

07.27.25

Luke

Chapter 6 - An Uncommon Perspective

Mans: Greatest Reward (vs. 35-36)

**Luke 6:35-36:** But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Well, certainly, from the very beginning of time, God is gracious, but man is evil. We see that in the garden; we see it shortly after the garden; we see it during the time of the flood; we see it ultimately after the flood. God is gracious; man is evil. His thoughts are evil. He's hostile. He's unkind. It's his nature. The Law of God, as you begin to read it, displays the character and nature of God. So,

even in the Ten Commandments you see the nature of God, not only in His desire to have a relationship with us, but His desire for us to have good relationships with each other. Don't take from them. Don't abuse your brother, don't steal, don't kill. These are all things that you wouldn't think you'd have to tell somebody, but it is the nature of man to do that. Ever since the time of Cain, the nature of man was to do evil. Strangely enough, man perceives God as the hard one, and the harsh one. It is not God. But it's understandable that he perceives God that way, and the reason why I say that is that religion starts morphing into, once again, in the control of man, something that is harsh and hard. So, as we begin to see Jesus as He comes on the scene in the realm of the religious, He begins to reveal just how harsh and hard they are.

In this particular chapter, we look in Chapter 6, it starts off with the harshness of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the religious leaders, the scribes, and how oppressive they were. In fact, they were watching to see what Jesus

would do in particular settings that they might accuse him.

If you look,

(Luke 6:7) “The scribes and the Pharisees were watching Him closely to see if He healed on the Sabbath, so that they might find reason to accuse Him.”

Then ultimately, Jesus says, “Look, I didn't come to destroy like you did. I came to do good.”

(Luke 6:11) “But they themselves were filled with rage...”

There is a stark contrast between religion and the religious leaders and then Christ choosing His disciples and as you see the disciples that He chooses, of course, obviously they seem to be not necessarily those that are in the higher echelon or those that are perceived to be religious by virtue of their garb, but they're just fishermen and in some cases you have even Levi, who's considered a great and grave sinner to the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Jesus calls them out, and He calls them out to be different than the world. There's a lot of confusion

going on with what is God like, and He has been misrepresented down through the years.

In Matthew 23 Jesus gets very clear about his description of the Pharisees and the scribes and the Sadducees in their continual woes that He gives within the passage as He begins to call them hypocrites because He basically says, “You look good, but you’re awful and horrible towards people. So, we see the nature of man to be destructive and hurtful. As Jesus begins to turn to His disciples and those that He called out, He turns to them, and He goes, “But you guys are going to be different.” So, our faith is different than religion, obviously. We're not oppressive, we're not accusatory. In fact, the great part about our faith is there is therefore now no condemnation in Christ Jesus. So, the wonderful message about our faith is that we literally are those that lift burdens rather than put them on.

We come to this passage, and He turns to the disciples, if you look in verse 20,

(Luke 6:20) “And turning His gaze toward His disciples...”

He begins to tell them the way that they should be, which is totally different than the way that it's been set up at this point. Man will twist anything. I mean, if man can distort the garden, he can distort anything, right? And Peter so aptly puts it that there are people that twist and distort Scripture, the untaught, the unstable, and there are a lot of those that are out there.

As we look in Luke 6:20, there's a context that's being said, and that's one of the things that I wanted to emphasize. In the passage, He's talking specifically to His disciples, and He's saying, "If you want to follow Me, this is the way that things are going to work." Now, as we go through this, I don't want this to be misconstrued because people will oftentimes read this and they'll go, "So, it's really good to be poor. You don't want to have any money because it says within the passage, 'blessed are the poor.' So, it's better to be poor than to have any money, and it goes on and it talks in this about the fact that you want to be hungry. So, you want to go without food. That's a better thing." So, you're going to misunderstand Scripture if in fact you're just reading it without the perspective of

He's talking to His disciples. What He's talking about is, “You're going to follow Me, and this is the way it's going to be. You're going to be better off to give up things to follow Me.”

In fact, the way that He'll put it, if you look in verse 22, (Luke 6:22) “... when men hate you, and ostracize you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil...”

Well, are people just doing that arbitrarily to anybody that they come up to? Well, I guess they can, but this is focused on, “You're My disciples; this is what they're going to do to you because you're My disciples.”

If you look at the end of verse 22,

“... for the sake of the Son of Man.”

Now, that's the emphasis of the text. In other words, there's nowhere in the passage where Jesus is walking around fundamentally saying, “You're really a much better person if in fact you're poor.” That's not what He's saying in the passage. What He's saying is that “You're going to be blessed if you're willing to give up things for following Me. You're going to be better off. You're going

to be blessed because of this.” Because it's in the context of following Christ.

There's so much Scripture that really deals with the fact that you don't want to be a sluggard. You don't want to be slothful. In fact, Paul will write in 2 Thessalonians 3, “If you don't work, you shouldn't eat.” So, He's not elevating sloth, and He's not elevating that person that is lazy.

What He is saying is that “You should be willing to give up things to follow Me and you'll be blessed if in fact you do.”

There was one incident, of course, when He comes to a rich individual and He says, “Sell everything you have and give to the poor. Follow Me.” The guy walked away sad because it says that he had much. In fact, if you look at that with me in the Gospel of Mark. I like the way that that it records in the Gospel of Mark. You begin to realize in Chapter 10 that the disciples were even taken back by the statement that Jesus says. He fundamentally says after this, “I tell you, it's very hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.” And they're going, “Well, then who can be saved? It doesn't make any sense.”

It goes on and says this,

(Mark 10:23) “And Jesus, looking around, said to His disciples, “How hard it will be for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God!”

(Mark 10:24) The disciples were amazed at His words...”

Because once again, there are going to be times that you're going to be asked in your faith to give up things. It may not be everything that you own. It may be a particular thing, but God's going to say, “Are you willing to give this up?” And if, in fact, the more you have and the more you're attached to the things you have, the more difficult it's going to be. So, blessed are those that perhaps don't have that allurements according to the passage.

But He goes on and He says,

(Mark 10:24) “The disciples were amazed at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God!

(Mark 10:25) “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

(Mark 10:26) They were even more astonished and said to Him, “Then who can be saved?”

(Mark 10:27) Looking at them, Jesus said, “With people it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God.”

(Mark 10:28) Peter began to say to Him, “Behold, we have left everything and followed You.””

Now, that's really the context that we're dealing with. He's turning to His disciples, and He's saying, “You'll be better off if you let go of this stuff to follow Me.” But it's in the context of following Christ. It's not elevating somebody to being a wonderful person because they're poor. They're not wonderful because they're poor. In fact, they may be very sinful because they're poor. That may be the reason why they're poor is because they made all the wrong decisions. But He's saying, “You're better off to let go of things to follow Me and this will bring a greater

blessing. Don't love the world. Don't love the things in the world.”

So, as it goes on,

(Mark 10:29) “Jesus said, “Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel’s sake,

(Mark 10:30) but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions...”

It’s not going to be easy.

“... and in the age to come, eternal life.”

In other words, Christ is saying, “Don't worry, I'll take care of you and the blessings will be far greater if you're willing to give up these things for My gospel. I'll take care of you.” The wonderful thing is that God has a wonderful way of extending your family. Sometimes you have to let go of family in order to follow Christ, or they let go of you, and the wonderful thing is that God just extends your

family in a greater way, and you go, “I have more brothers and sisters and family than I ever thought I would have.” So, God says, “Don't think that I'm not going to reward you.” I'm saying all of this because this particular passage that we're looking at is going to be talking about reward, and when we talk about reward, I know there are some of us who are really super-hyper spiritual people, which I just don't happen to be one of those, but that that fundamentally say, “I'm not doing it for the reward.” And I take people back to that fundamental passage in Hebrews 11, which says, “Without faith, it's impossible to please God.” Now, listen to the whole verse, “For you must first believe that He is,” That's one, “and He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” So, there are two things that you have to believe within the text. One is that He exists as who “He” says He is, and the second is that He rewards those who put their trust in Him. In other words, we're doing it for the rewards. Now, the question that arises in regard to that is, what exactly are the rewards? And it's an interesting passage because the rewards in some ways are being mentioned in this marked passage, but at the passage that we're going to be looking at today,

you're going to see how wonderful rewards are and what the great reward is within the text. Because clearly, I'm going for the reward, and you're going to see how wonderful the blessings are.

So, if you go back to Luke 6, we then go through the text and He then begins to tell them that “You need to love your enemies, even those people that hate you and abuse you. Bless those who curse you and pray for them.

Somebody hits you in the cheek, offer them the other.”

And all these things kind of go against our grain. Clearly, He's establishing, I would say, a way of thinking and a demeanor that is Christ like; it is like following Him. It's what God is like. So, there is kind of this general theme throughout all of this and that is that God has called us to be kind, generous, obviously unattached to the world, and not somebody that would be vindictive or be unforgiving to people. Once again, religion could be very harsh and very unforgiving and very condemning and very accusatory, which we know that Satan is the great accuser of the brethren. So, we know it's all those things, and He says, “You don't want to be this way.” But there is a more

specific context, and the specific context is specifically to the disciples, those who are following, and He says, "This is what you're going to do, and I want you to be like Me."

Now, after saying that, I just want to emphasize, too, that the fruit of the Spirit, which is the Spirit of Christ within us, in Galatians 5:22:23, is describing that demeanor. That is to say, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness; it's certainly good and faithful and humble in spirit and displaying self-control. All these things are the fruit of the Spirit as we come into the passage.

When we come to the end of this text, as He begins to list all the thing that the disciples should be doing, He kind of summarizes it, and it's one of the reasons why I just love this verse 35 and 36, because in the summary, there's an even greater clarity than we had before, and that is He's actually displaying to us what it means to follow Him.

So, in this summary statement, if you look with me in verse 35, we're going to see just what it's all about. Now, the emphasis within the passage is going to be that you're going to follow God. Matthew 5 would say, "Therefore you are to be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect."

And I would think in a fundamental way, “What do you mean by that? I'm omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent; that is to say, am I going to be all powerful like God? Am I going to be all knowing like God? Am I going to be everywhere like God is?” And He's not talking about that. But Paul will say in Philippians 3, “I press on towards the mark of the high calling.” So, how are we going to be like Him? And the answer is going to be very clear. You're going to love like He does. You're going to take on the disposition of Christ.

In fact, Ephesians 5 will start off,

(Ephesians 5:1) “Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;

(Ephesians 5:2) and walk in love, just as Christ...”

So, in case you're ever confused about that, and one of the reasons why when you go through the life of Christ, while He was here on the earth, He obviously wasn't omnipresent, right? He wasn't all powerful, and He wasn't even all knowing. I don't even know the time, until He is resurrected, but the point is that what we see in Christ is what we're to emulate and what we're to follow. Now,

what we have is the greatest nature of God and that is love.

We come to this passage and He starts off with what I would declare as the divine nature of God's disposition, God's disposition towards us. Scripture tells us that He is full of lovingkindness, and it will use that word over and over again, which is really in the Old Testament, “*hesed*” that is used, which emphasizes somebody that is zealous to love somebody. As Isaiah, we've oftentimes quoted, states that the Lord longs to be gracious. I believe that many of us can try to be loving. We work at being loving. We would like to be loving, but the bottom line is that we're not zealous about love, and when it talks about the lovingkindness of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, what it's talking about is that God really possesses the zeal and intense desire to be compassionate and loving and merciful and kind. There's a zeal about it and it's like you have to hold Him back to not be. Now, once again, because of religion, our perception of God has been skewed and twisted, but this is His nature. This is who He is. John will say in 1 John,

“God is love.” That's who He is. He defines what love is by His very nature. This is God.

So, it starts off in verse 35,

(Luke 6:35) “But love your enemies...”

Now, once again, as a number of passages have already made reference to, anybody can love somebody that loves them. Sinners do that, but what makes God unique is that He loves sinners. He loves those who don't love Him. “While we were yet sinners”, Romans 5 says, “Christ died for us.” So, this makes God unique. If you look in Hosea, and He says, “I could destroy you, but I'm God. I'm not a man, and My lovingkindness keeps pouring out. I still love you. I should abandon you, but I still love you.” It's by His nature that He does this. That's what makes Him unique. Well, what God is calling us to do is to be like Him.

So, in the passage, when Jesus says,

(Luke 6:35) “But love your enemies,”

That's in an imperative which is telling us that we're doing this because of our love for God. Now, there's something

about enemies that's just not loving; they're not lovable. But why do we love? Well, Christ turned and told me to. See, "we love because He first loved us", 1 John, right? So, it's His love that constrains me to do this. In fact, if you had Jesus sitting right next to you, is there anything that you wouldn't do for Him after you saw Him die in the cross for your sins, and He told you how much He loved you, and then He said, "Would you love this person next to you?" Would you say, "No"? I couldn't say no. So, when He turns and says, "Love your enemies," I go, "I got it," and it's not because in some way this enemy is more lovable; it's not necessarily because I'm a loving person, but it's because I'm so in love with God that I'll love this person for Him, and it is in that imperative that He begins to move us. He's fundamentally saying, "I want you to have the same heart that I have, and that heart is, I want you to be zealous to be kind; I want you to be zealous to be compassionate; I want you to be zealous to be merciful. I want you to have the same mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

So, if you look in the passage, He starts off,

(Luke 6:35) “But love your enemies...”

So, we're fundamentally dealing with His inherent quality and His temperament and His character to love. “I want you to have this nature in yourself.”

The psalmist really beckons God in this regard.

He says,

(Psalm 6:4) “... Save me because of Your lovingkindness.”

That's an interesting verse, a very short verse, and very interesting. The reason why it's interesting is he doesn't say, “Save me because I'm worthy; save me because I'm a nice guy; save me because I've done really nice things for You.” He says, “Save me because You're full of lovingkindness. That's why You save me.” And God wants us thinking that way. He wants the same heart, the same mind to be in us.

So, it starts with the divine disposition. The divine disposition is to love your enemies.

The second part within the passage is,

(Luke 6:35) “... do good...”

See that? Now, as He's been saying, "I want you to do good to men." Here again, the initial thought is, "Yeah, there's some people who I don't think you want to do good to, because if you do good to them, then..." Ok. So, this is where all of this is predicated on something. It's predicated on fundamentally, what good is. We have a twisted idea that good is fundamentally, and they'll tell you this in politics, "Give the person anything they want and you're a good person." And that's not good. So, what is exactly good? Because we need to understand what it means to give good in order to give good. Otherwise, you're going to be giving bad and think it's good and that's going to be not good. So, you want to do that which is good within the passage.

So, always good. What is good? Well, He uses the Greek word, "*agathos*," which fundamentally is not only something that's beneficial, but it's something that will benefit somebody and actually help somebody. But it is also understood as something that is honorable and something that is pleasing to God. In other words, you don't want to do anything for somebody that is not

honorable and that is not pleasing to God. In fact, ultimately the passage is going to say, “You should be just like your Father.” Well, would God give bad things? This is why Scripture will say, “Every good gift is from above.” James 1:17, right? Every good gift. What does he mean? Every honorable, every helpful, every beneficial, everything that is moral and right, God gives. God fundamentally doesn't supply to the evil, evil gifts. He won't give gifts. I mean, if you ask for a fish, would He give you a serpent? No, He's not going to give you a bad gift. He's not going to give you something that will hurt you.

So, when it says in Psalm 84:11,

“... No good thing does He withhold...”

It means that He won't withhold good things for those that are righteous. So, to those that are following him, He wants to give good things and this is what He'll do. But the fact that God is somebody that is just helter-skelter giving things to people just because they say, “I want something” is misunderstanding of who God is.

2 Chronicles 19:2 is a passage that we've oftentimes quoted, and if you remember, that's in the context of King Jehoshaphat, of Judah and his father-in-law, who is king of Israel, Ahab, which is not a good thing, not a good king. So, he's been dealing with his father-in-law and I think sometimes in family our thoughts are, "Well, I've got to be nice to my father-in-law." And I would say, yeah, that would be a good thing to do, but how do you define "nice"? And your father-in-law may be a wicked person, and he may want to do bad things; he might say something like, "Well, you need to ride with me and do the things that I do." And if in fact you go along with him, you're not giving him a good thing.

The way that it's quoted within the passage as Jehu, the seer, comes to Jehoshaphat, and he fundamentally says, "What are you helping your father-in-law for? He's a wicked king." And this is how he puts it,

(2 Chronicles 19:2) "... "Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD and so bring wrath on yourself from the LORD?"

That's an interesting question, isn't it? What it's telling us is that you're helping this person do wrong, and that's not good. So, we oftentimes get confused that the perception is, "If I'm going to help somebody, I'm going to do something good for them; I'm going to give them what they want."

2 John warns against giving aid or even actually greeting somebody that is refusing to abide in the teaching of Christ. It actually says, "Do not receive them in your house." It actually says that. So, is that being mean? No, it's actually taking a stand, making it so clear because you actually care for that person's soul more than you care for their affirmation. It's just like with a child. Look there are times the parent is going to look like really a bad guy, but the parent does what they do because they love the child, and this is the key, as 1 Corinthians 16 will say, "You do all that you do out of love." In other words, is this helpful? Is it truly helpful? Is it honorable? Is it moral? Is it right? Is it just? Will it benefit this person? So, you're thinking about the good for the person all the way around.

