



Luke 6:17-26

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, who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; ¹⁸ and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. ¹⁹ And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power came forth from him and healed them all.

²⁰ And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said:

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

²¹ "Blessed are you that hunger now, for you shall be satisfied.

"Blessed are you that weep now, for you shall laugh.

²² "Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you and revile you, and cast out 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.

²⁴ "But woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation.

²⁵ "Woe to you that are full now, for you shall hunger.

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

²⁶ "Woe to you, when all men speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.

Key Points and Discussion from Tim's Sermon:

- Tim points out the presence of three lists in the main text (at left). Two are easy to see – the lists of blessings and woes. One is harder to observe.
 - *Where is the list? What is on the list? (Hint: what was the author's (Luke) profession?)*
 - *What context does this list give for the more readily apparent lists of blessings and woes that follow?*
- Jesus presents two kingdoms in opposition: the earthly kingdom, and the heavenly kingdom he came to install.
 - *How does Jesus describe, compare and contrast each of these kingdoms?*
- Tim stated that while we can only be members of one of these kingdoms, it is still possible to be a member of his heavenly kingdom but still deeply influenced by the earthly kingdom. Tim used poignant and recent examples of nearby Christians committing suicide as an example of this phenomenon.
 - *How does this statement and Tim's example resonate with your experience – what you have observed in your friends, your family, your heroes, or yourself?*
 - *In what sense do you experience your own membership in Jesus' kingdom while still being deeply influenced by the earthly kingdom of "the now."*
- Tim called the earthly kingdom that Jesus came to overthrow the *Kingdom of The Now*.
 - *Why?*
 - *Does this mean that the Heavenly Kingdom has no immediate value?*
- As we soberly reflect upon the realities of a life lived exclusively within the earthly *Kingdom of The Now*, Tim introduced the poem Solitude by Ella Wheeler Wilcox for our consideration (see below).
 - *Is this a fair characterization of the Earthly Kingdom? Too harsh? Not harsh enough?*
 - *How is our experience of living in Jesus' Kingdom supposed to be different? How? Why?*
 - *Are you experiencing that difference in your own life, now?? If not, what must change?*

Solitude

Laugh, and the world laughs with you;
Weep, and you weep alone.
For the sad old earth must borrow it's mirth,
But has trouble enough of its own.
Sing, and the hills will answer;
Sigh, it is lost on the air.
The echoes bound to a joyful sound,
But shrink from voicing care.

Rejoice, and men will seek you;
Grieve, and they turn and go.
They want full measure of all your pleasure,
But they do not need your woe.
Be glad, and your friends are many;
Be sad, and you lose them all.
There are none to decline your nectared wine,
But alone you must drink life's gall.

Feast, and your halls are crowded;
Fast, and the world goes by.
Succeed and give, and it helps you live,
But no man can help you die.
There is room in the halls of pleasure
For a long and lordly train,
But one by one we must all file on
Through the narrow aisles of pain.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox