



The Gospel According to Luke Wk. 28 "The Call to Discipleship" By Pastor Jody May

Luke 6:17-26 ESV

Jesus Ministers to a Great Multitude

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. ¹⁹ And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power came out from him and healed them all.

The Beatitudes

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.

²¹ "Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.

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

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.

Jesus Pronounces Woes

²⁴ "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.

HEART or CONFLICT & CONVICTON

HEAD or CONFIDENCE:

HANDS or CONDUCT:



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Main Point:

Being hungry for God is not a weakness but it's a strength.

1. The Path to Jesus – where do we Start?

Why did people go after Jesus, from these great distances (Tyre and Sidon)? What was calling them to this path of discipleship?

¹⁸ who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured.

People were coming to Jesus for real physical problems whether they were caused by demonic forces or a failing body, **they recognized** in Jesus someone that **could do incredible things** and so **by grace and the power of the HS in opening their eyes** to His special abilities, they went!

Many of you are experiencing right now real physical and mental pain and you have prayed to God to be delivered from it. Just like these disciples in our story today maybe you came to Jesus because you know there is power in His name, and maybe He would grant you relief from what you are suffering from.

I do not know what your future has in store for you family, but what I can tell you is **that's not usually how our God works**. What He usually chooses to do, in calling true disciples, is that He **allows people to struggle** with their ailments because **fighting through the discomfort of suffering is how we discover joy** in the midst of life. **Then the day you discover you care less about what you suffer with and care more about the joy you find in Christ that is the day your joy is made complete and God is most glorified.**

These new disciples in our story came not to Jesus boasting in their strength like the Pharisees did. When Jesus began to speak to them as followers, they all had come in contact with Him for healing, He knew how hungry they were to leave better than how they arrived. Jesus even knew that many of them came not for what He could teach them but for what they could get from Him, power for healing. **Look, it is ok to admit that because without admitting first your weakness and hunger for being delivered from what is ailing you, you cannot be His disciple.** Awareness of your weakness is key in becoming a disciple of Christ.



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2. Finding Joy with a Hollow Heart.

Jesus begins teaching now and He uses a type of grammatical structure called an Oracle whereby Jesus speaks for God. He gives good news called "Weals" and bad news referred to as "Woes".

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.

²¹ **"Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.**

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

- Blessed, joyful, if you are poor, hungry, and sad.
- Poor - those that know they are spiritual bankrupt.
- Hungry - those that get they lack righteousness.
- Weep - those that are spiritually broken.

Mat.5 elaborates on these conditions more (sermon on the mount). Jesus is referencing to people that start the path of discipleship, that have allowed their suffering to bring them into contact with Him, that their **Hollow Hearts / EMPTY SOULS**; souls that desire to be filled - will find it when those disciples follow Jesus. **Disciples are people that recognize that their hearts need Jesus.**

Here's the good news from Jesus today for those that are aware of their spiritual hunger that is causing them spiritual weakness.

- Blessed are the poor, the spiritual bankrupt, for you will find God's Kingdom.
- Blessed are the Hungry, those that long to be filled with works of righteousness, you're going to be satisfied with what Jesus gives.
- Blesses are those that weep, for your hearts are broken, but you will be able to laugh again.

Being hungry for God is not a weakness because what Jesus is setting us up for the is the reality of **discovering joy from having His strength in us**, finding the Kingdom and being satisfied and laughing for joy because of it. Look at v.22 for a moment:



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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.

Now Jesus raises the bar and I am sure if we were standing there, we would think He is ridiculous. You will feel great, full of joy to the point of leaping in the air looking crazy when people exclude and revile you for His name sake. Back in those days the whole concept of **being despised for your religious beliefs held no reward**. The Pharisees were considered the top-notch religious people of the day, **their revile meant you were probably headed for Hell in a hand basket**.

We got to remember here though Luke is recording a 2-volume set and so I want us to turn to his second volume of work and see that His recording of Jesus' words were meant to show his prophetic and divine nature. Let's shoot forward about 2.5 years.

Acts 5:40-42 ESV

⁴⁰ and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴¹ Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. ⁴² And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.

The Apostles had made it, they had become not just students of Jesus, but they did the same things that Jesus did, they hacked off the religious elite! The Apostles had come poor, hungry, and weeping about the conditions in their hearts, but their hearts were filled to bursting when they were able to suffer for the cause of Christ.

