

Tommy Meador / General

Gospel of Luke / Luke 6:12–26

Introduction

- https://247sports.com/college/georgia/LongFormArticle/College-footballs-25-most-lavish-facilities-in-2023-ranked-Oregon-Texas-AM-Alabama-highlight-list-205364207/#205364207_19 - Luxury for 19-20 year olds! Using facilities to recruit high schoolers!
- Before we got married, whenever Staci and I drove by a large house, I'd tell her, "You marry me, you'll never live in a house like that." I knew when I entered ministry, I wasn't entering ministry to get rich.
- It's not sinful to have money, but it is sinful to place all of your hope in what you have.
- 2 Competing kingdoms: the kingdom of this world and the kingdom of God. Kingdom of this world says, "You be the king of your own life. You determine what's best for you. Pursue what your heart desires. Kingdom of God: "Submit to God. He knows what's best for you. Live for His desires." What kingdom are you living for?
- What does life in God's kingdom really look like? Simply put, Life in God's Kingdom is putting all of your hope in God and serving Him with everything He has given you in this life as you await the return of Christ.
- Interesting passage: Jesus sets aside 12 men to be His apostles, and He also begins to preach a sermon that explains the kind of life that His disciples can expect. In Matthew's Gospel, it's referred to as the Sermon on the Mount. In Luke's Gospel, it's the Sermon on the Plain. I'll explain the difference shortly.
- In this passage, what life in God's Kingdom looks like. Two truths you must know if you are going to live in God's Kingdom.

God gives the assignments.

- 3rd time in Luke's Gospel, told that Jesus pulled away to pray. Not told what Jesus prayed, but imagine. He's about to call 12 men to spend three years with Him. I imagine He prayed for them.
- At Pentecost, these twelve men, minus Judas, would be filled with Spirit of God and be used by God to be the foundation of the church ([Eph. 2:20](#), [Revelation 21:14](#)). [Matthew 19:28](#) - The Apostles will sit on twelve throne judging the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Jesus prayed for these men he selected. He prayed for Judas knowing that Judas would betray Him. Judas' betrayal would not surprise Jesus.
- Why 12 men? Think twelve tribes of Israel. Through Christ, God is making a new Israel - the people of God aren't people who are of a particular ethnic descent. The people of God are people who embrace Jesus as the Messiah.
- Jesus chooses His apostles. There's not an application process. Jesus didn't post a job opening and accept resumes. There were many disciples - many people who followed Jesus - but out of all His disciples - He chose these twelve. Why? Only God knows.
- Jesus gives the assignment. Apostle = sent one. Jesus is going to send His apostles out on His mission. They will be commissioned to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth ([Matt. 28:16-20](#)).
- The apostles do not get to change the assignment. They do not get to negotiate the terms of agreement. And, no indication in the text that they wrestled with the calling. We've already seen Peter leave his fishing business to follow Jesus. We also saw Levi/Matthew leave his tax business to follow Jesus. It was a joy for them to follow.
- Notice the names. What do we really know about these disciples? Not much. We know Peter has a hard time keeping his mouth shut. We know Andrew brought people to Jesus. We know Thomas doubted. We know that John was beloved by Jesus and told to take care of Jesus' mom when Jesus was crucified. We know that Peter, James, and John formed an inner circle. Outside of some verses here in there in the Gospels, we really don't know much about the Apostles. But, for three

years, Jesus invested, taught them about what it meant to live in God's Kingdom, to be like Jesus, and then sent them out on His mission. These twelve men, minus Judas, changed the world.

- That's the point. These men aren't superheroes. They're flawed. The Gospels highlight their flaws. They sin. They don't always understand Jesus. Scripture doesn't even record much of their work. But, God used these twelve ordinary men and their unrecorded works to birth the church which 2,000 years later is still alive and well.
- The role of apostle unique - No more apostles today - but God still calls people and puts them on His mission. He called you to follow Him. His grace came to you. He gave you an assignment - to conform to the image of Christ and live for His mission.
- God gives the assignment, are you living out His assignment on your life? If you are a follower of Jesus, here's what you cannot say:
 - **You cannot say, "I don't want to."** Jesus doesn't come to you on your terms. You don't get to call the shots. You don't get to define your purpose or your mission in life. You don't get to choose what kind of lifestyle pleases God and what kind doesn't. You don't get to redefine the Christian faith to make it more pleasing to yourself. You can't say, "I don't want to do it God's way." If you say, "I don't want to," you're in sin. Some of us have gotten into the habit of saying, "I don't want to."
 - **You cannot say, "I'm not qualified."** The disciples probably thought that, but Jesus was with them. That qualified them. We use the excuse, "I'm not qualified" to not do what we know God wants us to do. You cannot say "I'm not qualified" because God's Spirit lives within you, and He has gifted you for service. Plus, He has give you His church to help equip you. When you say, "I'm not qualified" it could be that you are just lazy, or that you just don't want to do what God has called you to do. I'm not qualified is not a valid excuse for living out God's calling.
 - **You cannot say, "I don't know what to do."** You have a whole Bible that reveals what God wants for you, and you have the Spirit of God speaking to you through His Word. You know what God wants you to

do. You may not know the specific ways/places where to serve. Missionary? Pastor? Layperson? But regardless of the specific, you know what God wants you to do. Grow in the character of Christ and live on His mission. That's it.

