

### **Title: The Master's Mighty Message – Part 3**

Text: Luke 6:24-26

Date: December 7, 2025

Proverbs 3:13 tells us that *"the one who finds wisdom and the one who gets understanding is blessed."* And so, if you have your Bible with you this morning, and I hope you do, please turn to Luke 6. We're going to begin looking at verses 24-26 this morning, which is the upside-down inversion of the divine assurances that Jesus gave us last week.

If you remember the main point of Jesus's first significant summary sermon here in the gospel of Luke, the theme of his preaching from here on out is that if we would but come and draw near to him in faith and surrender to his saving sovereignty, Jesus will by his divine power and compassion transform our lives from the inside out. He will make you a new creation, one that is born again with a yearning hope, a radical love, and a desperate dependency on him who is the bread of life eternal. That is wonderfully good news. That is the best news that could ever happen to you. And Jesus wants us to come. He wants us to draw near to him in faith. And so, he draws out this response by his grace in this passage by showing us the type of change he works within us when we surrender to his saving sovereignty.

And the first change that we've been looking at and that we'll be finishing examining this morning is that when we come to Christ, he imparts to us a yearning hope. And Jesus seeks to draw people to that yearning hope in him in two ways in this sermon. In verses 20-23, Jesus shares divine assurances that drive us to finding a yearning hope in him. And today, we're going to be looking at verses 24-26. We're going to see how Jesus shares some divine admonitions that drive us to find a yearning hope in him as well. And we're going to see today that these admonitions act as perfect inversions to the assurances that Jesus shared earlier. Whereas we were taught back in verse 20, if you remember, that with Christ, you have great resources.

Today, we're going to see in verse 24 that without Christ, you have no resources in life. And whereas we were taught back in verse 21 that with Christ, you have great hope. This morning, we're going to learn in verse 25 that without Christ, you have no hope at all. And whereas we were taught back in verses 22-23 that with Christ, you are counted among great company in this life. Today, we're going to see in verse 26 that without Christ, you are counted among bad company. And that's the opening point of this first summary sermon by Christ. And this is the most essential point to the gospel that Jesus is going to preach for the next three and a half years of his public ministry.

It is this simple truth. Jesus is what makes all the difference in this life and in the next. With Jesus, you have great resources, great hope, great company. Without Jesus, you have no resources, no hope, and bad company. Jesus is what makes all the difference. And so, the call that Jesus is making is to come to me and be made new. Jesus makes all the difference. And what we're going to see today is Jesus works by his divine admonitions to drive us to a yearning hope in him.

And so, with that in mind, if you're able, please stand with me out of attention and honor for the word of God as I get to read the passage that is before us today from Luke 6:20-26. Luke, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, writes these words for us today.

*Luke 6:20, "And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said: 'Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. 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.'"*

*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."*

This is the word of God whose statutes, when they are not forgotten, give us life.

So, let's pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for the passage that is set before us today. Father, we thank you for the rich feast and varied feast of truth that Christ gives us here. Father, I thank you for Christ's assurances, for those who draw near to him. And Father, I thank you for Christ's admonitions that he gives for those who have not yet done so. And I pray that your spirit would take your word today and drive people into the arms of Jesus, that they might find all they need in him for this life and the life to come. Father, I pray that you would help me to declare these truths as I ought to declare them with the same spirit in which Christ preached them all those years ago.

And we ask this in Jesus' name, amen.

You may be seated.

So, after Jesus calls us to draw near to him in faith through divine assurances, he then proceeds to drive us to draw near to him in faith through several sobering divine admonitions that we have set before us this morning. The first divine admonition that Jesus gives to that curious crowd that was standing in front of him that day was that without him, without Christ, you have no resources. Verse 24 reads, *"But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation."* And here we see that Jesus has taken a drastic shift in his approach to the crowd. Whereas in verses 20-23, Jesus is wooing us through blessings. Starting here in verses 24-26, Jesus is warning us through woes. And putting blessings right next to woes, by the way, is a classic prophetic appeal that we see several times throughout the Old Testament.