They had discovered the secret of our principle this morning.

Being hungry for God is not a weakness but it's a strength.

3. Heading the Warnings of a Full Heart

²⁴ "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.



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"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.

Yes, you are supposed to see the opposite in these verses. This is to reflect on those that think they don't need Jesus, which by this point in the story you know are the Pharisees and the scribes. Look at how Jesus describes them.

Rich as opposed to poor, meaning those that think they are filled up spiritually, they don't need a handout, they're doing fine.

Full as opposed to hungry, meaning those that think their spiritual works have filled them with righteousness.

Laughing as opposed to weeping, meaning those that find joy in life have joy because they see their earthly blessings connected to their good behavior.

But if we are honest isn't that how we think a lot of the time. **We think we are ok spiritually because we compare ourselves to those outside our faith, just like the Pharisees.**

We think we are righteous when we can point at people like government officials and can compare ourselves to them.

We get caught up in chasing comfort because we think God wants to bless us because of obedience.

We think we are ok when others like ourselves approve of us by our FB likes.

Here's the warning that Jesus has for people that have full hearts.

You find your heart rich? Then know there will be no consolation after this life for you got it all now.

You find yourself full? In the end you will find yourself hungry never satisfying your guilt.

You find yourself full of the joy of life now? One day you will find yourself in the place where there is eternal wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Woe to you if you find yourself like by people because you went along with either majority to the far left or right. You were more concerned with being "Liked" than for being "unliked".

Jesus is painting for us the narrow path of discipleship because he is using the Pharisees not the gentiles to let His people know there will be **two types of people in Hell, the unrighteous and those filled with self-righteousness.** Jesus has now flipped the religion that He has grown up in. **You are to envy those that act broken over their sin for they are on the right path to enter**



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into God's Kingdom. On the flip side you are to pity those that are full of their righteousness because it means they are lost to God's Kingdom. This is why the Pharisees hated Him and why it got worse with time, because He had just started the anti-Pharisee campaign.

Being hungry for God is not a weakness but it's a strength.

I came to learn about a special woman this year, Joni Eareckson Tada¹ and what a wonderful lady she is. She has spent her adult life since 1967 in a wheel chair after a recreational accident at the age of 18. After fighting through her suicidal depression, she learned how to paint with her teeth and through her struggles discovered how she could glorify God through sharing her story. That catapulted her into starting a ministry for other Christians with disabilities, writing books, conference speaking, etc. You would think that being paralyzed you can't feel anything but that's not the case for Joni. She still has feeling but can't move and after years of inability to move she is now enduring pain everyday and by the grace of God when she feels like giving up she allows that pain to drive her to Jesus. **While we don't envy her pain we should covet her relationship with Jesus.** The way she talks about Him it's like He's physically there with her! And when you are that close to Jesus oh the presence she has when she witnesses and testifies for Him. **What power in weakness!**

Are you weak right now? **The only way your weak heart is a curse is if you let it be one.** Let it drive you to Jesus! Here's what Joni has learned about the desperateness of her soul and you should know too.

The state of desperation increases the effect of revelation in the lives of those called by God.

Paul had the same thing going on with him, and God knew Paul was strong in mind and spirit but was inclined to pride.

2 Corinthians 12:7 & 10 ESV

⁷"So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited."

¹ <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/teachers/joni-tada/>



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Here's what Paul and Joni have learned and what we will learn if we stick with being a Disciple long enough:

¹⁰" For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

Let me challenge you in here today with how to let your desperation increase your joy from having the revelation of Christ. I challenge you today to stop asking the Lord all the time to make your life easier but ask Him to:

- Teach me how to deal with this suffering
- Show me how I fool myself into thinking I'm good
- Reveal more of yourself to me through this suffering

If He answers your prayer here's what will happen: You will learn what Christians have discovered over the centuries, that your suffering no longer defines you but **your joy in the midst of suffering shows you to be a true disciple of Jesus** and that's what truly brings you peace and contentment that NOBODY can take away. You see:

Being hungry for God is not a weakness but it's a strength.

PRAYER

COMMUNION

BENEDICTION

Go in the name of the Father who will allow our suffering not to destroy us but will use it to guide us to His son.

Go in the name of the Son who mastered a life of suffering giving us the courage to endure our persecutions.

Go in the name and power of the HS that when we are weak will fill us with the joy of Christ for our strength.