

March 29 2009 – Oaklands Chapel - Assignment

Luke 6:20-26

"Sermon on the Plain 1: Signs of the Upside Down Kingdom"

1. Read Luke 6:20-26. Compare verse 20 with Luke 7:1. To whom is Jesus really directing His words – the 'disciples' or 'all the people'? Talk about the genius of Jesus' teaching methods as He engages the disciples in conversation in a context where the larger group 'overhears'. Can we learn from this about reaching people through 'kingdom' conversations in public settings?
2. Verse 20. What is your understanding of the term 'kingdom of God'? Luke uses this phrase at least 31 times in his Gospel. Check out a few of them: 4:43; 7:28; 8:1; 8:10; 9:2. Talk about ways in which we might use this 'kingdom of God' terminology to help us understand what God is doing in our own lives; in our church; in our society today.
3. Notice the direct link between the 4 'blessed' statements and the 4 'woe' statements in this section. Given what you understand about the context of Jesus' words (the disciples had given up career, home and everything to follow Jesus), what do you think is at the heart of these statements? In what ways is Jesus confronting the commonly held views regarding wealth and ease of life and the blessing of God?
4. How should we receive these words for our own context today? Are there some different decisions that we should be making both individually and corporately about our view and use of wealth? How can we put this discussion in the context of the whole of Scripture in order to avoid misusing the words of Jesus? What is one way in which you want to challenge or encourage yourself personally from these words?