Love for the Troubled Soul
(6:17-19)

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“And He descended with them, . . . and there was a great multitude of His disciples, and a great throng of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon, who had come to hear Him, and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were being cured. And all the multitude were trying to touch Him, for power was coming from Him and healing them all” (6:17-19).

Luke 6:17-19 is often read without really thinking of all that is involved. These verses set the context, in emotional details, that define the Lord’s kingdom. Specifics are given. A hurried reading prevents one from grasping the marvelous love of God revealed through Jesus Christ.

Jesus had explained the utter incompatibility of the old covenant with the new covenant in Luke 6:1-11. The meaning was plain: Jesus was introducing a new system that could never tolerate the regulations of the old. This new system was about to be introduced by Christ, beginning in 6:20. Before the governing laws of the new were stated, the twelve were selected (6:12-16). The night before had been spent in prayer, and the dawn’s new light brought the day for the announcement of the kingdom’s guidelines.

This was a critical point in Christ’s ministry. His popularity was at its peak (cf. Mark 3:7-12). His continuing conflict with the old religious order was intensifying. And with the pronouncement of the new guidelines the chasm between Him and the old would widen. These verses of Luke 6 describe the opportunity Christ seized to announce His new kingdom. The sermon on that day would be His greatest. The audience would be His largest. The announcement would be His plainest.

But before the great discourse we read the words of our text. As we consider the events that have just happened, these verses contain startling words. The atmosphere was charged with excitement. The newly chosen twelve were radiant with optimism. The audience was moved by great anticipation. And before anything else Christ took time to heal and comfort!

Notice how Luke sets the stage for this phenomenal sermon. Christ “descended,” not to the foot of the mountain but to a level plateau. He had ascended to escape the multitude (Mark 3:13). After a night’s prayer, He had chosen the twelve from a larger group of disciples. Thus, on that morning, Christ, the twelve, and the larger band of disciples started down the mountain. As they descended they reached a plateau where they were met by a multitude from all areas of Palestine (Matthew 4:25; Mark 3:7, 8; Luke 6:17). This meeting provided Jesus the opportunity to speak about the new system’s guidelines. Those who were present could then return to the far corners of Palestine and tell others what they had seen and heard. No better opportunity for introducing this new system could have been provided!

But look closely at the impact of our text. Before the greatest sermon that the earth would ever hear was preached, there was a need for God’s universal love to be shown! Hurts had to
be healed; troubles had to be calmed. It was the most critical point of His ministry (the new system would be introduced and explained), yet Jesus took time to reveal God’s compassionate love!

Luke provides a word that best describes the object of divine compassion—“troubled.” This word refers to an uneasiness of a mob; the nagging annoyance which hinders tranquility (cf. Hebrews 12:15). When Jesus came down from the mountaintop, He was met by a multitude seeking the divine power which was able to calm “troubles.” Consider how their uneasiness was compassionately answered by the Lord’s love.

“TROUBLED SOULS” IN JESUS’ DAY

The cause of the troubles was Satan. Those who ascended the mountain to meet Christ had troubled souls because of Satan’s influence on their lives. Some had physical ills caused by sin entering the world with Adam and Eve, and others suffered from demonic possession. Whether directly or indirectly, Satan’s evil had prevented them from finding peace.

The Bible is frank in warning us about the trouble that results from a willful sin. Eliphaz reminded Job, “According to what I have seen, those who plow iniquity and those who sow trouble harvest it” (Job 4:8; cf. Deuteronomy 29:18; Psalm 9:15; Proverbs 1:31—8:36; etc.).

The cure was Jesus Christ. The multitude sought the “power” that could answer and dispel their troubles. His healing power over physical ills verified that He also possessed healing power over spiritual ills. The multitude realized that divine “power” radiated from Christ, and this was the answer to their troubles.

The multitude’s realization (that the cure for troubled souls is Christ) is needed today. He alone is the “Great Physician” (Matthew 9:27), the “Balm of Gilead” (Jeremiah 8:22—46:11), and the “Rock” whose cleft provides a peaceful haven (Psalm 18:2).

Christ came to bring a soothing cure to all troubled souls. Isaiah’s words well describe the Lord’s objective: “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, and freedom to prisoners; to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn” (Isaiah 61:1, 2; cf. 42:7).

It was on the mountaintop of Luke 6 that this blessed “cure” was demonstrated to the multitude. Little did that crowd know that a greater “cure” was coming by way of Calvary’s cross.

