

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. **Enjoy discovering more about Him!**

"THE GREAT REVERSAL" | LUKE 6: 20-26 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

When it comes to driving in reverse, is it better with a camera or looking over a shoulder?

"The Great Reversal" (Luke 6: 20-26)

Jesus shares 4 blessings that are matched by 4 woes and one of them is weeping and laughing. **How does weeping and laughing reveal someone's character? How difficult is it for someone to change their emotional responses?**

"The Poor" (Luke 6: 20-26)

Jesus became poor and preaches the gospel to the poor, saying they are blessed. This all gives the poor dignity. **How does our society treat the poor today? How can followers of Jesus show honor and dignity to people in poverty and not just sympathy?**

Jesus is different than others by saying being poor is a blessing, because they have nothing and must rely upon God to be saved. **What does that say about how people should approach God? What does that say about God's approach to us?**

REFLECTION QUESTION:

Pastor Brian makes a point to say that a "middle class" spirit loves religion because it gives them a way to try to earn their salvation and move up. But a poor spirit leads to surrender and obedience because they must humbly admit their need for a savior. **What are ways you have struggled with a "middle spirit" in your attitude towards God? Are there parts of your life you should give up to be more "poor"? Pray and ask God to mold your spirit to be humbler and submissive to Him.**

The Great Reversal

I. Announce:

- A. Slide 1-4 Lar: Men's Brkfst. Easter Weekend. Mission Prayer. Ro Prayer Guide.
 B. Prayer: Women's Retreat. Ukraine.

II. Slide 5 Intro: The Great Reversal

- A. From last week (17-19) This seems to be *different* from Matthews *Sermon on the Mount*, as this is Luke's *Sermon on the Plain* (level place). *The differences include...*
1. The **Location** (mount vs. level place). The **Occasion**. The **Content** (both have diff content the other doesn't have). The **Listeners** (disciples (in Mt) vs. disciples + many others (Lk))
- B. Jesus' sermon here, which we'll spend a few weeks on, deals with **2's!**
1. **2 attitudes** (the godly & the godless). **2 commands** (love your enemy & don't judge your friends). **2 illustrations** (blind leading the blind & the log in your eye). **2 trees** (a good tree doesn't produce bad fruit & bad tree doesn't produce good fruit). **2 buildings** (with different foundations).
- C. This *isn't how to get into* the kingdom (that was ch.4) this is *how shall we Now live*.
1. This has to do with **the cost and the blessings** of **following Jesus**.
 2. These are the **ethics or behavior** of **living** in His kingdom.
- D. This may be the cliff notes of the sermon on the mount. **Or** as we mentioned last week *a different sermon, in a different place, for a different audience*. which I bel!
1. **But** if it's **true**, it's worth **repeating**.
 2. **Diff:** Mt. has **9 blessed's** (oh how happy) vs. Lukes **4. poor in sp vs. poor**.
 - a) What if Jesus actually meant *blessed are the poor...is that possible? I think so*.

III. THE GREAT REVERSAL (20-26) Read

- A. And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said:
Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.

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

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!

Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.

24 **But woe** to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.

Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry.

Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.

Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.

B. Five keys:

1. Remember from last week (17-19). Jesus is speaking **both** to his disciples and others. (Just disciples in Mt.)
2. Slide6a-d Look at Luke's **layout** of this: 4 **blessed** are matched with 4 **woes**
 - a) poor/rich. hungry/filled. weep/laugh. hate/exclude/revile/spurn/speak well of u
3. Note: **now** versus later.
 - a) (24) you **have** received - received was used *in a commercial sense* to acknowledge the receipt of for payment. **So** besides the present possession of riches, these people have nothing to hope for in the future.
4. Slide7 There wasn't a religion that **esteemed the poor**. The wealthy, the educated, the spiritual, **yes**, but **the poor having any value? This was radical for that day.** **And** it was appalling to the religious elite of the day. **Jesus' outreach to sketchy people was abominable in their eyes.**
5. Jesus describes His kingdom upside down from **all other kingdoms**. It is **The Great Reversal**.
 - a) It's a strange thing when we hear people say that *all religions are the same!* That's not just offensive to Christianity, **but** to all religions.
 - b) **Are the the same? Buddhism** doesn't have a god. **Hinduism** has 330 mill. **Christianity/Islam/Judaism** is monotheistic.

