

05/04/2025 - Luke 6:12-26 - "The Marks of a True Disciple: Chosen, Crucified, & Christ's"

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Date: 04 May 2025

Preacher: Carman Arroyo

[0 : 00] Please turn in your Bibles to Luke, chapter 6, we'll be starting in verse 12, and we'll be reading through verse 26.

And all night he continued in prayer to God. And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them twelve 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.

And he came down with them and stood on a 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, who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. 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.

And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples and said, Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.

[1 : 46] 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.

This is God's word. Thanks be to God. All right, good morning church. I think all of you know me, if you don't.

My name is Carmen. I'm one of the pastors here. And it is a privilege to stand before you again as we continue our journey through the gospel of Luke. Today, we're diving into Luke chapter 6, 12 through 26, a passage that confronts us with the raw and radical beginnings of Jesus' public ministry.

[3 : 07] From his baptism to his bold confrontations from Luke 3 through Luke 6, verse 11, it reveals that Jesus is the authoritative Son of God, calling disciples, healing the broken, forgiving sinners, and shaking the foundations of religious tradition.

And now, in today's passage, the line is drawn. Let me be clear. We do not gather here today for entertainment, comfort, or routine.

We come to open up the living word of God and stand before a consuming fire. This text is not here to boost your self-esteem.

It is here to crush pride, expose dead religion, and drive the sinner to the feet of Christ. These are not words of man, but the word of the Lord who thunders from heaven, and may they pierce our hearts and cause us to tremble.

Because here, Jesus doesn't coddle the crowd. He separates the blessed from the condemned, the true disciple from the deceived.

[4 : 21] The title of today's passage is, The marks of a true disciple, chosen, crucified, and Christ's. I have one question for you.

Perhaps the most important question you'll ever have to answer. Are you truly in Christ? Are you just a part of the crowd?

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we come before you with humble hearts, knowing that your word is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword.

As we open the gospel of Luke today, we ask for your Holy Spirit to illuminate our minds and pierce our hearts. May we not simply hear, but be transformed by the truth of your word.

Lord, help us. Help us to examine ourselves in the light of Christ, that we may truly follow him as his disciples.

[5 : 22] In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. All right, so we're going to start part one today. The God who prays and sovereignly chooses. We're going to be diving into verses 12 through 16.

And where we see in today's passage is with Christ. In prayer. The eternal Son of God spending the entire night in communion with the Father before choosing his apostles.

What reverence. What dependence. You see, church, in our generation, Christianity has often been reduced to just a label.

A raised hand for a sinner's prayer. A whispered prayer. Rather than a surrendered life and a daily cross. But when we look to Jesus, the only perfect man to ever walk this earth, we see something wholly different.

Before making any significant decision, he prayed. Not once, but repeatedly. Time and time again in the Gospels, we find him withdrawing to desolate places, to be alone with the Father.

[6 : 33] After feeding the 5,000s in Matthew 14. After a long day of healing in Mark 1. And just a few weeks ago, when he was pressed by the crowds, when we looked at Luke 5. And the Garden of Gethsemane in Luke 22.

Where he wept and yielded and obeyed the Father. His life was marked by deep, persistent, intimate prayer.

Whether seeking strength, guidance, rest, or simply his Father's presence. And then there's us. Dust and ashes.

Rushing into decisions without even a moment of prayer. So let me ask you plainly. When was the last time you were on your knees for more than a blessing over your food?

Do you walk with the Father in every season or do you only run to him in crisis? Is your prayer life marked by real communion or hollow routine? Do you seek him in joy and sorrow or forget the one who holds your very breath?

[7 : 44] Prayerlessness isn't just weakness. It's rebellion. We are made to walk with God like Adam did in Eden, as Enoch and Noah did, as Abraham and Micah did, and as Paul reminds us in Romans 6 verse 4, we were buried therefore with him by baptism into death in order that we too might walk in newness of life.

