

# Luke 6:12-26 - A New Community: New Values

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[ 0 : 00 ] You are listening to a message from Southwood Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, Alabama. Our passion is to experience and express grace. Join us.

What a great song to sing before you preach. I ought to stand up here every Sunday and have y'all sing, Give Me Jesus to me. Tell me that whenever you want to.

Give me Jesus. We're looking at God's Word this morning in Luke 6. And we're studying through Luke's Gospel together. His careful account of the historical events surrounding in particular Jesus of Nazareth.

We've seen already that this is good news of great joy for all people. A Savior. A Savior who will rescue and reshape all sorts of people in relationship with Him.

And we're going to see more of what that good news of great joy for all people looks like this morning. I'll be honest, as we're getting started, there are several sermons in this passage.

[ 1 : 06 ] I'm going to try not to preach all of them. But we're going to start reading at verse 12. As we read the first few verses, I will stop to give you a couple mini sermons before we get to the verses on which we will focus this morning.

Luke 6 at verse 12. In these days, He went out to the mountain to pray, and all night He continued in prayer to God.

Really mini sermon? Jesus prayed all night to His Father. The perfect Son of God who needs sleep, just like we do, is fueled for all the significant things He's about to do by this intimate relationship with His Father.

If Jesus needs to pray like that, how much more do we? Verse 13. And when day came, He called His disciples and chose from them 12 whom He named apostles.

Simon whom He named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip and Bartholomew and Matthew and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot, and Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who became a traitor.

[ 2 : 32 ] It's hard to miss what Jesus is doing here in this passage, isn't it? As He's calling out this 12, He's creating this unique new community, isn't He?

In fact, 12 men. Like the 12 tribes of Israel, He's reconstituting the people of God with these leaders of the community.

To be led by Him into the promised land, to be sent out by Him on His mission. And I love how He does it as you read through the list of the apostles here.

Very ordinary men. No particularly impressive resumes on the list, right? Fishermen. Tax collectors. Some of them very politically liberal. Some of them politically conservative, as it were in those days.

[ 3 : 29 ] One working for Rome. Another likely working passionately against Rome. But that's the people of God, right? A band of natural enemies who love one another for Jesus' sake, D.A. Carson says.

In the next verse, we're going to find that the broader group of Jesus' followers involves a number of Gentiles coming from a long way. Throughout Luke, many women will be highlighted among Jesus' followers.

Unheard of in the culture of His day. This rabbi is creating a unique new community unlike any other group that follows any other religious leader. Let's keep reading.

Verse 17. And He came down with them and stood on a level place. He's about to preach what we call the Sermon on the Plain. On the level place.

With a great crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, Gentile region. Who came to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases.

[ 4 : 37 ] And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured and all the crowd sought to touch Him for power came out from Him and healed them all. What brings all of these diverse people together?

Why are they all there in this one place? It's a very unique leader, isn't it? They're all there for Jesus for one reason or another. His kingdom is coming in word and deed again together at the same time, right?

Some of them are there to hear Him. To hear Him teach. Others are there to get healed. Others to be released from oppression. But unlike the Pharisees we read about last week looking to trip Jesus up, they're all there for a different reason.

They're desperate to get near Jesus. To touch Him even. Notice in these few verses, just as we're getting started this morning, the heart of God on display.

What happens after Jesus spends the entire night in prayer with His Father? Having His heart aligned with God the Father's, what happens when He walks down from there?

[ 5 : 48 ] He's got people on His heart, doesn't He? He's got people He wants to call into special relationship with Him. There are relationships to establish. Hasn't that been God's heart since He created us?

To have those relationships? They're sick to heal. They're lost to rescue. A new community of people to teach and shape in a new and unique way.

Don't miss God's heart that's on display as Jesus moves out of prayer with Him. So a unique new community that this gracious and powerful leader is creating.

And He begins to tell this new community what it will be like as God's people. And here's where we're going to slow down a bit this morning. Jesus doesn't tiptoe into the water with the new community.

