

In the Name of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Intro



Today, we are celebrating Scout Sunday – and in a few minutes, a member of our Scout Troop will share with you some of his thoughts about the role of Scouting in his life.



One of the things every Boy Scout knows is the **Scout Law**.

The Scout Law consists of 12 points, or principles, that a Scout tries to live by every day.

- Essentially, it puts into “bullet points” how to be a Scout and how to live out your life as a Scout.

The Scout Law states that a Scout is:

Trustworthy	Obedient
Loyal	Cheerful
Helpful	Thrifty
Friendly	Brave
Courteous	Clean
Kind	Reverent

It's not always easy to live up to these goals, but a Scout always tries.

In a way, in our Gospel lesson, Jesus give us our own set of bullet points for what it means to live a life following him – we call them the Beatitudes.

I. Beatitudes

A. After spending time in prayer with God and choosing his Disciples – his inner core – Jesus comes down from the mountain to a plain – a level place where all can hear him.

1. There stretched across a great plain, this Teacher calls his followers together and begins to tell them what it is like to live in God’s Kingdom – this Kingdom of Love.

2. Although it is given in the midst of a great crowd, this “Sermon on the Plain” is actually directed to Jesus’ Disciples – in other words, those who have already decided to follow him.

3. And he begins to tell them about this Kingdom and how they can live it out in their own lives.

B. Here in the Beatitudes, Jesus presents the contrast between two different ways of living: **God’s** way and the **World’s** way.

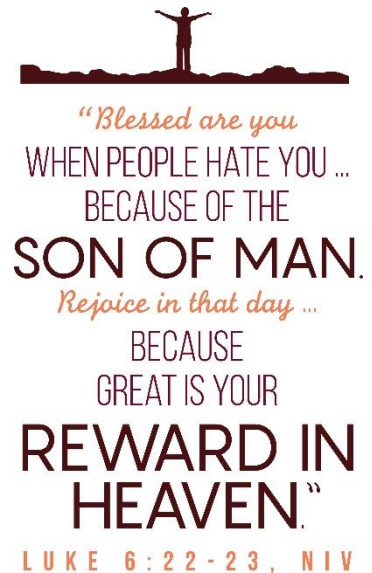
1. Hear again Jesus’ words about this new Kingdom that he has come to usher in, but this time we’ll pair each Beatitude with its corresponding woe.

2. The word translated as “blessed” is used in the sense of a pronouncement of the Lord’s favor.

- To be blessed or happy is to entrust one’s life to the Lord, and results from following God’s ways.

- In contrast, a “woe” is a pronouncement of God’s disfavor and disapproval.

3. *“Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.
- But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.”*



4. The **poor** are those who put their trust in the Lord, in contrast to the **rich** who put their trust in their wealth instead of looking to the Lord.

- The promise to the poor is the Kingdom of God **which is everlasting**; while the wealth and power of the rich are temporary.

5. *“Blessed are you who are hungry now, you will be filled.*

- Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry.”

6. Like the poor, the hungry have the promise of future abundance;

- whereas those who are full now have received all they are going to get.

7. In these first two Beatitudes, Luke puts more emphasis on ethical and social justice concerns.

- We can hear echoes of Mary’s Magnificat: *“He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich empty away.”*

8. *“Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.*

- Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep.”

9. Here the word *laugh* reflects the joy of being in the Kingdom of God.

- However, for those who trust in themselves, their “laughing” or present success will ultimately turn to failure, resulting in mourning and weeping.

10. *“Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.”*

- “Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.”

11. Those who are hated, excluded, reviled and defamed for their allegiance to Jesus should have JOY, for they will be rewarded in heaven.

- But Jesus warns of the woe to come to those who revel now in the world’s acclaim; they are false prophets who tell people what they **want** to hear instead of the truth.

II. Our Choice

A. So, basically, it all comes down to this – **Where are YOU going to put YOUR trust?**

1. That's the question the **Beatitudes** ask:

- “Where do you put YOUR trust – in the ways of God; or in the ways of the world – in God or in yourself – and how do you live that out?”

2. The word **TRUST** is neutral – whether it is good or bad depends on how it is used.

3. “Trust” in this context is a deep and abiding relationship.

4. **One's God is determined by what or in whom one puts complete trust.**

5. So, I'll ask you once again: Where will you put your trust?

B. It seems nowadays we live in a world that has already made its choice.

1. So many people are putting their TRUST in themselves and the world and not in God.

2. And what are the results?

- Our government – our very society – is seemingly dysfunctional – we are being pulled apart, and set at one another in vicious ways.

3. So what is the choice we will make? That choice we have to make every day of our lives.

- Will you take **world's way** – the way of immediate pleasure and profit?

- Or will you take **God's way** which leads to hard work and possibly suffering?

4. Will we seize on the pleasure and profit of the moment?

- Or are we willing to look ahead and sacrifice for the greater good?

5. Will we concentrate on the world's rewards or will we concentrate on God's?

6. It has to be one way or the other – it can't be both – they are too diametrically opposed.

7. If we take the world's way – we must abandon God's way;
- If we take God's way, then we must give up the values of the world.

8. The choice is up to us – but if we are to be followers of Christ than there is only one way to go.

9. And the Good News, Jesus tells us, is that there is blessing and reward in the end if we are faithful.

10. What are the “bullet points” you are going to follow?
And now I would like to introduce, Scout **Jackson Kaspar**.

Jackson currently holds the rank of Life Scout – and is working toward achieving his Eagle Badge.

He has been a member of our troop since 2016 – and no doubt was one of those “Little Green Men” who served you pancakes at one time or another.

Jackson is going to share with us some of his Scouting experiences and their importance in his life.

Please welcome Jackson.

