xxiv}).

The Talmud has a number of accounts of Jews cursing Christians even when they offered to pray for healing for their loved one. The rabbis in the third century taught it was better to die than receive healing from prayers of Jesus’ followers. There are

accounts of rabbis troubled by the sayings of Christians, and other rabbis would tell them they are disturbed because the saying had gotten into their soul, when in fact, it was the Holy Spirit reaching out to them.

Rejection from the world puts you among the prophets who were also rejected. It means your reward is in heaven and eternal rather than on the earth and temporal. That is truly a great reward! You've chosen the right path. Think about this for a moment. Would you want to end up in eternity with everyone who wants to be lord, or with the one true Lord who made you and loves you enough to die for you and be among all those who recognize He is worthy to be Lord of all?

The contrast in verse 26 is the woe to those who are praised by the public. ²⁶ *“Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.* Luke 6:26 The Bible tells of the Jews’ history when they loved the false prophets who promised prosperity and who told them there was no need to repent (Jeremiah 5:31^{xxv}). They soon learned it was a lie when the conquering nation came in with judgment (Ezekiel 13:10,11^{xxvi}). It is a natural desire to want to be liked and accepted (John 12:43^{xxvii}). It is natural for people to like the fruits of the Spirit in people (Galatians 5:22,23^{xxviii}), that is until the need for a Savior is brought up, until conviction begins to start working on their hearts. We all want to be thought well of but remember that when you must take a stand for the truth of the Gospel, people will turn on you (John 15:19-21^{xxix}). Rejoice! You are in great company, for so their fathers did to God’s prophets.

In our passage for today we’ve been reminded that God uses ordinary people and transforms them to represent His kingdom. We’ve seen Jesus knew who He was choosing at God’s direction to accurately convey the Gospel. We read of Jesus’ blessing on the poor, the hungry, and those who weep. Heaven’s values are so different from this world’s values. True and eternal satisfaction is found in Jesus alone. And we’ve been warned that if we are faithful to Jesus this world will reject us, but that is a reason to rejoice. It means we have heaven’s values. Heaven’s blessings and unexplainable joy are ours even in the trials of this life when Jesus is our shepherd (Psalm 23:1^{xxx}).

Questions

- 1 How has Luke addressed Jesus’ authority?
- 2 What do the disciples have in common?
- 3 Why did Jesus pick these particular men?
- 4 Why was the crowd so large?
- 5 Why are the poor blessed?
- 6 What is the danger of wealth?
- 7 Where is true satisfaction found?
- 8 Why are those who weep blessed?
- 9 Why should we rejoice when we are rejected?
- 10 Why are we so vulnerable to praise?

ⁱ **Luke 4:6-7 (ESV)**

⁶ and said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. ⁷ If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours."

ⁱⁱ **Luke 4:28-29 (ESV)**

²⁸ When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. ²⁹ And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff.

ⁱⁱⁱ **Luke 4:32 (ESV)**

³² and they were astonished at his teaching, for his word possessed authority.

^{iv} **Luke 6:5 (ESV)**

⁵ And he said to them, "The Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath."

^v **Luke 5:27-28 (ESV)**

²⁷ After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, "Follow me." ²⁸ And leaving everything, he rose and followed him.

^{vi} **Revelation 21:14 (ESV)**

¹⁴ And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

^{vii} **1 Corinthians 1:26-28 (ESV)**

²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are,

^{viii} **Luke 4:42 (ESV)**

⁴² And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them,

^{ix} **Luke 5:16 (ESV)**

¹⁶ But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.

^x **John 8:28-29 (ESV)**

²⁸ So Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me. ²⁹ And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to him."

^{xi} **Matthew 10:3-4 (ESV)**

³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;

⁴ Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

^{xii} **Luke 8:43-44 (ESV)**

⁴³ And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and though she had spent all her living on physicians, she could not be healed by anyone.

⁴⁴ She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, and immediately her discharge of blood ceased.

^{xiii} **Exodus 15:26 (ESV)**

²⁶ saying, "If you will diligently listen to the voice of the LORD your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, your healer."

^{xiv} **Luke 14:33 (ESV)**

³³ So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

^{xv} **Luke 2:25 (ESV)**

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

^{xvi} **2 Corinthians 11:25 (ESV)**

²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea;

^{xvii} **Hebrews 11:24-25 (ESV)**

²⁴ By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,

²⁵ choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

xviii **Luke 4:3 (ESV)**

³ The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread."

xix **Luke 4:5-6 (ESV)**

⁵ And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time,
⁶ and said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will."

xx **Luke 4:9-11 (ESV)**

⁹ And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here,
¹⁰ for it is written, "'He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,'
¹¹ and "'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'"

xxi **Matthew 5:6 (ESV)**

⁶ "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

xxii **Revelation 7:17 (ESV)**

¹⁷ For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

xxiii **Matthew 5:11-12 (ESV)**

¹¹ "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

xxiv **Luke 10:10-12 (ESV)**

¹⁰ But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say,
¹¹ 'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.'
¹² I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town."

xxv **Jeremiah 5:31 (ESV)**

³¹ the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule at their direction; my people love to have it so, but what will you do when the end comes?"

xxvi **Ezekiel 13:10-11 (ESV)**

¹⁰ Precisely because they have misled my people, saying, 'Peace,' when there is no peace, and because, when the people build a wall, these prophets smear it with whitewash, ¹¹ say to those who smear it with whitewash that it shall fall! There will be a deluge of rain, and you, O great hailstones, will fall, and a stormy wind break out."

xxvii **John 12:43 (ESV)**

⁴³ for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God."

xxviii **Galatians 5:22-23 (ESV)**

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

xxix **John 15:19-21 (ESV)**

¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. ²¹ But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me."

xxx **Psalms 23:1 (ESV)**

¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want."