He dives right into the deep end. Give your attention to God's Word at verse 20. And He lifted up His eyes on His disciples and said, Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

[ 6 : 57 ] Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil on account of the Son of Man.

Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven, for so their fathers did to the prophets. But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.

Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep. Woe to you when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.

Will you pray with me? Father, these words are perhaps not hard to understand, but that's part of our difficulty with them.

And they're hard to hear for many of us. And so Holy Spirit, would you not allow us to miss them? Would you speak to our hearts very clearly in a way that we know is your voice, that we can hear and follow, and in a way that points us to treasure Jesus more than we ever have.

[ 8 : 27 ] We ask it in his name. Amen. Imagine with me this morning that late one night, some thieves break into the Target store down the street here.

They get in, they disable the alarm system, they spend a couple of hours in the store, and they leave at the end of the night with absolutely nothing.

They don't take a thing. Instead, what the thieves do is they spend the evening in the store swapping a bunch of price tags around. So what happens is the next morning, before anyone notices what has happened, shoppers are there turning up their noses at \$700 pairs of socks and walking out with flat screen TVs for \$3.99?

They're avoiding the \$200 candy bars on the shelf, but they're purchasing formal dresses for less than a dollar. Can you imagine how shocking it would be if you were one of those shoppers who'd walked in there?

How many TVs or dresses would you buy for that much? A lot more than you did otherwise, I bet. The thieves are making out great, aren't they?

[ 9 : 47 ] All they had to do was swap some price tags to change what was really valuable, and they did a lot of damage without taking a thing. Jesus enters into a world where that is very much what has happened.

What's truly valuable has been swapped, and he wants to swap some price tags back in some equally drastic and startling ways.

Actually, it's going to make \$700 socks and \$4 TVs seem like no big deal in comparison to what Jesus has to say. Jesus says to his followers, to this new community, I want to tell you who's really important, what's really valuable, what the good life really looks like, what fullness is, what it means to have a full life, and you may not recognize it.

Try for just a minute to make a list of the things that you would think of as blessed. What does it mean to be blessed? Come on, you use that word all the time. You're a church person. I'm blessed, I'm blessed.

We're all blessed. What does that mean? What does it mean to you to be blessed? Really try to think of some specifics. What are the things you pray for most often for yourself and for others?

[ 11 : 12 ] What do you want for your kids? What would it look like for them to be blessed? What's valuable? Come on, be honest for a second, like we didn't already read the passage.

Like you don't know what Jesus is about to say. What would you have answered? What are those things in your mind that make up being blessed? Now listen one more time as Jesus gathers his followers around and says, listen, here's what's valuable.

What are they expecting to hear? Hey guys, let me tell you. Here's what's valuable. Blessed are the poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.

Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil on account of the Son of Man.

Rejoice in that day and leap for joy. For behold, your reward is great in heaven, for so their fathers did to the prophets. What in the world is he talking about?

[ 12 : 25 ] I mean, seriously? Certainly Jesus is joking. We all know that this is not actually true, but he's not joking. He's dead serious as we will see further.

He begins this address with compassionate comfort for the have-nots. For those who don't have, he says take heart.

Though you experience emptiness now, you will know fullness forever. Look briefly at the list he's talking about.

The poor, those who don't have money, who don't have influence, who are outsiders in society, looked down on, left out, because they didn't have any of those things.

Those who are outsiders in society are the first ones who are in in Jesus' new community, aren't they? The poor. They're blessed.

[ 13 : 28 ] Jesus is indeed bringing great joy for all people. In fact, the poor aren't just sneaking in like one here and one there, kind of making their way in and infiltrating his kingdom.

No, they own the place. Yours is the kingdom of heaven, Jesus says. Take heart. There's the hungry now.

They're hungry now and are told they will one day be full. Satisfied. Take heart, Jesus says. You have a provider who will fulfill forever.

Never. Then Jesus says, blessed are you who weep now. Maybe not what you think of as blessing, but is that you?

Those who weep now? Some of you have dealt with more pain and shed more tears already in your life than you ever anticipated doing in your entire life.