Like in the book of Deuteronomy where Moses gives the blessings and the curses to the nation of Israel in Deuteronomy 27 & 28. This pattern and type of approach to prophetic preaching is picked up by the wisdom writings of David and Solomon, is carried on by the prophets, particularly the prophet Isaiah and

Isaiah 3 and Isaiah 65 and it's continued here by Jesus. Jesus here by placing blessings and woes right next to each other is purposely placing himself within the long-established prophetic pattern of scripture. A prophetic pattern that Moses had predicted long ago would bring forth a final prophet who would be greater than Moses, one whose every word spoken would be divine. Jesus through the opening introduction of his first main sermon in the Gospel of Luke is presenting himself to be that final prophet who has come to deliver that final word, message and revelation from God and it's all about himself. And Jesus does this through the prophetic use of blessings and woes. And we need to see right off the bat that this word woe is not a word that is spoken in hardness or hatred though we might see it used that way in our modern culture today. It is a word that is spoken in brokenness and in love.

This word woe in scripture is not a word of final condemnation. It is a fervent, compassionate cry over someone's spiritual standing and state. A cry of woe is a cry of warning. It's a cry of grief. It's a cry of pain, of pity, of brokenness. And it is a cry that pours out of the loving heart of Jesus here in this passage over the spiritual state of people who think themselves as spiritually rich before God. Jesus says, *"woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation."* And this is in contrast to the blessing that Jesus bestowed back in verse 20 if you remember upon those who were poor. That is poor spiritually for theirs is the kingdom of God.

Please remember throughout this entire passage Jesus is speaking in spiritual terms. This is made evident not only by looking over at our parallel passage in Matthew 5 and not only by looking at Luke's previous usages of poor and rich in Luke 1 and Luke 4, but it's also seen by just looking at the immediate context of the verses that are in front of us. By observing that those who are labeled poor, hungry, sorrowful, and scorned in verses 20-22 are equated with believers, those identified with Jesus and also by observing that those who are labeled as rich, full, laughing and well-spoken of here in verses 24-26 are equated as you'll see with false prophets, with unbelievers. And so, in verses 20-23 Jesus is describing the spiritual characteristics of those who are spiritually blessed. And here in verses 24-26 Jesus is describing the spiritual characteristics of those who are spiritually imperiled. And so just as there are divine blessings for those who recognize their spiritual poverty and come to Christ, so also there are divine warnings for those who do not recognize their spiritual poverty and therefore neglect Christ.

Oh, observe this believer that as you strive to share the gospel with those around you, there are both assurances you give to faith and there are admonitions to unbelief. Even Jesus, the greatest example of gospel preachers offered up blessings and offered up woes depending on how someone responded to the message. If you never give anyone warnings in your gospel presentation, you probably have never given the gospel truly as Jesus shows here. Jesus says, *"woe to you who are rich."* Jesus does not put himself on the side as some option for your life. He sets himself up as the determining factor of your eternal destiny. Blessing is with me; woe is apart from me. And he says, *"woe to you who are rich."* In other words, woe to you who think or assume that you are spiritually rich, that you will make it into heaven or merit acceptance before God someday on the basis of your works, your living, or your actions. Woe to you who think that righteousness and a righteous standing before God can be obtained anywhere apart from faith alone in the perfect son, Jesus Christ. Woe to you who think that you have even one penny to contribute to your

spiritual standing before God. Woe to you, by denying your spiritual poverty, you are in a dreadful spiritual state, Jesus is saying. The state of being self-deceived.

As Isaiah 5:21 says, *"Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight!"* *"Who are clean in their own eyes but not washed of their filth,"* as Proverbs 30:12 says. Woe to you. Why? Because Jesus says, for you've received your consolation. So, you think that you are more righteous than others around you, and you think that merits you something before God, well, that's the only comfort you will ever get. If you think that you're good enough to make it into heaven based on your own self-effort, there is no comfort waiting or available for you in that state except the comfort of your own self-delusion, Jesus is saying.

