

FYI: Our church uses multiple methods of communication for Sunday morning talks. Regardless of the method being used today (live or on video), our goal is life transformation! We hope this is your experience.

Baggage – Week 8

Speaker: Dave Nelson

Want to get the most out of this series? Download a FREE spiritual growth guide, for daily prayer and Bible reading help, at greatlakeschurch.com/101

God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way. Matthew 5:10-12

- The summary of Jesus teachings on happiness: Quit trying to _____ like you've got it all together and _____ that you need help!
- _____ will alert you to where your comfort zone ends.
- Key question: When was the last time following Jesus _____ in me?

Other verses used during this talk: Matthew 5:1-12; 2 Timothy 3:12; John 3:20-21; Matthew 16:24-26; John 15:18-20; Philippians 1:6; Philippians 3:12-14

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE SERIES: *Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.*
Matthew 6:33

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What is the Holy Spirit saying to me through this message?

WHAT'S YOUR NEXT STEP DURING THIS SERIES?

Memorize the key Bible verse for this series (Matthew 6:33)

NEW SERIES STARTS NEXT SUNDAY: THE COMPARISON TRAP

There's NO win in COMPARISON.

Let's face it. Not a day goes by that you're not tempted to glance to the left and to the right to see how you measure up to the people around you. But it doesn't stop there, does it? You're tempted to compare your children to other children, your spouse to other spouses!

It's frustrating... It's exhausting... It's a TRAP!

This series will explore the difficult—but not impossible—challenge of escaping *The Comparison Trap*.

WANT TO HEAR OR WATCH TODAY'S TALK AGAIN?

- Check out www.greatlakeschurch.com/media

BABY DEDICATIONS

If you'd like to dedicate your baby on Sunday, December 1st, at one of our services, please check the "baby dedication" box on your connection card. We'll send you an email with information and a link to sign up.

SUMMARY OF JESUS' TEACHINGS ON HAPPINESS IN MATTHEW 5:1-9...

God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. Matthew 5:3

The only way to really understand and appreciate God's grace is to embrace the depth of your spiritual poverty and brokenness. By doing this, you'll come to realize how helpless you really are and how powerful God really is.

God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Matthew 5:4

In the midst of our mourning, we are able to let down our guard and remove the masks we are wearing. Once we mourn our sin and helplessness, by realizing how it affects us and others... we can experience God's grace.

God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth. Matthew 5:5

Genuinely happy people are the ones who've learned how to manage their emotions and keep their strength (words and actions) under control.

God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied. Matthew 5:6

It's easy to hunger and thirst after justice for other people, but once we start to hunger and thirst after it for ourselves, we are filled. The turning point in this verse is that "justice" or "righteousness" is not a behavior, but rather the person of Jesus Christ.

God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Matthew 5:7

Showing mercy to others, and extending forgiveness, is the only way to truly be free from hate, anger, bitterness and resentment.

God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God. Matthew 5:8

When our hearts are undivided and we are completely focused on a life that is dedicated to God... we begin to see Him in a new way.

God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God. Matthew 5:9

Our primary role in a world that is broken by sin, sickness, and disease is to do our part in bringing peace and reconciliation wherever possible.

You can download any of the talks from our
Baggage teaching series at
www.greatlakeschurch.com/media

FAQ's FOR THE 2013 CHRISTMAS OFFERING:

Every year we receive one special offering, over and above our regular giving, to help launch initiatives that have the potential of paying big dividends with life change!

• WHY A SPECIAL OFFERING?

As part of God's plan to grow the faith of the people in His church, He calls us to sacrificial giving from time to time (2 Corinthians 8:1-15). This special offering is an opportunity for us to grow in our faith and to prepare us for what God wants to do through our church in 2014. This offering is not because we are behind on budget (we are not), but rather it is to position us to make a greater impact in 2014, both in our city and around the world.

• WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE REGULAR OFFERING AND THIS SPECIAL OFFERING?

The regular Great Lakes offering is what we set apart on a systematic basis and give throughout the year. It is through our regular offering that the church is able to operate and do ministry.

The year-end Christmas Offering is one of those sacrificial occasions that stretch us to grow in our faith. The special offering should be over and above what you regularly give.

• HOW MUCH SHOULD I GIVE?

The precise amount is between you and God. Whether it's \$30,000 or \$30, the issue is not equal giving, but equal sacrifice. What amount can you give that will stretch your faith?

• WHEN SHOULD I GIVE?

It's totally up to you. However, Wednesday, December 11th and Sunday, December 15th (depending on which service you attend) is the day that we are officially designating as the time to bring our best gift. That being said, you can give anytime between now and December 31st. Please indicate on the offering envelope what portion of your giving should be designated to the Christmas Offering.

• ARE MY GIFTS TAX-DEDUCTIBLE?

Yes. Be sure your gift arrives at our office before December 31, 2013 to ensure that it can be applied to your 2013 contribution statement.

Questions? Contact Mary Sweeney at mary@greatlakeschurch.com