Prayer is the echo of Eden. The soul returning to its creator. To neglect it is to believe the serpent's lie all over again that you don't need him.

But that lie makes a statement, whether you mean it or not, that you're saying when you don't pray, God, I don't need you. And that's just not neglect, that's defiance.

Christ shows us another way that true spiritual power flows from communion with the Father and surrender to his will. Prayer is the lifeblood of that relationship.

A cold prayer life is not just a spiritual symptom, it's a heart condition. Cold prayer reflects a cold heart. And if Christ prayed, how dare we approach ministry, life, or any decisions prayerlessly?

[9 : 10] And as we move forward to verse 13, we see that after he prayed and he called his disciples and he chose 12 of them whom he also named apostles.

I think it's amazing that once again, we see our almighty God coming down from the hill, from the mountains to a plain level field to be with us and to choose people.

And I want to take a moment to clarify two terms right here between the disciple and the apostle. Sometimes they're used interchangeably, but there is a biblical and scriptural difference between the two with very different meanings.

A disciple, disciplined, is a learner, a student, or a follower, anyone who responds to Christ's call that walks with him and is shaped by his teaching.

And as Christ says in John 8, verse 31, if you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples. This term appears frequently in the gospels and in Acts to describe those who earnestly follow Christ.

[10:23] An apostle, on the other hand, refers to a much more specific role. The word means one who sent. Apostles were personally chosen by Jesus.

given authority to preach, established a church, and in some cases, even perform miracles. As we see, according to Acts chapter 1, verses 21 through 22, and 1 Corinthians 9, verse 1, an apostle had to be a witness of the resurrected Christ and directly commissioned by him.

Makes you question some others who claim this title today. So while every apostle is a disciple, not every disciple is an apostle.

The apostles were the foundation of the church, Ephesians 2, 20. But all disciples are called to grow in Christ and make more disciples, Matthew 28, 19 through 20. But what about these 12 men that are chosen in verse 13 that make them so different?

Surely they must have been remarkable, right? They had to have been. However, these men, the New Testament offers very limited biographical information about most of them before their calling.

[11:48] However, through scripture and early Christian tradition, we can piece together some insight on who they were before they were chosen and called by Christ to be apostles. And just, we see this just similar as in Matthew, Mark, and Acts, Luke lists these apostles by name, all of them starting with Simon Peter and ending with Judas Iscariot.

But after Judas' death in Acts, Matthias was chosen to take his place. So, these 12 were not religious elites but ordinary men, mostly working class, called for an extraordinary mission.

Simon Peter and his brother Andrew were fishermen. James and John, sons of Zebedee, also nicknamed the Sons of Thunder for their rambunctiousness and their loud bravado.

I wonder if they were Italian. Were also fishermen and likely partners with Peter. Philip from Bethsaida has no profession mentioned. Bartholomew, possibly the same person as Nathaniel, also went by Nathaniel, was described as sincere and honest.

Matthew, we met him a few weeks ago, also known as Levi, was a tax collector. He was socially deprived, despised, excused, yet chosen by Christ.

[13:11] He was the IRS. No one likes the IRS today, right? Bad government. No. Thomas, called the twin, is known for his honest doubt and later faith.

James, son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot remain a little bit more obscure, but Simon may have been connected to a radical anti-Roman group, political activists.

That's what he was zealous about. Judas, the son of James, also called Thaddeus because why wouldn't you go by a different name if your first name was Judas after everything that happens, right?

Little is known about him too. And then we round off the list with Judas Iscariot. He's the group's treasurer and later betrayed Jesus.

These men weren't chosen for status, wisdom, or virtue, but for their willingness to follow Christ. ordinary and flawed, they were sovereignly called by Jesus, not for what they offered, but by his will and purpose.

[14:18] Ephesians 1, verse 5 and 2, verse 20. This is the heart of divine election. Not that man chooses God, but that God, rich in mercy, chooses whom he wills.

