



Smith this week shows that which our culture prizes as beautiful and the price that many pay in pursuit of it. Jesus says that's ugly.

( ) In contrast, what culture considers ugly, Jesus blesses. Our genuine needs as human beings are where we find the source of our true beauty. Our need to be loved, to belong, to be connected to serve – for the identify that is ours in God, in Christ. Our poverty, that's beautiful. Our hunger, that's real beauty. Our brokenness – now there are the places of beauty.

Culture says, you are crazy! Your vulnerability, your neediness, your sincere open-heartedness – why Betty Christian – that's ugly. Cover that up, put some make-up on that. Christ says, no – that's where the blessing comes.

( ) Jesus celebrates and blesses those in need. It is when we come to our personal poverty, our devastating hunger, our brokenness of heart and tears that our beauty begins. I'm going to share that real clearly with you in a moment.

But first, notice that to deliver this great teaching, Jesus came down from a high place to level ground. He stood among them on a level field right in the middle of the ugliness of the day. He spoke of inequality, an unfair system that esteemed some as better than or preferred over others. Such a life view comes from a false belief of scarcity – that there's only so much to go around; so much potential wealth and value in the universe. Some will gain while others must go without. To that unlevel culture, Christ spoke of an upside-down existence that invites God's power in supplying for each according to their need. Those who follow Christ learn how to make space for God to turn the ugly things of life into beauty.

So here's today's Big Question: In the story of your life – Past – Present – Future, are you open to, engaged in this Beautification Make-Over Process with God? Are you discovering the true beauty in poverty, hunger, and weeping? I think I can make this real clear if you'll think with me about the story–your story--like it were a book. See it here: [This Is My Story](#).

I want you to see your story in a book that has three separate sections. There are many chapters and they are grouped together around the themes that each chapter carries. The various stories, themes, experiences of your life clustered together in three sections, three divisions.

Here's the first part. In these chapters are all those terrible experiences, all the mistakes, failures. All the hurts. All those stories of being treated badly by others. All the stories about unfairness, stories about limits; those you've placed on yourself and those placed on you by others. And there are those awful circumstances: born \_\_\_\_\_, lived \_\_\_\_\_, financially \_\_\_\_\_, relationships that \_\_\_\_\_. You fill in the blanks – this is your story. As I speak, get some mental pictures of the events, persons, circumstances that are in these chapters of your personal life. Personalize this – get into it. The more you get into it, the MORE you're going to get OUT of this message. Let me repeat that. The more you GET INTO this the more you'll GET OUT. And remember this, doing now, is cheaper (cost you less) than doing it later.

Alright, good. Those chapters, that first section of your book is Your Poverty. Isn't it ugly? Ain't it awful? Doesn't it stink? Oh God, it's so messy. If it stinks, and it's awful, and it's so ugly – why do you spend so much of your time there; re-reading, re-living those chapters? It's your poverty for God's sake. Why is this the big story of your life?

I'll tell you why. . . you are holding on to it. It has a marvelous attraction for you. It keeps pulling you back like a huge magnet. You're drawn to it. And as you are drawn back into it, you become magnetized, drawing to yourself – attracting to yourself – the same old ugliness that those chapters have already recorded. Do you want to change those chapters of poverty into beauty?

Hear this saying from Christ from the text: "Why You've Lost It All – God's Kingdom Is There (IS THERE) For The Finding." There is where you find it. Where? When you've lost it all. Here's How: Loose it all. This is my story, the chapters in the first part of my book are full of crap, limits, failures, impossibilities. Poverty – Good it's ugly, isn't it? Good – Loose It. Let it Go. How can I do that? Turn the ugly into beauty through True Forgiveness.

True Forgiveness? What's that? True forgiveness of yourself, others, and life circumstance comes through these steps:

- Figure out what it was (is) that you need to learn from the experience/person, etc.

- Thank God for the learning and apply the learning in your life. Take those chapters and methodically, bring each "Ain't it awful", each poverty, limit, negative and say to God – "Thank you for this, for what I learned from it. For how I understand now – for what it kept me from, for how they taught me about myself, of how I can be and am different from. . ., of how I can set a boundary and keep from repeating the same."

True forgiveness has taken place when you and I find real thanksgiving gratitude for every poverty that's come our way. When we've squeezed the grace of God out of every drop, applied it, and let go.

Look, take this part of your story, these chapters, tear it out of the book and turn the poverty into wealth as you focus on the grace learned and applied.

The second section of the story of your life is the section on your HUNGER. The symbol of the cross is the symbol of God's grace and the source of food for which every human deeply hungers. Each of us has a hunger for a food and a meal that will satisfy our spiritual starvation. No amount of human food can provide that which we must have to be spiritually filled. That spiritual meal comes only through the Christ meal, the food of God.

Jesus taught “You’re blessed when you’re ravenously hungry. Then you are ready for the Messianic meal.” This is the meal of grace and forgiveness. This is your story in Christ. The chapters in this part of your book are of those times when you hungered for, were drawn to, received the grace, Spirit, and power of God. These are the chapters when your hunger becomes a place of beauty, when you are open to God to be fed, to be nourished, and when you feed on the truths of love, grace, and mercy. Isn’t it odd that we come to this section and yet still feel the great pull back to our poverty. True Forgiveness is found in these chapters when you experience grace. It will keep you grateful for what you have learned in poverty and thus break poverty’s power of pulling you back. Hunger for it and feed on God’s grace, know that where loss abounds, grace abounds more.

Jesus said: “You’re blessed when your tears flow freely. Joy comes with the morning.” Morning speaks of the new day, the new life that God has out there before you.