[ 14 : 34 ] Than most people ever do. You ever had one of those days you just keep crying? Do you have a grief in your past that every time you think about it, the tears just flow?

You can't seem to stop. Some of us do. A lot of times, just living in this world can make us feel like we will never smile broadly or laugh deeply again.

We feel insignificant. Forgotten. Downcast. Jesus would take your hand this morning and He wants you to hear Him saying tenderly to you, blessed are you who weep now.

You're blessed. There will be joy again. You will laugh again. One day I will wipe away every tear. Take heart. Be of good cheer. He's caring for you. And finally, He tells them that this strange,

blessed life of His followers will involve being hated.

[ 15 : 59 ] What you've always wanted, right? Excluded. Slandered. Notice importantly there, it's on account of Jesus, the Son of Man.

Your allegiance to Him. Not being reviled on account of your abrasive attitude. That doesn't count. And here Jesus says, not just take heart, but even what?

Rejoice. Not just hang in there. Not just it's not as bad as you think. Rejoice. Leap for joy. How many times do you leap for joy? You don't do that a lot.

Here's a great opportunity to leap for joy. Why? Your reward is great in heaven.

Your reward is great in heaven. The picture here is of people who are poor, hungry, tearful, outcast.

[16:56] They experience emptiness perhaps for years, but they know Jesus. They follow Jesus.

And He promises an eternity of fullness that far outweighs today.

Eternity is way more valuable than today. He's saying. Notice the message here is not go be.

It's not a go be message. Go be poor or hungry or outcast. That's not the goal. That's clear from the fact that the blessedness is not in the state itself because He says the hungry will be satisfied.

Those who weep now will laugh. So it's not just getting there, go be poor or go cry more. He's saying something different.

He's saying the have-nots will become haves because they have Jesus forever. That's how the have-nots will become haves because they have Jesus.

[18:06] You've seen that joy on the face of a poor person, haven't you? Perhaps sickly thin, maybe grieving deeply over loss of something significant, someone loved and at the same time worshipping Jesus.

You've seen Him, haven't you? Maybe here in Huntsville. Some of you have seen Him in an orphanage in Peru. Maybe somewhere else that you've gone and maybe if you're anything like me you've had that moment where you thought I'm actually a little jealous.

I'm seeing something in their eyes and in the way their heart cries out in worship of Jesus. Have you thought like I have? Man, when Jesus is all you've got He sure seems precious.

They sure treasure Him. So Jesus is swapping some price tags here. This is not what His followers were expecting.

He speaks to the have-nots and tells them what the world deems worthless is actually valuable. worthless. But then He turns to the have's and He tells them what the world deems valuable is actually worthless.

[19:21] don't miss the strength of Jesus' warnings here. It's coming from the same compassionate heart but when Jesus says woe to someone you better pay attention.

He doesn't do it often but it's serious when He does. He says to the have's woe beware watch out danger though you experience fullness now you will know emptiness forever.

Don't skirt these words verse 24 but woe to you who are rich for you have received your consolation. Woe to you who are full now for you shall be hungry.

Woe to you who laugh now for you shall mourn and weep. Woe to you when all people speak well of you for so their fathers did to the false prophets. What do you want me to say?

That He's not talking to you and me? I wish I could. But Jesus consistently has strong warnings for those with money.

[20:33] We can't dodge them. He says it's hard for the rich even to enter the kingdom of God harder than squeezing a camel through the eye of a needle. In the parable of the sower it's the deceitfulness of riches that chokes out seed on the thorny soil.

When Jesus says you can't serve two masters it's who's the second master you can't serve God and what? Money. Perhaps like us Jesus' disciples are taken aback.

Hold on there goes a TV for nothing. Are you serious? Riches are a good sign. In that culture riches were a sign of God's blessing.

Right? God must like me. I must be one of His. He's taking care of me. Don't we often think the same way sometimes? God is blessing me.

How do I know? Because my business is growing and my health is good and keep on going down the line. I don't know what things you wrote down earlier but if you'd had long enough those would have been on the list wouldn't they?

[21:42] Jesus says beware. In my kingdom level of godly living does not equate to level of material blessing. In fact there's an inherent danger in having money.