You think about first Corinthians 13, and it actually defines love, and what it says in there is not only is love patient and kind, but it states that “Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness but rejoices in the truth.” In other words, it's not going to party around doing bad things. Now, once again, the world might perceive that as not being good, but that's one of the good gifts that we give people. We give them a sense of right and wrong. It would be a bad gift to give them “gray.”

So, when the passage says, “do good,” it's talking that you have this divine blueprint of what is good. When Scripture talks about the gospel, the name of the gospel is that which is defined as “good news.” Now, does that mean that it's just something that tickles your ears? No, it means that it's virtuous, beneficial, helpful, pure, good news. So, it's all those things. When we hear about the fact that Christ died for our sins, we hear about the fact that we have to admit that we're sinners in order to be free from our sins. But once again, I guess that could be perceived as being mean, but that's really the love of Christ, and that's how we give good gifts, we make things

clear. It's that gray area and that misunderstanding and twisted perception of what is good that oftentimes causes people hurt.

Obviously, we're to follow Christ, right? So, you go in the Gospels, and it's one of the great reasons for the Gospels, because you read through the Gospels and you go, "Well, it looks like if somebody asked me for stuff, I just give it to them, whatever they want." And that's not what Jesus is saying. He's saying, "Go with a generous heart. Give him good all the time. Don't withhold good from him, but make sure it's good."

When we go in the passage, what's interesting is that He starts off, and as we go on into Chapter 7, we'll see Him minister to a centurion which is a Roman soldier and he's not even a Jew. He's a Roman. He's an enemy of the Jews and yet He will minister to them. He will help save a life and his family and his concerns, and He'll be concerned for him because he comes to Him with a broken heart and a desire, and he says, "Help me." And Christ says, "I'll help you." And He doesn't withhold that. I mean, He's not a respecter of persons. He's not bias. He'll help anybody.

There was a woman from Nain, and her son dies, and she's at the funeral. She's a widow. So, this was the only one that could possibly take care of her family, and now he's dead, and Jesus will raise him from the dead and help this woman.

But what's interesting is in the same chapter, in Chapter 7, and let me just show you; He is invited to a Pharisees' house, right? Let me just make this real clear. Jesus is a guest in somebody's house. Now, He's a guest in somebody's house. I mean, you want to be very gracious, right? I mean everything He's been telling me, "Love your enemies. Do good." So, ok, I'm going to see what this looks like. So, he goes to the Pharisees house and He goes in the Pharisees' house, a woman from the street comes in. Of course, the Pharisee goes, "Oh man, this person. I don't want her in here. If He was a prophet, He would know just what kind of person this is." And then Jesus turns to the person who has invited Him into his house, once again, I want to emphasize that, and He goes, "Simon," which is his name, the Pharisee, "I have something to say to you." Now, we're going, "Ok. So,

we've got to get ready for a blessing because this guy opened up his house and he invited Him over."

So, if you drop on down to verse 40,

(Luke 7:40) "And Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." ..."

So, He tells him this interesting event of two debtors and one owed a lot, the other owed very little, and He said, "Both were forgiven, but who do you think would be more grateful?" He says, "Well, I guess the guy that owed the most." He goes, "Ok. So, let Me tell you something." He says, "This woman right here..."

(Luke 7:44) "Turning toward the woman, He said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.

(Luke 7:45) "You gave Me no kiss; but she, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss My feet.

(Luke 7:46) "You did not anoint My head with oil, but she anointed My feet with perfume.

(Luke 7:47) “For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven...”

Now, what would be the other end of that spectrum? Maybe his aren't? This is insulting, and it's not only insulting an individual, but it's insulting a religious leader. But let me emphasize something, Jesus is doing good. Do you understand the point? Jesus isn't necessarily telling people what they want to hear. He's telling people what will save them, and I think our thoughts are, “If I cater to a person, give them what they want long enough, that they're going to think I'm a nice person and eventually, I'll just kind of move it over to God and go, ‘Well, but it's really kind of Him’ and they're just going to wrap their loving arms around...” No. Tell them the truth, speak the truth in love, give them good all the time, and good will always be the right thing. “I'm going to minister to my family. I have to miss Sundays, but I'm going to minister to them.” No. Put the Lord first, do good, and then watch God save them. See, because it's God that does the work. You do good and continue to do good. So, it starts off with your disposition; it goes into the realm of what the

design is, and you need to always be thinking in this term, “I'm doing good.” Once again, don't just limit it to those things that that person may like you to do.