The third and last section of chapters in the book of your life center around the theme of brokenness. It is in this section that the greatest power potential is available to transform your life totally into what God envisions it to be. Such beauty comes through the ugliness of Brokenness. Have you had moments of utter brokenness before God? I highly recommend them. I mean open, fully submitted, fully trusting, fully pouring out and fully open before the Creator. You say it doesn’t sound very pretty. It’s not – it’s Beautiful.

In these chapters of your life you discover new elements of what can be. Here you are discovering the new life potential that you have. Here you are applying the lessons from poverty, the fullness of re-connection with God, and new wisdom, understanding, and knowledge. And it’s in the new, yet to be chapters, where you find God’s greatest resources and powers are ready and able to transform your story. Live each new morning there by the grace of God. But remember this--see the new life opportunities as more than your past coming forward. Don’t allow the past chapters to control what you are seeing in the new. Go through the stages of processing your poverty by true forgiveness. Go through the feeding of your hunger for and by God’s grace. Go through the weeping and brokenness that lets you look with clear vision at what now can be. Break into God’s greatness in each new morning.

Her name is Cindy, and this is part of her story. I first met her in her senior year of high school when I was her principal. She had attended the beginning of the year senior retreat in which, through small groups and larger group sharing and interactions, I shared with them God’s unconditional love. Cindy later related some of her experiences in writing in her Break Into Greatness transitions. She wrote that between 8<sup>th</sup> grade and her senior year, she attempted suicide three times. She relates the following: “When I was in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, I was fat, ugly, and everyone made fun of me. I worked on my looks, developed a beautiful physique and people prized me for my beauty. No one cared about the “me” behind the physical. But I was miserable. Three times I attempted to commit suicide by cutting my wrists. My parents would fight and argue and I’d hide in my room and wish that I were dead. Then, in my senior year, Mr.

Parker, our principal, took us on a retreat. There he spoke to us of how God loves and values us. He spoke of our Breaking Into the Greatness that God has for us. I realized my true value and worth. I determined to like me for who I am and to break into my own greatness, regardless of whether others like me or not. Regardless of whether my parents remained together or not. I'm pursuing God's greatness for me." And she did.

So then – this is your story, written in chapters, divided in three parts. Here's Christ's message for you:

Part One:	Your Poverty	Lose It
Part Two:	Your Hunger	Feed on God's Grace In Christ
Part Three:	Your Tears	Break Into Greatness

And let God turn your ugly into beauty.

“Something beautiful, something good.  
All my confusion, You understood.  
All I have to over You is brokenness and strife  
But You've made something, beautiful of my life.”

“In your time, in your time, you make all things beautiful in your time.  
Lord please help me in each day, as I go along my way,  
To know you do just what you say. . . in your time.” BEAUTIFUL

**SLIDES**

# Luke 6:17-26

“Coming down off the mountain with them, he stood on a plain surrounded by disciples, and was soon joined by a huge congregation from all over Judea and Jerusalem, even from the seaside towns of Tyre and Sidon. They had come both to hear him and to be cured of their ailments. Those disturbed by evil spirits were healed. Everyone was trying to touch him – so much energy surging from him, so many people healed!

Then he spoke:

‘You’re blessed when you’ve lost it all.  
God’s kingdom is there for the finding.

You’re blessed when you’re ravenously  
hungry. Then you’re ready for the  
Messianic meal.

You’re blessed when the tears flow freely.  
Joy comes with the morning.

Count yourself blessed every time someone cuts you down or throws you out, every time someone smears or blackens your name to discredit me. What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort and that that person is uncomfortable. You can be glad when that happens – skip like a lamb, if you like! – for even though they don't like it. I do. . . And all heaven applauds. And know that you are in good company; my preachers and witnesses have always been treated like this.”

Ugly – The New Beauty  
Or Is It?

If you were able to capture it, run  
the clips from Ugly Betty from  
Cut off when I give the signal.  
If clip not available I'll give a verbal  
background on Ugly Betty.

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Jesus Loves, Blesses, and Exhorts that which  
we see in ourselves as our ugliness:

Our Ugliness. . .

Our Poverty. . .

Our Hunger. . .

Our Weeping.

Run The Homiletics power point slides here,  
but drop the first one which says Ugly Dogs

- ( ) What our culture blesses, Jesus considers ugly
- ( ) What culture considers ugly, Jesus blesses
- ( ) Jesus celebrates and blesses those in need

# Today's Big Question

In the Story of Your Life. . .

Past – Present – Future –

are you open to, engaged in God's

Beautification Make-Over Process?

# THIS IS MY STORY



The Story of Your Life has many chapters that are broken down into three sections.

Part One: Poverty

Mistakes, Limits, Failures,  
Hurts, Treated Badly,  
Circumstances, Deficits,  
Debits. . . Ain't It Awful

(Write In Your Titles)

**PERSONLIZE**

“Blessed when you lose it  
all” (Christ)

# THIS IS MY STORY

## Part Two: Your Hunger

Chapters on your deep  
Spiritual Hunger and  
God's Grace in Christ that  
fills it.

“You're blessed when you're  
ravenously hungry.  
You're ready for the  
Messianic meal.”



# THIS IS MY STORY

Broken Into Greatness:

“You’re blessed when  
the tears flow freely.

Joy comes in the  
morning.”

In the Dawn of Each  
New Day In Your New  
Life – Here’s where  
God’s Power Is For  
You.



# THIS IS YOUR STORY

PART ONE: YOUR POVERTY **LOSE IT**

PART TWO: YOUR HUNGER **FEED ON  
GOD'S GRACE  
IN CHRIST**

PART THREE: YOUR TEARS **BREAK  
INTO  
GREATNESS**

LET GOD MAKE YOUR UGLINESS GOD'S BEAUTY