- C. Weep now ... one day laugh (unique to Luke) - *“If you want to know someone’s character, find out what makes them laugh & what makes them weep!”*
1. What we laugh at & what we weep over indicates our values of life & values are a part of maturity.
 2. **Nineveh** (8th cent. BC) wept & they were comforted. *Jonah 3:8,9*
 - a) The miracle of *the big guppy* steals the stage, but the greater miracle was *the largest revival of all time*, All of Ninevah!
- D. Slide8 Ok, but the 4th? Happy when people *hate us, exclude us, reveal us, or spur in our name*. How?
1. Realize that is a privilege to be **persecuted** for Jesus sake.
 2. Realize this is evidence that we’re **living** like Him.
 3. Realize that the fellowship of his **sufferings** (Phil.3:10) is the closest fellowship possible w/God. (like Daniel, when we are in the furnace, the Son of God is there w/us)
 4. Realize when the **stones** are flying we have opportunity to be our best witness. (Stephen w/Saul - Look at the results!!!)
 5. Realize **persecution** gives me the opportunity to grow. (It has a way of driving us to God)
 - a) This rejoicing & leaping for joy isn’t *worked up*, it is the gift of the H.S.

IV. Slide9a **THE POOR**

- A. **Blessed are you who are poor** - Dr. Martyn Lloyd Jones said, *“This one is first because it is obviously **the key to all that follows!**”*
1. This one speaks of **emptying**, while the rest are a manifestation of a fullness. **We can’t be filled unless we’re emptied.**
- B. Slide9b The gospel is for the *spiritually poor* and the *actually poor*.
There are different kinds of poor in our world:
1. **The Economic Poor** (who **do not** have. *few possessions, lil income*).
 2. **The Social Poor** (who **do** have, *but it’s taken away from them*).

3. **Absolute poverty** (measures compare income against the amount needed to meet basic personal needs, such as *food, clothing, and shelter*).
4. **Relative poverty** (measures when a person cannot meet a minimum level of living standards, compared to others in the same time and place).

C. Remember when **John the Baptist** disciples asked, **are you the one?** He answered, *tell them **the poor** have good news preached to them.* Lk.7:20,22.

1. Is.61 said when Messiah comes *he will proclaim good news to the poor.*

D. **Slide10a** Who is he speaking to in this *Sermon on the Plain*? **His disciples!** But they weren't all poor! Matthew was wealthy (a tax collector).¹

1. Jesus' disciples must become poor *no if's, and's, or but's.*
2. **So there's no middle class or wealthy class that enter the kingdom? Yes,** but you must get rid of your *middle-class spirit, or your rich-spirit.*

E. **Slide10b** It means this, **when the gospel comes to you,** you must get rid of your middle-class spirit, or your wealthy spirit, you must be *poor in spirit.*

1. **"Religion" is middle class:** it appeals to the able. It appeals to people that say, *I can do it if I work hard enough.*
2. **But** the gospel only comes into the lives that are *poor in spirit.* Those that say, *I have absolutely nothing of value, and I have no power and no choices, And I need to rely completely on the salvation and sheer grace of Jesus Christ.*

F. If you are *middle-class in spirit* you **cannot be saved.** You will **enjoy religion.** You'll **love religion.** **But** the gospel is not religion. You must be *poor in spirit.*

1. Religion says, *try hard, live nobly, be good, be tolerant, give \$ to the poor.*
 - a) **And** the religious person says, *I can do it.* And summons all of his/her strength, *I can do it.* And *I'm going to do it. I'm going to turn over a new leaf.* That's what religion says.