John 15, 16. Jesus knew these men completely. He knew their temperaments, their weaknesses, their failures. He knew Peter would deny him. Thomas would doubt. John would wrestle with ambition.

And Judas, he knew Judas would betray him. And yet, he still called them. Just as Moses set up the 12 pillars to represent the tribes of Israel in Exodus, Jesus now lays the foundation for a new Israel, a new covenant people, not formed by bloodline, but by grace alone.

That same sovereign grace is still at work today. The Lord continues to call the unlikely and the unworthy, not because they are clean, but to make them clean.

Maybe that's you. Maybe you're battling with addiction, with shame, despair, or the crushing weight of your past. Maybe you've chased what the world promised would make you happy, but you're left empty, broken, addicted, and numb, wondering, what is this life?

[15:42] What am I here for? What's the point of it all? Hear this, church. The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. And our salvation belongs to the Lord.

It is not earned. It is not deserved. It is given. Christ does not wait for you to be worthy. He is worthy in your place. If the Father is drawing you, it's not by chance and certainly not by your merit.

It is by his sovereign mercy that all the Father gives me will come to me and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. John 6, 37. But hear the warning and it is urgent, church.

Because Jesus also said, did I not choose you, the twelve, and yet one of you is the devil in John 6, verse 70. Judas heard every sermon, saw every miracle and walked besides the truth himself.

And still, he was lost. Today, many sit in this church, maybe this church even, in churches all across the world, close to the things of God, yet far from saving grace.

[16:56] They're stirred by Jesus' words, impressed by his power, but untouched in their heart. So I ask you with love and a holy urgency, are you truly born again?

Has the Spirit of God been made your heart anew? Has sovereign grace awakened your soul? Don't confuse proximity to Christ with salvation.

only a transformed heart can follow him. Which leads me to the second part of today's sermon.

The crowd and the Christ drawn, but not always, disciples. And now as we move on to verses 17 and 19 specifically, we see Jesus descending with his apostles and standing among the crowd.

People came from Judea, Jerusalem, Tyre, and Sidon, some walking for days because they heard that this Jesus could heal the sick and cast out demons.

[18:01] And indeed, he did. He healed them all. The power of God flowed from him and he restored broken bodies, relieved, tormented minds.

But here is the sobering truth. Though he healed them all, not all of them were saved. The crowds came for healing, but many did not stay for the truth.

They touched his garment, but did not touch his heart. They received his healing hand, but rejected his all-consuming lordship.

Many even today seek the healing hand of God, but not his face. They want the blessings, but not the authority. They crave the miracles, but not the majesty.

So we have to ask ourselves, what is this face of God? It's to seek his face, it's to seek his presence, his holiness, his beauty, and his glory.

[19:03] Not just what he can do for you, but for who he is. To seek the Lord and his strength. Seek his face continually, the psalmist says in 105.

The face of God is what Moses longed to see, what David yearned for, and what believers will one day behold in glory in Revelation 22 for.

So ask yourself, do you follow Jesus because he's useful or because he's worthy? Is he your lord or just your healer?

Are you content to just touch his robe or do you long to gaze upon his face? True disciples do not follow Christ for what he gives, but for who he is.

And the good news of the gospel is that this sovereign, holy, glorious Christ welcomes sinners. Not the self-righteous, but the desperate. Not the strong, but the broken.

[20:05] Come to him, not for his gifts, but for his grace. Come and live. These blessings is the next part of today's sermon.

The beatitudes, the heart and cost of true discipleship. We'll be focusing on verses 20 through 23. And as the crowds pressed in, having seen the power that flowed from Christ and eager for healing, we saw just previously, Jesus turned his gaze towards his disciples and began to preach what we now know is the sermon on the plain.

Now, there are some discussions between this and the sermon on the mount that we see in Matthew 5. And so, the thing is, is that there is scholars that say this could potentially be the same sermon, the same time, just different perspectives, or the same sermon, just different places.