- God has given the assignment. What's your response? Are you giving an excuse for why you cannot live out God's assignment?

God gives the blessing.

- Sermon on the Mt. or Sermon on the plain? Probably a similar sermon that Jesus preached multiple times in multiple locations. Some similarities, some differences. Sermon on Mt in Matt = 3 chapters. Sermon on the plain in Luke's Gospel = not even a full chapter.
- Sermon on the plain addressed to a large crowd of his disciples. The twelve present and many others. What it looks like to be a part of God's Kingdom - very different than the kingdom of the world.
- Sermon opens with 4 blessings and 4 woes. Four blessings are surprising because they are absolutely countercultural.
- BUT... think about what these disciples were walking into - think about what the apostles would experience: opposition. If you live in the Kingdom of God, you are living in opposition to the kingdom of the world. Don't be surprised if the world hates you. Don't be surprised if you are persecuted. Don't be surprised if it's difficult to live out your faith in a fallen world. In these beatitudes Jesus is calling us to a specific kind of faith:
- **A sacrificial faith.**
- Don't be surprised if you're poor. That's what the apostles would experience - they would leave their careers to follow Jesus - who was poor. ([Luke 4:18](#)... Jesus has come to bring Good News to the poor.)
- Poverty doesn't make you a saint, and wealth doesn't automatically disqualify you from heaven. BUT.. being a follower of Jesus assumes a willingness to give up everything if that's what God requires of you. (e.g., the rich young ruler) That's what Jesus required of His disciples. What if

He required that of you? Do you value following Jesus more than the earthly comforts that wealth promise?

- Does the way you give your money away demonstrate that you have a sacrificial faith? How is your giving to the local church? To those who are in need? Some of us buy too much and give too little.
- **A satisfied faith.**
- Jesus probably not talking about physical hunger but spiritual hunger (vs. 21).
- Are you hungry for God? Does your life demonstrate that you find satisfaction in feasting on God's Word?
- The less you feast on God's Word the less hungry you are for the things of God, and the more hungry you become for the things of the world. But the more you feast on God's Word the hungrier you become. You are satisfied yet crave more.
- Every day, you get to choose what you will feast on - and you ARE what you eat. Some of us are greedy because we feast on greed. Some of us lustful because we feast on lust, etc.
- Some of you lack a hunger for God because you haven't tasted. [Psalm 34:8](#): Taste and see that the Lord is good.
- **A somber faith.**
- Bless are you who weep now? Last week, we talked about how there is joy in Christ - there is joy! But, Jesus, the ONE who was filled with joy, was also a man of sorrows. He wept over the death of Lazarus. He wept over Jerusalem. He wept over the affects of sin on this world.
- Our faith should be joyous and at the same time somber. Sad truth is we spend far too much time glorifying sin rather than weeping over sin. We celebrate sin when we choose to allow sin to entertain us and amuse us rather than weeping over how sin is destroying the lives of people we love.
- Parents, do your children see you celebrating sin in the things you watch, listen to, talk about? Or, do they see you mourning over sin?

- **A scorned faith.**
- If you choose to live for the Kingdom, expect to be scorned, misunderstood, etc. It's coming.
- BUT, what's also coming is blessing. Rejoice! (vs. 23) Your reward is great in heaven. We are living for what's yet to come.
- This is the kind of faith followers of Jesus are called to. Note the woes in vs. 24-26.
- **A call to beware of:**
 - **A materialistic faith** -A mix of a little Jesus and a lot of pursuing wealth (vs. 24).
 - **A feel-good faith** - (vs. 25) - feeling yourself with a Christian platitudes, emotional worship, etc. instead of diving deep into the truth of God's Word. Many want just enough Christianity to feel good about themselves instead of a radical surrender to Jesus and His will.
 - **A people-pleasing faith - (vs. 28)** - Living for Jesus is offensive to those who are not living for Jesus. If you're always trying to please people, or you're afraid to speak the truth because of what people might think of you, beware!
- God blesses His followers who live out a sacrificial, satisfied, somber, scorned faith. Does what Jesus describe in vs. 24-26 describe your faith? This is the kind of faith that characterizes a disciple of Jesus.
- A passage like this is a call to examine our own faith. What kingdom are we really pursuing?
- If you are pursuing God's Kingdom - not easy - but blessing. If the kingdom of the world - may be comfortable, but damning.
- Why should I pursue the Kingdom of God? Because of the King - the King who became poor so you could become rich - [2 Cor. 8:9](#). You were on your way to hell because you were pursuing the wrong kingdom. BUT the true KING came on a rescue mission. He lived the life you could not live, died the death you deserve, and rose again to give you real life - life in His Kingdom - a life where He invites you to rule and reign with Him and enjoy adoption into His own family.

- The kingdom of this world is ultimately unsatisfying and will pass away, but the Kingdom of God is satisfying and will last forever.
- Living for the Kingdom of God in a broken world is not easy, but it is worth it. Trust the King today.