¹ adapted from Timothy Keller sermon on the poor.

G. But the Gospel says, *no one is good no not one*. There's nothing in your heart that is good. Even your good deeds have been done to *either* feel superior over other people, or to get control or leverage over God, to get Him to owe you.

1. Even your best deeds are *a filthy rag*, a stench. You are filled with self righteousness, and you're no different than someone who has lead an immoral life. And therefore you are *utterly lost*, there is no love of God in your heart.

H. Slide 11 And there's only one possibility, Jesus Christ *the Rich One* who became poor

1. Jesus the King became poor: born in a manger, lived in a poor family as a child, who when he was older *had no where to lay his head*.

2. Here's a man who was rejected. Here's a man who is cast off. Here's a man who is always weeping. He was a man who was always empty. Here's a man who had to borrow transportation on Palm Sunday. Who spends His last supper in a borrowed room. Who was buried in a borrowed grave.

Then died naked (as the last thing He owned they had cast lots for).

I. When you go to God you must *come with nothing!* Do you believe that you have nothing to bring to him? *Nothing in my hands I bring, only to the cross I cling.*

1. You cannot come by saying, *I have led a pretty good life, you owe me!*

2. To become **spiritually poor** is to say, *I have nothing of value*. And it is also to say, *I owe you everything*. Unconditional obedience and unconditional surrender. *It's then* that you realize for the 1st time *u have value above everyone else, because you've given yourself to God.*

3. Timothy Keller said, *"The gospel is only for the spiritually poor, and especially for the materially poor."*

J. Don't you see what Messiah has done now? He didn't just bring a **program**.

He didn't come and say, *I will fulfill the scripture*, but that *it has been fulfilled in your hearing*. Lk.4:21

1. **Messiah has come.** He has lifted up the poor through the gospel. *He gives them hope, He gives them dignity.*
2. If you're ready to give up your middle-class spirit **but not** your middle-class goods, you have a problem (**not that** He will require of you **but** that He can). **See** as a true *Jesus follower* you realize *you are exactly as the poor are*. You love them. You don't pity them (feel sympathy yes), **but** you don't condescendingly look down on them. *You're exactly like me, there is absolutely no difference between me and them.*
 - a) When you see someone in tattered rags, you can relate to them. Spiritually I am just the same. I'm willing to live with them, be part of them. To give generously to them.
 - b) **John Stott did a booklet on this, his conclusion was:** do we have to give away everything to become **materially poor**, **no**. But it also doesn't allow us to **remain rich** & just throw a few dollars towards a charity, **no**.
 - c) **Instead we become *incredibly contented with what we have* because we have **rewards in heaven**.** That's why we're not afraid to *weep now*, not afraid to *mourn now*.
 - d) Be **extremely content** with what we **have**, and **radically generous**.
 - e) You don't have to **become poor** **but** we also **cannot stay rich**.
 - f) There's a power in our world that can *change our hearts* & can *change the poor's hearts*.

K. **Slide12a WRAP UP:** The kingdom of God spreads and is far deeper than any *program*.

1. There is good news for the poor, and only for the poor. *The poor need Jesus, and those who know they are no different from the poor need Jesus, and* those who love the poor **prove** that they *have met Jesus*.

L. **That's why Jesus came as *a suffering servant*:** a **servant** is ... a **poor person** (Jesus the Rich One, became poor). One without power (you must give up your power, **as** Jesus did in Gethsemane). Jesus was both socially and economically poor.

1. You must come as a poor person. *Does that offend you?* Then your *middle class in spirit and* you cannot be saved!
 2. The poor do not believe *your religion*, *but* need *the gospel*.
 3. If the gospel is by **grace** *then* He can require anything of you, *but* if salvation is by **works** *then* He owes you.
- M. *Slide12b* The gospel is for the *spiritually* poor *and* the *actually* poor. *Jesus* is the only hope we have!

N. Keywords: Jesus, God, kingdom, poor, religion, gospel.