The scope was universal. Those who came to Jesus traveled from all parts of Palestine. From every district (north, south, east, and west) the troubled hearts were drawn to Jesus (cf. Matthew 4:25; Mark 3:7, 8; Luke 6:17).

The multitude that assembled on the plateau that morning fittingly portrayed general humanity—all were troubled in some aspect (cf. Isaiah 57:20, 21; Romans 6:23a; 3:23).

Christians today are encouraged to look around them and observe all with troubled souls. There are many surrounding us having no peace, no happiness, and no security! The scope of the troubled soul is indeed universal.

“TROUBLED SOULS” TODAY

Not much has changed since that morning described in 6:17. Satan’s evil still plagues humanity, and earthly existence is often tragic. A surging multitude is still seeking a cure for the burdens of their troubled souls. Many have given up hope of anything better. Some resign in despondency to troubles. Often troubles are so pressing that people shrug off the prospect of anything “better.” And the scope of this tragedy is still worldwide!

There is an answer for the “troubled soul” today. It is still the answer which the multitude sought in Luke 6. The answer is still Jesus Christ!

Through Christ troubled souls can find a marvelous “power” that effects the only cure. Paul speaks of this power as having the ability to rescue us from darkness and quicken us with eternal life (cf. Colossians 1:13, 14, 21, 22; Ephesians 1:19).

Through Christ our troubled souls are able to find a hope that provides tranquility and peace for our conscience (Hebrews 6:19).

Today the blessed invitation of Christ is still extended to “all” who will submit and obey the divine will (cf. Mark 16:15, 16).

Today it is possible for every troubled soul to find an answer to life’s turmoils.

Today, as in those days, the convincing proof of Christianity is found in its beneficent effects. It makes everybody better who accepts it. The drunkard becomes sober, the selfish becomes generous, the...
CONCLUSION

The events recorded in 6:17 were of critical importance to the Lord’s mission. It was imperative that He explain the nature and guidelines of His new system. The multitude on that morning was a great avenue to spread His message to every district of Palestine. But before He preached that marvelous “sermon on the mount,” He took precious time to reveal God’s love for “troubled souls.” Why? Because that was the reason He came. He came to earth to show us just how much the Almighty God loves the troubled soul. His coming explained how far God was willing to go to bestow divine benevolence upon all men. The new system which He was to inaugurate was to provide an escape from evil’s bondage and open the glories of heaven’s reward. This divine love, with universal application, could be illustrated no better than by the caring love displayed in the acts described in Luke 6:17-19!

This message was eagerly received by the multitude, and it is welcomed by “troubled souls” in our time. Here is an invitation for all to replace the uneasiness of sin and the annoyances hindering tranquility, with the calm of the Savior’s love. This will provide a “peace” that passes all understanding. This love for the “troubled soul” should be acknowledged and obeyed!

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28).

The Prayer Life of Christ
(Luke 6:12)

1. Prayer was used by the Lord to conclude moments faced with opposition.
2. Prayer was practiced by the Lord in moments of tranquil solitude.
3. Prayer was so important to the Lord that He spent long hours in its practice.
4. Prayer was the first step in our Lord’s decision-making process (6:13).
5. Prayer was so critical in our Lord’s opinion that He made a special effort to practice it.

The Sweetness of Prayer
(Luke 6:12)

God has provided an avenue through which mortals can taste the sweetness of heavenly life. Through prayer we are able to find sweetness in life:
1. When confronted with bitter people, we are able to find a sweet refreshment through prayer (6:6-12a).
2. When faced with loneliness and solitude, we are able to find a sweet fellowship in communion with God through prayer.
3. When facing major events in life, we are able to find reassurance and confidence in prayer’s sweetness.

The Classroom on the Plateau
(Luke 6:17-19)

1. The teacher—Jesus Christ.
2. The students—apostles, disciples, “a great multitude.”
3. The lesson—compassion, power, authority.

Points About Prophets
(Luke 6:23-26)

Christ mentions two kinds of prophets, the true and the false. Each kind can teach us.
1. Each kind received particular treatment from others. The true prophets were insulted and rejected while the false prophets were honored.
2. Each kind demonstrated particular attitudes toward God. The true prophets were humble servants striving to please God (hungry, poor, hated, weeping). The false prophets strove to please themselves (rich, well-fed, well spoken of).
3. Each kind was told to expect particular rewards. The true prophets could be “glad” in anticipating rewards. The false prophets could anticipate only “woes”!

Only two groups existed then, the true or the false. There was no middle ground. It was one or the other. This is true today. We must choose to follow either the true way or the false way!