Just a little FYI tidbit information for you. But this sermon on the plain, what he did and said next wasn't what the people expected from this miracle worker.

[21:17] It was the message of a Messiah who came not to pamper the flesh but to crucify it. And in Luke 6, 20 through 23, Jesus describes not the successful but the surrendered, not the admired but the afflicted.

In a world that exalts the proud, the rich, the happy, and the popular, Jesus declares blessings over those the world rejects.

And in doing so, he defines the true Christian as one crucified to the world. Galatians 6, verse 14.

Let's start with verse 20.

Blessed are you who are poor. This is not a blanket endorsement for material poverty. Jesus is not saying that poverty is inherently virtuous, but that those who recognize their spiritual poverty are

truly blessed.

The poor are those who come to God with empty hands and a desperate heart knowing that they have nothing to offer except the sin that they carry with them.

[22 : 29] It is the spiritually bankrupt, not the self-assured, who enter the kingdom. Poverty of spirit is the first step towards grace. And Jesus said elsewhere, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Children are dependent upon their parents for almost everything. We are dependent upon our Father for our salvation. Proud men don't fit through the narrow gate.

They're too big. They carry too much of themselves. We look next to the blessed are you who are hungry now, who weep now, when people hate you in verses 21 through 22.

These are not generic life struggles, but Jesus is describing people who hunger for righteousness, who mourn over their sin, and who are hated for his name's sake.

These are marks of a true discipleship. The Christian life is not marked by worldly comfort, but by a holy dissatisfaction with this present age. If your Christianity never costs you anything, never makes you uncomfortable, never brings rejection, never puts you at odds with the world, then you may not have a biblical Christianity.

[23 : 57] Jesus said, if the world hates you, know that it's hated me before it's hated you. Paul echoes this in 2 Timothy, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ, Jesus will be persecuted.

If your life never experiences friction with the world, it may be because you're going in the same direction as it. Next, we look at verse 23, where we rejoice for great is your reward, and we come face to face with this paradox of the Christian life, that joy is not in ease, but in being counted worthy to suffer for Christ.

Jesus doesn't say just to endure begrudgingly. He says, leap for joy. Why? Because the suffering that comes from faithfulness is evidence of your citizenship in a better kingdom.

But I have to pause here and give you a word of caution. Because not all suffering is cross-bearing. We've all seen the t-shirts, we've seen the saying, like, Christ gives his strongest soldiers his greatest battles or something like that. Sometimes we suffer not because we're following Christ, but because, well, we're kind of stupid.

[25 : 22] And we make foolish decisions. And, well, if you quit your job without prayer, you go to your boss and you start barraging him with insults or her with insults because of the name of truth-telling.

Or you wreck your life because of bad stewardship financially, materially, with your relationship, with your spouse, with your kids, whatever.

That's not persecution. That's poor judgment. And as Proverbs 19.3 says, when a man's folly brings his way to ruin, his heart rages against the Lord.

So don't blame God for the consequences of your own foolishness, but do rejoice when you are rejected because when you are rejected or mocked or marginalized for righteousness' sake, know that for it is suffering with Christ.

Christ. And so we take heart because Jesus doesn't promise ease, but he promises himself. And that is altogether worthy.

[26 : 28] The path of the crucified life is narrow, painful, and often lonely, but it leads to glory. So if you are despised here, rejoice because you are known in heaven.

If you are hungry now, you shall be satisfied, but do not be deceived. Earth is not our reward. If you live to be fully here, you will be empty there.

Jesus warns later in this very passage of what happens if you do. If all of your treasure is here, all of your joy is found in this world, then you have already received your portion and it perishes.

The blessed are those who delay gratification, who live for the kingdom not yet seen, and who treasure Christ above all comfort. The question remains, do you follow Christ because he is useful or because he's worthy?

Blessed are those of us who can say with Paul, I count everything as lost because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord, in Philippians 3, verse 8.

