

The Great Reversal (Luke 6:24-26)

Woes from Jesus

“But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. 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. 26 “Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.”

The God of the universe has called out a group of people and put his favor on them... they are blessed. There is also a group of people that are on the path toward eternal judgment separated from Jesus in the Lake of Fire. Jesus warns this group by giving four descriptions of a fake disciple within proximity of His teaching. You could even say, this was aimed at Judas in a way even though there were others in the audience to which this would directly apply.

If this describes you then you must turn from your sin and trust Jesus today.

In this section Luke emphasis the great reversal God’s kingdom will bring. Blessings await the poor, who hunger, weep, and are hated; because God’s kingdom belongs to them, and God will one day wipe away each tear. This momentary (“now”) affliction will soon give way to glory (2 Cor 4:17). On the other hand for the arrogant rich, who are now satiated, there is a fourfold woe. For Luke’s readers this should encourage them not to lose heart (cf. 2 Cor 4:16) but to continue with greater resolve to live for Jesus Christ with eternity’s values in view.

Jesus reveals 4 marks of an authentic disciple:

1. The Blessing of poverty
2. The Blessing of hunger
3. The Blessing of sorrow
4. The Blessing of rejection

Jesus issues a 4-fold description of a fake disciple in the form of warnings:

Before we unfold this description we must first establish what a WOE is.

QUESTION—What is meant by saying ‘Woe to you’?

1. Its an expression of compassion or pity [BECNT, NIGTC, TNTC]: alas for you. Instead of expressing a threat, it reveals compassion and regret [TNTC]. It expresses pity for those who will be judged by God [NIGTC]. This expression of pity was intended to warn them of danger and the nearness of judgment [BECNT].

Lets see how this word was used in the Bible to better understand what Jesus is saying.

Put in powerpoint:

Woe is used as an exclamation of judgment on others

Woe to God's enemies Isa 33:1 *Probably referring to Assyria*, **Jer 48:1-2; Na 3:1-7; Hab 2:6-20; Zep 2:5**

Woe to God's faithless people Hos 7:13-16, Isa 30:1-2; 45:9-10; Jer 4:13-18; Eze 16:23-27

Woe to careless leaders of God's people Jer 23:1-2, Eze 13:1-9; 34:1-10; Zep 3:1-4; Zec 11:15-17

Woe to those who are complacent in their prosperity or religion Am 6:1-7 *See also Am 5:18-24*

Woe to those who neglect social justice Isa 10:1-4, 5:8-23; Jer 22:13-19; Mic 2:1-3

Woe to a godless world Rev 8:13, 12:12; 18:10,16-17,19

Woe is used as an exclamation of misfortune on oneself

Woe as a consequence of circumstances or events Jer 4:13, 10:19 *Jeremiah is describing the pain he feels at the impending destruction of his nation.* **1Sa 4:6-8; Ps 120:5-7.**

Woe as a consequence of one's own sin La 5:16, Isa 3:8-9; 6:5

Woe as a consequence of God's call on one's life 1Co 9:16, Jer 45:1-5; Eze 2:9-3:11

Woe is used as an exclamation of sadness over others

Woe to those who do not recognise their own needs Lk 6:24-26

Woe to those whose religion blinds themselves and misleads others Lk 11:52, Mt 23:13-33; Lk 11:42-51

Woe to those who cause others to sin Mt 18:7, Lk 17:1-3

Woe to those on whom judgment is coming Lk 10:13-14, Mt 11:20-22

Woe to the one who betrays the Son of Man Mt 26:24, Mk 14:21, Lk 22:22

Woe to those who experience the signs of the end of the age Mt 24:19-21, Mk 13:17-19, Lk 21:23.

In our text, Jesus expresses sadness over those who fail to recognize the true misery of their condition and warns them about coming judgement.

The warnings of Jesus would have a two-fold accomplishment: **warn the unbeliever** and **comfort the believer**.

He speaks to His authentic disciples while simultaneously addressing those in the crowd of their serious spiritual danger. There will always be tares among the wheat.