Perhaps you're here this morning thinking I'm a pretty good person. I've done more good than bad in my life. Surely God will accept me on the basis of my works, the change of heart that I've been showing, my good intentions, my moral conclusions, my religious demeanor. Listen, if that's what you're thinking this morning, you are terribly deceived. God is so holy, scripture says, he cannot even look upon iniquity unmoved, not one single action of self-pride, self-pleasure, self-righteousness, or self-determination is overlooked. God must visit it in his just judgment. And Jesus, as God the Son come down from heaven, is reminding you here that if you stay in this self-righteous train of thought, then the only comfort you will ever have for all of eternity is the short-sighted comfort of your own lie right now.

The momentary delusion of your self-righteous fairy tale that has nothing in common with the true nature of God or the true nature of your life, if you were to be honest, or the true nature of eternal realities. *"For all have sinned,"* Romans 3:23 says, *"and fallen short of the glory of God."* Make no mistake, having a high self-esteem spiritually that has nothing to do with Christ has sent more people to hell than could possibly be imagined. To say with the Laodiceans, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not knowing that you are wretched, poor, pitiful, blind, and naked is a damning self-deception. And so Jesus, the saving sovereign of all says, with a broken heart to that crowd that had gathered around him that was ensnared in legalism and self-righteousness and works-based salvation, he looks out to them with a broken heart and he says, woe to you who fail to realize your sinful state before God, who are so rich in your own eyes that you fail to turn to me for my mercy, blessings, and forgiveness. How dreadful, how terrible is your state? And notice if this is you, you are in a terrible state, not because God has shut himself off from you.

I mean, here we literally see God the Son come down to earth standing in a crowd of people who are self-deceived in this way and is appealing to them to see the truth and to come to him, he has come down from heaven to offer you himself, his true righteousness. Now this morning, if you think that you have no need for Christ or salvation or his righteousness, you're in a terrible state, not because God has shut himself off from you, but because though God and his love has made himself available to you, you and your pride and self-righteousness are saying you have no need for him. You've deceived yourself into thinking that you're spiritually rich and therefore you have no need for this person named Jesus or the sacrifice that he made on the cross or the righteousness that is available to you by faith. You're thinking you're spiritually rich and therefore you have no need for the saving riches of Jesus Christ. That is a dreadful spiritual state.

And make no mistake, if you do not repent of that exalted view of yourself, it's not God turning his back on you, but you're turning your back on God. For even here, we can see God crying out with a broken heart to you, woe. Woe to you who think you are spiritually rich for you have received your consolation. Now before we move on, I need to make this point now so that we can have it in the back of our minds when we look at the rest of these verses. This description of thinking that you are spiritually rich before God on the basis of your behavior and your works and your performance and all the descriptions that we're about to see this morning is the natural state of every single person apart from the saving grace of God in Christ. This is the natural state of every soul before God's grace works upon them hard. They think that they are fine before God.

I had a powerful example of this happen to me early on as a young pastor, a young man and his girlfriend came to my office, young man that I had been ministering to for a while. And the girlfriend, as she showed up, was convinced that she had a great relationship with God and was really upset that her boyfriend was concerned that she didn't. So, I asked her, you said that you think you have a good relationship with God. May I ask you why you think that? And she said, well, because God knows I'm a pretty good person. So, I turned to Exodus 20, and I started going through the 10 commandments and explaining them to her one at a time. You know what happened? She got upset.

In fact, she stormed out of my office when I told her that she needed to come to Christ for the forgiveness and the righteous standing that God demands. She was cut to the heart. I showed her she had not kept even one of the commandments. Yeah. You heard it. Out of the mouth of babes. There it is. But think about that. Why was she cut to the heart? It's because I had just showed her that she was not rich spiritually before God. She was in fact dirt poor. Can I tell you, even though she hated me, she was in a better spiritual position after that fact than she was before. When she was stripped of that self-delusion, she finally was equipped.

I prayed by God someday to realize I need Jesus. I need Jesus. In that moment, she could not accept her poverty and therefore she could not accept Jesus Christ as her savior. That is a terrible and that is a dreadful state to be in. *"Woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation."* What a powerful admonition and warning from the heart of Jesus. This is you this morning. This is Jesus trying to tell you to wake up. See yourself truly in light of who he is, not in terms of how other people see you. See yourself in your spiritual poverty and then find in Jesus the riches of his great righteousness and salvation which he offers to you. Because if you see yourself as spiritually rich without Christ, you have no resources for the present.