[27 : 35] The earth fades, but Christ remains. Which brings me to my fourth and final part. We're almost there.

The woes, divine warning for the comfortable and the carnal. We'll be focusing in on verses 24 through 26. But as Jesus blesses the poor, the hungry, the grieving, and the hated in the previous

verses, we now turn with his piercing clarity to those who are comfortable, celebrated, and self-satisfied.

What we see in these following verses is that he pronounces not a blessing, but a woe, a word of deep lament and divine warning. These are not empty words.

They are judgment from the lips of the Son of God himself. The theme is stark and sobering. God will judge those who find their heaven on earth.

We see first in 24 through 25, the woe to the rich, the fool, and the laughing that Jesus is not condemning all wealth or earthly joy. We must remember that Abraham was wealthy, that Job was restored with his riches.

[28 : 53] God is not against possessions. He's against idolatry. The rich, Jesus condemns, are those who trust in riches, who mistake material blessings for spiritual security, who are full of the world and yet empty of God.

Their comfort now will testify against them in eternity. They have already received their reward and it perishes. The tragedy is not the money in the hand.

It's the self-sufficiency in the heart. These are people who feel no need of grace, who are comfortable in their own righteousness, who laugh at judgment and mourn nothing.

And like the church in Laodicea, they say, I am rich, I have prospered and I need nothing. Not realizing that they are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked as we read in Revelations 3.17.

And that those who are at ease at Zion, comfortable in the covenant community, but untouched by the covenant's Christ, or that are untouched by the covenant's Christ, are often strangers to grace.

[30 : 12] the warning is not for the materially wealthy alone, but for all who see no spiritual poverty in themselves, who rely on achievement, morality, or acclaim, and never cast themselves on the rock of Christ.

Is that you? Do you think because you said a prayer or you took a baptism or you come to church every single Sunday or you volunteer that you're really saved?

this is a dividing line between the disciple and the worldling. The disciple hungers for righteousness. The worldling is already full. The disciple mourns over their sin. The worldling laughs in ease. So let this rebuke land.

If the world can satisfy you, you may still belong to it. The true Christian is never truly at home here. This world cannot fill them because he belongs to another, to Christ.

[31 : 19] And we move on to the final woe to those well spoken of in verse 26. And it, again, has devastating clarity that we must beware when we are universally loved, when the world praises you, when the culture embraces you, when even the enemies of the gospel, feel no offense at your message.

You should tremble. Why? Because this was the treatment reserved for the false prophets. Don't you see, church? For so their fathers did to the false prophets. They were smooth-tongued people. Pleasing voices always find a platform. They said what the crowds wanted to hear. They comforted the wicked, sued the rebellious, and blessed where our holy God had cursed.

In contrast, the true prophets were hated. They were mocked. They were imprisoned. They were murdered. Elijah was hunted. Jeremiah was beaten and thrown into a pit.

Zechariah was stoned at the temple. Look at what they did to the apostles and the other disciples. Look at what they did to our Savior, Jesus Christ himself. Truth rarely makes one popular.

[32 : 33] It confronts. It convicts. And the world hates the light. And this word, woe, used in this chapter is not no casual lament like I said.

It is a prophetic oracle of judgment used throughout the Old Testament when God announced doom upon rebellious people. In Isaiah 3, 9, and 11, woe to them for they have brought evil on themselves.

Woe to the wicked. It shall be ill with them. Ezekiel 13, 3, woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing. Jesus is standing in that same prophetic tradition.

The woes of Luke 6 are not warnings of temporary hardship. They are announcement of eternal judgment. The people he describes are not merely mistaken.

They are on the broad road to destruction. To love the praise of men more than the praise of God is to abandon the cross and to follow the crowd.

[33 : 43] Think of that throughout your day, throughout your week, when you're at work and in school with your families. I want you to examine your heart.

Do you desire a Christianity that costs nothing, that offends no one, and fits in everywhere, that fits nicely into your Sunday afternoons when football isn't on?