If you would go back to the passage in Luke, it uses this phrase,

(Luke 6:35) “... and lend, expecting nothing in return...”

Now, it actually uses the word “lend,” where you would lend something, and probably has, for the most part, this bent towards charging interest. So, the principle of lending is to get something back. However, He puts in a qualifier within the passage. I heard a while back, somebody said they loaned their lawnmower out to somebody, and they said, “I knew I wasn't going to get it back.” That's the way you ought to think, “I'm not expecting it back; I'm expecting them to keep it.” Now, this is divine deliberation. This is deliberate. I love the phrase here that He uses,

“... and lend...”

Look at the words here,

“... expecting nothing...”

The Greek word that He uses within the text is somebody that is wringing their hands and in despair. You know how you loan something out, maybe your car; especially when you watch them pull out of the driveway and hit the tree, or graze the tree? But there is this sense of wringing your hand. There's a sense of despair and anguish and you're feeling miserable, and actually, it is the word, feeling "despondent". That's pretty interesting. In other words, if you loan it, you can't feel despondent. I'm going, "What do you mean? Because at this point, I'm beginning to regret the fact that I loaned it out. Because I may never get it back." He said, "You can't feel that way." What He's talking about is that you're giving in such a way that it's deliberate. It's a deliberate abandonment to yourself, and that's the way you have to give. Being like God is, well, a lot different than I think most of us will expect, but without any regret or any remorse, we're all in this. I've oftentimes heard people, "Following the Lord, I didn't know all this was involved. I didn't know it was going to be this hard." And I'm hearing regret and I'm going, "That's not the Spirit of God." You've given your life without regret. I don't regret one moment. I don't have

one remorse over any sacrifice that God has called me to do. Scripture so aptly puts it, “Look, I'm going to tell you, the sufferings of this world are not to be compared with the glory that is to follow.” And that I could do something for Him, what an amazing thought that is.

So, He goes on and says within the passage,

(Luke 6:25) “... and you will be sons of the Most High...”

Now, Scripture will tell us,

(John 1:12) “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God...”

And he used the Greek word “*teknon*,” which is basically a general word for His children, or you're going to be born into His family. So, that's a wonderful thing if you believe on His name.

But the word “*huios*” here within the text, that He uses, is almost always used in the context of a son being like his father. It will be used specifically in Romans 8, and I want to kind of bounce off of that one as well.

But if you look in the passage it says,

“... your reward will be great...”

And for all of you who don't want rewards, here's the reward, "And you'll be like your Dad, the Most High." That's a reward. To be like my Heavenly Father, could you imagine? You've taken on the character and the nature of your Father.

I mean, look, there are a lot of things in Scriptures that tell you that there are rewards in heaven and even on the earth. I think of one of our favorites is Psalm 37,

(Psalm 37:4) "Delight yourself in the LORD;  
And He will give you the desires of your heart."

Well, that's a reward. That's a great, great reward. I love that one, and I love also in Proverbs 19:23, where it says if you fear the Lord, you'll sleep really well, you'll not be afraid, and you'll be satisfied with your life. I think people think that they have to take things or something in their water to somehow calm them down. But the point is that you can have great peace if in fact you will fear the Lord. The psalmist will go on to say, if in fact you'll put your trust in the Lord and offer the sacrifice of trust to Him, you'll sleep like a baby. So, I like those kinds of rewards. Those are all really cool rewards, but to understand what

He's saying here, this is the greatest reward. I'll be like Dad.

If you look with me in Romans Chapter 8, you'll see the same picture here.

(Romans 8:12) “So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—

(Romans 8:13) for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

(Romans 8:14) For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”

He doesn't say, “children of God”. We're children of God when we believe on the name of Christ.

“These are sons,” “*huios*”- These are the ones that look like their Dad. That's the word that He uses. “These are sons of God.”

Now, watch, it goes on and says,

(Romans 8:15) “For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a

spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!”

(Romans 8:16) The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God.”

Now, watch. He’s going to take a leap.

(Romans 8:17) “and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him...”