And second, Jesus warns without Christ, you have no hope for the future. Verse 25, Jesus says, *"Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep."* These are words of admonition that Jesus gives about the future of those who do not draw near to God in faith. He says, *"Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry."* This is in direct contrast to what Jesus said back in verse 21. The glorious promise that he offered, if you would draw near to him, he says, *"Blessed are you who are hungry now,"* who hunger and thirst for God's righteousness, *"for you shall be satisfied."* If you

remember, that was a spiritual hunger, an aching desire for the righteousness, the presence, and the pardon of God in your life.

Those people, Jesus says, are blessed because they will find all of those things in Christ Jesus. They will find in him the righteousness and satisfaction that their hungry souls desire. But Jesus says here, woe to you who are under the delusion that you have no need for God and who have no desire for him in the present because one day, if you do not repent, you will be hungry. And this is a sobering reality that apart from the gracious work of God, the Holy Spirit, self-satisfied individuals will remain self-satisfied in themselves the entire duration of their lives. And Jesus warns, oh, the insatiable hunger that awaits these people for all of eternity. As Luke 1:53 states, *"God has filled the hungry with good things, while the so-called rich he has sent away empty."* There will be, Jesus is warning in his very first gospel presentation, a great reversal one day.

We see a picture of this later in Luke 16 where Jesus tells of a rich man in eternal torment who had no need for God and no need for salvation his whole life long, crying out for just one drop of water. And do you remember the answer that this rich man received from Abraham in that day? Luke 16:25 says, *"remember that in your lifetime you've received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner received bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish."* Can you imagine craving just one drop of water for all eternity, of being hungry with a hunger that never ends, of being lonely with a loneliness that never stops? He who thought he lacked nothing in this life and did not care for God at all ends up being someone who has nothing.

Remember, this is Jesus, God the Son speaking here about the eternal ultimate realities of life. What does it profit you if you gain the whole world and lose your own soul? What a sobering reality that Jesus reveals here. What a sobering reality. What does it profit you if you remain deceitfully satisfied with your own life today only to be hungry for all of eternity? Isaiah 65:13 puts it this way that we read this morning when the Lord God says, *"Behold, my servant shall eat, but you shall be hungry; my servant shall drink, but you shall be thirsty; my servant shall rejoice, but you shall be put to shame."* And then listen to verse 14 of Isaiah 65, *"Behold, my servant shall sing for their gladness of heart, but you shall cry out in pain of heart and shall wail for breaking of spirit."* This is exactly what Jesus says next in verse 25 where we read, *"Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep."*

Now, again, as I mentioned last week, Jesus is not condemning laughter here. No, as Jesus said back in verse 21, laughter is where everything is headed. Laughter is a heaven-like quality. Some of the most fulfilling times of my life have been when I've sat down with Christian family members or friends over some holiday or birthday celebration and just joked and laughed for hours on end. Wholesome laughter with dear and kindred spirits is one of the greatest joys that God has given us here on earth. And is itself a little taste of heaven. But what Jesus is referring here, referring to here is ultimately the laughter of fools. It is the laughter of those who handle with triviality things that should be handled with the utmost gravity. And Jesus says, woe to you who laugh and make light of things that should be wept over, who take things of great moral, spiritual importance and make a punchline out of them. Woe to you.



There are those who make their living in our world today, turning adultery, lust, and an infinite number of perversions into a punchline. There are people who mock the morality and message of God's word, who when confronted with their sin or the message of the cross, dismiss it all with a smile and a laugh. These are the people who find all of their pleasure or joy in the sinfulness of the world, who unlike those in verse 21, laugh rather than weep or their rebellion against God and are not bothered by iniquity or transgression or sin. And as a pastor, you sometimes have opportunities to see this, like when you were called on to deliver messages at funerals, where unbelievers are present and you address the issue of the gospel and the reality of death, and you see people laughing in the middle of your message when they should be weeping. And Jesus says, woe, this is a dreadful spiritual state to be in.