In feeling fulfilled in life. In being on the inside all the time. And that danger is that you have so much that you will miss your need for the eternal treasure.

It's a danger Jesus speaks against time and time again. You'll miss your need for the eternal treasure. You'll miss that you already have your reward. That you've received your consolation already.

Consolation may seem like a strange word to you. It's the same word used earlier in Luke when Jesus is the consolation of Israel.

The one they've been waiting for. The consolation is Jesus himself. You miss Jesus. He says woe to you if you have much stuff.

[ 22 : 45 ] If life is basically good. If people basically like you. Full pockets. Full bellies. full hearts. Full status. If you will.

You will be empty forever if you don't have Jesus. And be honest. What is the value of 80 years or more of feeling fulfilled compared to an eternity of experiencing deep emptiness?

holiness. Listen, this is not merely about scolding those who make six figures. Jesus is calling all of us to treasure him.

And when the treasure chest is full of other things beware. Watch out. Be warned. It clings to you. It settles you there. the way this new community Jesus' kingdom functions it's about needing not having.

[ 23 : 57 ] Puritan Thomas Watson said until we see our poverty we will never see Christ's value. See in his kingdom there's only one king.

There's only one with a lot to offer and the rest of us come how? Poor nothing in my hands I bring so that we can cling tightly to and treasure the king.

That's how it works. Our culture has swapped a lot of price tags on us and many of us have bought right in. Rich means worthy and poor means unworthy which looks like among other things external image valued above internal character.

Self determination being whatever you want valued above reflecting God's image. Control of your life valued above trusting God and leaning into relationship with him in difficult times.

See having money helps get all those things we value doesn't it? And I say we intentionally because we in the church have in many ways the very same values as all of the people around us don't we?

[ 25 : 21 ] The price swapping thieves have duped us too haven't they? Changing what's really valuable for something worthless. So what's Jesus doing in this opening address to his new community of followers?

He's not just trying to confuse them is he? will help us understand how to apply it to ourselves if we can see what he's doing. What he's doing here is he's preparing them for what's ahead.

These challenging words are preparatory for his followers for what he's going to call them to tangibly and specifically in terms of lives of sacrifice and self denial.

Preparing them also for what they will face in terms of opposition and persecution from the world. And he knows that to prepare them for either of those things they must have their hearts clear on what's really valuable.

So he's focusing here in these verses inward on their hearts right? With words that carry undeniable outward tangible implications we we can't miss.

[ 26 : 37 ] He does it with the have nots. What about the days you're in need or suffering for Jesus? You've been there or you will be there.

How does a have not know if he's really treasuring Jesus? What would that look like? I'd suggest that taking Jesus' words to heart means a have not would not pursue value in the places that the world does.

Just think about the basis of decisions you would make in those lowly moments. Do you decide about the job you'll take based on what it will pay even if it moves you away from fellowship with God and his people?

Just take the one that pays more. Do you soothe your tears in your darkest moments with false promises of life getting better and strategies to fix things or with God's promises of eternal hope and plans to depend on him.

But Jesus particularly is focusing on the hearts of the haves with some obvious outward implications for them isn't he? How does a have know if he's really treasuring Jesus?

[ 27 : 58 ] I always recommend starting with what I call the Jesus challenge from the encounter with the rich young ruler Jesus tells the rich young ruler to sell everything he has and give to the poor

and then he'll have treasure in heaven what's Jesus saying hey you think you're a have but you really treasure Jesus I've got a lot of stuff but I treasure Jesus Jesus says great here's how you can start giving it away give a little away give a lot away how does it make you feel how does it make you feel when you start thinking about the particular things you will give away and not have does your heart kind of protest a little bit as you think about it he's not calling all of us to give away all of our things right I mentioned this challenge several years ago when preaching about that particular story and several of you told me it was hard enough just thinking about it you didn't actually have to give anything away you just had to think about what it would feel like giving away things like money control comfort so forth listen we have to hear