Who would suffer with Him? His sons. They're going to look like him. What makes you look like Him? You're willing to suffer for doing what is right, and that I would begin to look like my Dad, I just can't imagine. I mean, this is somebody that's being led by the Spirit of God. It's the difference between an infant and a mature young man. That's the difference between the two words. One is born, the other looks like and acts like a mature man like his father. There's a reward in maturation. That's why Paul says, “I press on towards the mark of the high calling,” right? And then he will state this after that, in Philippians 3, “And as many of us as are perfect, mature, have this same mind.” What he's fundamentally saying is

that the child that wants to be like his dad is always pressing to be like his dad. That's the mind of the mature. They're always pressing on. They're not complacent. They're not sitting back.

So, as the passage says,

(Luke 6:35) “... you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men.”

In other words, your disposition, your design, is going to always be to give good and you're not going to hold on to anything. You'll be willing to let anything go, because in whatever the sacrifice God has called you to, you have no regrets. Absolutely no regrets.

There's a passage in the Book of Hebrews, and if I could just take you there in Hebrews 13. It calls us to be like Christ, and to fix our eyes on Jesus, who is the author and perfecter of our faith.

It reads this way,

(Hebrews 12:2) “fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross...”

Once again, I'm going to have you underline the word, but you probably already have it underlined,

“... despising the shame (*kataphroneō*) ...”

“*Kataphroneō*” actually means “mind”. So, the word “mind” is in the text. What it's making reference to is that when Jesus went through the suffering, and once again, the connotation that we get from the text is probably a little bit off; the word is correct, “despise,” but the question is, what was He despising? And it's inappropriate to come up with the conclusion that He despised the shame. That's not what the text is saying. It's saying that He despised what He was going through in the sense of thinking nothing of it. The word itself, “*kataphroneō*,” means “to think nothing of it”. So, it would be as if something insignificant came into your life and you go, “This is insignificant.” “Aren't you worried about this?” “It means nothing to me.” That would be the word. So, what He's talking about is that in all the suffering that Christ was going through, He said, “It's nothing because I have a greater joy, the joy that is set before Me.” This is why Paul would say, “Look, the sufferings of this world are not to

be compared.” Same idea, not to be compared, nothing, with the glories to follow. see. The focus is that it’s deliberate and what He's saying is when you lend, expect nothing in return, then there's no anxiety over giving up stuff. There's no anxiety. You gave out of a deliberate desire to do. It. You have no regrets over this. You have no remorse over it. You wanted to follow God.

So, it goes on and says,

“... endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Obviously, you look at the two, the shame of the cross, and sits down at the right hand of God.

Therefore, God highly exalted Him and gave him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, every tongue will confess..... “I think nothing of it.”

(Hebrews 12:3) “For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”

(Hebrews 12:4) You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin;

(Hebrews 12:5) and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons..."

He's calling you to be like Him.

"... "MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD,  
NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM;

(Hebrews 12:6) FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES..."

By the way, the word "discipline" actually has the reference of training and instructing in the sense of correcting mistakes. Through the difficulties in your life, He's correcting the errors. We'll put it another way, He's correcting all of those things in your life that don't look like Him, because the reward is to look like Him. That's the reward. We get to look like Him.

If you look with me in Luke 6, and you'll see this very clearly in verse 36, and understanding the context, it reads this way,

(Luke 6:36) “Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”

See, that's the reward, and I can't think of a greater reward. I press on towards the mark. I'm working for that reward. I'm going for that one. There's nothing that compares to that. That at the end of my life, at the end of your life, people would say, “Well done, good and faithful servant, you look like your Dad.” And then to go into His presence, can you think of anything greater than that?

### **Closing Prayer:**

Father, we come before You and we give You thanks for Your love for us, for Your calling us to be different, not like the world and not like the religion of the world, but to be like You. Clearly, this is not a religion, this is a faith. This is not a religion, this is a relationship. This is not a religion, this is love. We're coming into Your presence, and as You, who are our adored Father, we long to be like You. You've placed within us the same Spirit that's within Your Son, to be like You.

With your heads bowed and your eyes closed, what we're asking you to do is come in faith. Come be learners of Christ, as the name “disciple” would say. See what it's like to be like Him, and then press on towards that mark. Certainly, as you receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, the Spirit of Christ is now within you, and you can feel that tugging. Don't start compromising now. There is a call to be like God in your demeanor, in your disposition, by virtue of loving the way He loves in the design and by doing good, and in the deliberateness of the things that you do. These are all the calling of God. Do you hear His voice?