Transition: Lets look first at the warning of riches.

1. The Warning of Riches

The verb ἀπέχω "you have received" was used in receipts to indicate that the person had had full payment of a debt, and hence that he had no further claims on the debtor (cf. Mt. 6:2, 5, 16). The rich have thus received all that they are ever going to get.

The Bible seems to speak with two voices on the subject of riches, sometimes describing material wealth as a sign of God's blessing and approval (e.g., Gn 24:35), at other times virtually identifying the rich with the wicked (e.g., Ps 37:7, 16). Jesus, in particular, is very stern in his denunciations of the wealthy. "How hard it will be for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" (Mk 10:23).

Riches do not bring satisfaction: (Ecclesiastes 5:10) He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity.

The comfort they already have received consisted of the possessions they have acquired and that is their full payment, with nothing to come to them from God in the future

Let's look at 1 Timothy 6:3-10, Then 17-19 is the charge to Christians entrusted with wealth (much like Matthew, Barnabas, Zacchaeus, etc.)

Bill Gates (net worth 89.8 billion) was once asked what he wanted and he said "more"

It's not wrong to be rich but its evil to replace God with the pursuit of riches.

Transition: Secondly, lets look at the warning of satisfaction.

2. The Warning of Satisfaction

Have you ever been physically starving? The stomach relentlessly reminds you that you must eat. Mood is affected, energy is affected until you eat.

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This happened to me on Friday. I didn't eat lunch. not that big of a deal but as i tried to work, my stomach kept badgering me. I finally ate around 4 and after eating, I felt a sense of satisfaction.

I connect satisfaction with a state of contentment or fulfilment. Only God brings true satisfaction and Scripture advocates that believers should cultivate that satisfaction in every situation. Your relationship with Christ should always be more than enough. God is your portion and we should live today in light of that eternal truth.

Jesus woe here is aimed at fake followers like the rich man that was "eating sumptuously everyday" while Lazarus was laid at his gate.

Right now, that rich man is completely starving (physically and spiritually) while Lazarus is full (physically and spiritually) (Lk. 16)

The prophet Isaiah gave a woe similar to Jesus:

Isaiah 65:13 (ESV) Therefore thus says the Lord God:

“Behold, my servants shall eat,
but you shall be hungry;
behold, my servants shall drink,
but you shall be thirsty;
behold, my servants shall rejoice,
but you shall be put to shame;

Isaiah prophesied hunger and thirst, shame and sorrow for those who are not God's servants.

Earlier the Prophet cried out:

Isaiah 55:1–3 (ESV) “Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. ² Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. ³ Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

Authentic disciples find their satisfaction in a relationship with Jesus and provisions from God. Fake disciples always suppress that need by gorging themselves with material, physical, and temporal provisions.

One day, there will be a great reversal, the hungry now will be full and the full now will be hungry FOREVER!

Transition: Thirdly, lets see the warning of laughter.

3. The Warning of Laughter

They revel in silly laughter while they reject God and never mourn over their sins [NTC]. They laugh because they are self-satisfied and there is an evil sense included as they look down on the needs of others [NIGTC, WBC].

In eternity the one that rejects the Lord Jesus Christ will experience mourning that will never cease.

“Weeping and gnashing of teeth”:

- Matthew 8:10-12

¹⁰ When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, “Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. ¹¹ I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, ¹² while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

- Matthew 13:41-42

³⁷ He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, ⁴² and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

- Matthew 22:11-13

¹¹ “But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. ¹² And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. ¹³ Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ¹⁴ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

- Matthew 24:44-51

⁴⁴ Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

⁴⁵ “Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? ⁴⁶ Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. ⁴⁷ Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. ⁴⁸ But if that wicked servant says to himself, ‘My master is delayed,’ ⁴⁹ and begins to beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards, ⁵⁰ the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour

he does not know ⁵¹ and will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites. In that place there will be **weeping and gnashing of teeth**.

- Matthew 25:25-30

²⁵ so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’ ²⁶ But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? ²⁷ Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸ So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. ²⁹ For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. ³⁰ And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be **weeping and gnashing of teeth**.’