Jesus' warning clearly this morning don't assume your heart is full of Jesus if your life and your bank account and your home are full of the things of this world don't assume your heart is full of Jesus our concept of fullness is so small it's just the things we want for ourselves and for our lives it's too narrow that longing for him

Jesus is teaching us that we must begin to see him as most valuable to be prepared for what he will call us to sacrifice for the sake of having him he's going to call us to sacrifice some things now to have him forever this passage also reminds us Jesus is preparing us for what we will face in this world with a different value system from his following in Jesus and having his values may cost you financially it may cost you professionally may cost you relationally it may cost you physically the choice between valuing today and valuing someday between valuing now and valuing forever is going to become increasingly evident you'll face reviling and perhaps firing from a co-worker you'll face mocking and perhaps exclusion from friends you'll face hatred and perhaps persecution from neighbors if you haven't already you will soon and you'll have to have decided if

Jesus is worth it if the reproach of Christ is more valuable than the treasures of Egypt you'll have to make that decision but listen here's the beautiful opportunity that we have in those moments rather than just thinking oh I've got the chance to get back at the one who just hurt me you can actually show them the true treasure that's the beauty of what Jesus is doing here see you know the haves we know the haves don't we and they need to know Jesus they need to see the treasure the haves next door who fired you or left you out or whatever else they need to see you have not in some ways walking through poverty hunger tears or rejection whatever is brought into your life whatever it may be now they need to see you walk through that and not act like you lost your true treasure forever and for that you'll need a community like

Jesus is creating right here I believe that is together having our hearts shaped towards what is truly valuable we together as a community must swap some price tags it'll look like a lot of things and we'll get to talk more in coming weeks but but for starters we must value the poor in our city and not just value them expect that they have much to teach us about fullness and blessedness rather than merely valuing climbing the social ladder move toward them and find out when you get there that you haven't moved down toward them that there's blessedness there we must value the reputation of Christ more than the reputation of our new kitchen we must value time with the suffering and the lost rather than merely valuing time with the comfortable and the religious multiple families in this body alone right now are wrestling with young adult children who want to take the good news of [ 35 : 28 ] Jesus Christ overseas to distant and dangerous countries and it's hard because they love their kids and they taught them to treasure Jesus but that much did I mean I really wanted them to treasure Jesus some of those parents and grandparents are actually considering going themselves to places where they know there's a real possibility they won't see their kids or grandkids again they're wrestling with that loss we must value the eternal glories of Christ more than the earthly glories of Southwood what would we do if we truly treasure Jesus above all else what would that look like what if we individually or corporately found ourselves to have given away so much that we were really in need and we got to find out for ourselves and for our kids if Jesus was really serious when he said this if he was really serious that there was blessing and fullness to be found there in not having that's the eternal blessing he wants us to find the treasure the treasure we would get to show our neighbors and our co-workers and our friends the one he wants them to be enamored with more than our stuff it's

Jesus if we get that treasure we'll have that treasure to offer to others the king who calls us only where he has already gone Jesus stands before these followers gathered around him when he says these things having already laid aside the glories and the privileges and the joys and the riches of heaven and become right among them poor and hungry and lowly and outcast Jesus pulled the

greatest price tag swap ever didn't he he pulled the incalculable price tag off those heavenly glories and placed it on us didn't he that's what I value relationship with us was so valuable to him that he would give up the comfort and the privilege of heaven to suffer for us and he restores that relationship with us forever that relationship that was always so precious to the heart of God to be in close relationship with us

Jesus restores forever he's so worthy he's so valuable whatever he calls you to sacrifice wherever he calls you to go he'll always be worth it let's pray Jesus we believe that but we struggle to believe that there are so many other things we treasure and would you work in our hearts this morning that we might truly cry out give me Jesus that that might be the longing of our hearts not just that those words would be on our lips momentarily but that that would be the longing and the deep desire of our hearts that we would have you and be found with nothing else to our credit but an eternal treasure we're going to need you to change some things in our hearts but I know you will do that Holy Spirit work in us give us more of Jesus make us satisfied joyful and fulfilled in him for more information visit us online at [southwood.org](https://southwood.org) to to h you