When it fits nicely into the sins that you already continue to commit, that your sins aren't that bad. That is the religion of the false prophets.

The gospel is the stone of stumbling in a rock of offense as we see in 1 Peter 2, verse 8. If your life and message provoke no discomfort, no ridicule, no rejection, it may be because you have silenced the truth and maybe you don't know the full gospel.

We worship a loving God, but his hand has wrath as well.

[34 : 55] Church, Jesus is not calling you to popularity. He is calling you to the cross. We are better to be hated with Christ than loved without him. Better to be poor in spirit and rich in grace than full in the world and empty in eternity.

For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and to lose his soul? As we close today, I want to talk to the one still in the crowd.

Hear this with trembling. The gospel is no light matter. It is not a soft suggestion or a spiritual accessory. It is the thunderous decree of an almighty God.

It is the summons of a sovereign king who commands men everywhere to repent. This is not the offer of life on your terms. It is a call to die and to be raised with Christ.

You are not invited just to admire Jesus, to admire his teachings. You are commanded to bow before him. There is no neutrality.

[36 : 04] The heart is either softened by sovereign grace or is hardened by sin. To remain indifferent is to choose rebellion.

Have you been drawn by the Father or are you merely a spectator among the saints? the Lord does not call the clean.

He cleanses the called. He does not wait for the willing. He creates the willing by the power of his Holy Spirit. The gospel is not an appeal to your strength.

It is a revelation of your helplessness and of God's infinite mercy. Consider Judas numbered among the twelve yet dead in sin. He heard the truth, walked with the truth, and betrayed the truth.

Let this be a warning that proximity to Christ is not union with Christ. You can sit here every Sunday. You can take this bread. You can be baptized. You can sing these songs.

[37 : 10] You can volunteer. But that doesn't mean that you're in Christ if it's all lip service. Is there a changing in your heart? Is there a renewal of your mind? So I beg you, has the Spirit of God wrought a true work in your soul?

Has the Word pierced your conscience, broken your pride, and driven you to the feet of Christ? Has your stony heart been replaced with a heart of flesh?

This is not mere morality. This is not emotional stirring. This is a supernatural rebirth. earth. I ask you, sinners, to cast yourself upon the mercy of Christ.

Flee to the cross where justice and mercy meet. Do not harden your heart. The kingdom of God advances unshaken by your opinion or anyone else's opinion. And yes, even you will be swept into its glory or crushed by its weight.

When all is said and done, when every idol turns to ash, only Christ shall remain.

[38 : 20] Solus Christus, Christ be all. To the one who believes, brothers, sisters, let us not trifle with sacred things.

The gospel is not a tale we admire, but a fire that consumes. Has it truly consumed you? Has it broken your heart and bound it to Christ alone?

We are not called to a safe religion but to self-denial, not to shallow belief, but to a union with a crucified and risen Savior. Let us not be content with a hollow, hollow profession.

Let us examine ourselves whether we are in the faith. Test yourselves to know that your election is sure. Are we crucified with Christ?

Are we merely coasting in comfort? Are we pilgrims in this world or are we citizens of it? The true disciple bears the marks of grace, repentance, obedience, love for one another, and hatred for sin.

[39 : 30] The plow that is the gospel must break the soil of our hearts and we must plow, and we must plow, and we must plow again every week when we are here proclaiming his gospel.

We must come face to face with our sin. We must be able to see our sin so that God's grace and mercy and love and light is reflected and contrasted with how wretched we are.

And then when we are broken, we must let the spirit continue to till our heart and let every sin be exposed, every false comfort be cast down because our Christ will not be shared with idols. He will have all of you or he will have none of you. The kingdom of our God is near and it comes not in suggestion but in power.

Let us be found faithful. Let us live as those who have died and been raised with Christ. Christ be all and we be nothing.

[40 : 44] Soli Deo glory for the glory of God alone. Let us pray.