All these references to “**weeping and gnashing of teeth**” have one thing in common—the undeniable fact that those who do not belong to Christ will suffer a terrible fate.

God’s children will enjoy bliss in heaven with Him forever while those who reject God’s free gift will be in the Lake of Fire which is a place of anguish, remorse, pain, and misery.

Heaven will be a place where God eventually “will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away” (Revelation 21:4).

The misery that causes the gnashing of teeth will be unknown in heaven, and there will be no weeping, no wailing, and no tears.

Sadly, those who reject God’s free gift of the Lord Jesus Christ will realize in hell what they have truly lost, and the realization that there is no “second chance” will cause them to feel the full weight of the pain that goes with that knowledge. The anguish of being separated from God does not go away. It is eternal and unrelenting. We all deserve that kind of punishment: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23), but God, in His mercy, made it possible for us to avoid that eternal pain and suffering. Paul explains, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23).

All who accept the gift God has provided through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ will escape the everlasting weeping and gnashing of teeth. Paul proclaims, “If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved” (Romans 10:9–10).

Jesus uses powerful imagery like “wailing and gnashing of teeth” to illustrate the importance of turning away from the sin that leads to hell and turning to Him who alone provides salvation.

γελᾶω—‘laughter.’

‘happy are you who weep now, for you will laugh’ (Lk 6:21)

‘let your laughter be changed into sorrow’ (Jas 4:9)

various types of laughter:

- (1) laughter directed against some person as a form of ridicule
- (2) laughter resulting from seeing some humorous event or as the result of listening to a humorous account
- (3) laughter which reflects happiness and joy.

In Lk 6:21 and Jas 4:9 it is this third type of laughter which is relevant to the contexts.

Jesus is essentially saying, those who laugh at their sin will mourn with their sin as they pay for it in the lake of fire for all eternity.

Transition: So far Jesus describes fake disciples as those that are consumed with riches, satisfaction, laughter, and now draws the line in the sand with worldly acceptance.

4. The Warning of Worldly Acceptance

False Prophet— (psuedo-prophet) one who falsely claims to be a prophet of God or who prophesies falsely, (*bogus prophet.*)

These false prophets claim to have authority from God but in fact their authority is from Satan and their main weapon is deception.

Unbelievers are under Satan’s power (2 Cor.4:4).

Unbelievers accept false teaching because of blindness to the gospel. Basically the world accepts its own.

There is a **paternal connection** between those that reject Jesus’ disciples and Satan.

Jesus says in (v.26), “so their fathers did to the false prophets” Jesus said of the Pharisees that were rejecting him, “John 8:42–47 —“If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me. ⁴³ Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. ⁴⁴ You are of your **father the devil**, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. ⁴⁵ But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. ⁴⁶ Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? ⁴⁷ Whoever is of

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God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God."

Jesus knew His followers would be rejected by the world. He told his disciples not to be amazed that the world would hate them.

If the world does not hate you, you should check yourself.

Priorities? Thinking? Behavior? Heart?

Loving God has a direct connection to your performance as His follower. If you do not love God then it makes sense that you are the way you are.

Litmus test: If you presented yourself to the world for service, would they accept you or reject you?

Conclusion:

One day there is going to be a Great Reversal.

Right now, there are those who are spiritually bankrupt, hunger to know God, sorrow over their sin, and are rejected by the World.

There are also those who love money, are satisfied with temporal provisions, laugh at God, and are accepted by the world.

Jesus will ultimately separate His authentic disciples from the fakes.

Are you an authentic follower of Jesus or a fake?

Jesus reveals 4 marks of an authentic disciple:

1. The Blessing of poverty
2. The Blessing of hunger
3. The Blessing of sorrow
4. The Blessing of rejection

Jesus issues a four-fold description of a fake disciple in the form of warnings:

1. The Warning of riches (love of money) wont help the poor, James 2:1-7, 5:1-6
2. The Warning of satisfaction (food and drink)
3. The Warning of laughter (condescending, boastful, mocking)
4. The Warning of worldly acceptance (approval)