Just as the prophet Amos writes, *"Woe to you who lie in ease upon your beds of ivory and eat and sing idle songs and drink wine and anoint yourselves with the finest of oils, but are not grieved over the spiritual ruin of Joseph!"* What a sobering reality that Jesus reveals here. If all you ever do is laugh over your sins in this life and never repent of them by coming to Jesus, then you will, Jesus is saying, surely suffer for them in the next. And so, beware as Romans 2:4 teaches God's kindness towards you and his mercy and patience is intended to bring us to repent from our sins, not to laugh over them. And so, in his mercy, God sent his Son to this earth to admonish and to warn all of us here in these verses against taking matters of eternity in relationship to himself lightly. Woe to you who are full and laugh now. For if you do not recognize your true spiritual state and repent and draw near to Christ by faith, Jesus says here, you have no hope for your future.

There is only one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who offered up his shed blood on the cross on behalf of sinners. And there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby you must be saved. He is the hope sent from on high for sinners like us. Neglect it and there is no hope left. Without Christ, you have no resources for your present. Without Christ, you have no hope for your future.

And then finally, without Christ, you have bad company for your life's journey. That's in verse 26, where Jesus says, *"Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the,"* what, *"false prophets."* Here Jesus is pointing out that false disciples always have one overarching priority in their life and that is to please people. They seek for this one great idol at the expense of absolutely everything else in their life, especially the truth of God. I mean, let's be honest, it is utterly impossible for all men to speak well of you unless you speak out of both sides of your mouth. And that's what false prophets do and false believers. We've all met people like this, haven't we? And if we were to be honest, at times we've been people like this, haven't we?

People who say one thing to your face, right? And then walk into another room and it becomes apparent later that they said the exact opposite all for the sake of pleasing whoever they happen to be in front of at that given moment. If the driving purpose of your life is to have all people speak well of you, mark this, you will sacrifice faithfulness to the word of God and testimony to Jesus Christ in an instant. And so, Jesus warns here, you are in a dreadful spiritual state *"when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets."*

See, a true prophet, a true believer, a true follower of Jesus Christ who desires to live a godly life and speak the word of God with clarity and conviction will quickly come into collision with the ungodly as verses 22-23 already taught us last week and will quickly fall into disfavor with them. And now I should clarify that in our pluralistic society, people will generally tolerate you for having your own private walk with God. Where you personally read the Bible or go to church to worship for yourself, they'll generally tolerate all of that up until the point where you refuse to accept their sins to the point where you refuse to use their pronouns, you refuse to give them access to your children, you call child mutilation what it is, you show up to quietly pray outside their abortion clinics, or you say with Peter in Acts 4:12 in public, *"there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby you must be saved."*

All of those examples I just gave are examples that have happened in the last year in our own country over which someone has been arrested or worse for. At that moment, when you take a stand for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ in those ways, when you decide I want to be counted with Christ no matter the cost, get ready in that moment for persecution. Be ready for rejection and for hating and for scoffing and for scorn. Perhaps you've already experienced this in school, where you speak up in the classroom or among your friend group about your faith in Jesus Christ only to see your classmates and your peers just slowly kind of disappear or fade into the bushes. Perhaps you've always been included on those golf outings at work or those work parties or those hunting and shopping trips with your friends, and then suddenly after talking to one of them about your relationship with Christ and who you believe him to be, you're suddenly no longer invited, and the feelings of contempt start being felt in the office place. Jesus is reminding us here these experiences, if you're experiencing them, don't belong to false prophets or false believers, but to true.

See, when it comes to false believers and false prophets, all men speak well of them when it comes to their faith and religion. Why? It's because they have made compromises left and right for the sake of maintaining their public reputation and popularity. As Isaiah 30:10 says, *"they don't say what is right, rather they speak smooth things and prophesy illusions."* This is a sign of a false prophet who, as Jeremiah says, seeks to heal people's sins lightly by saying, *"Peace, peace," when there is no peace.* All men speak well of them because they tickle people's ears rather than giving them the truth and calling them to repent. And Jesus here gives us a warning. If we always seek the path of least resistance, the path of appeasement, the path of pleasing everyone at the expense of truth, we will find ourselves on the wrong side of this eternal equation.

As Jesus will say later on, these sobering words in Luke 9:26, *"Whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed of when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels."* Quite frankly, following Jesus is a choice. You must choose to be with Christ or else you will be in bad company, the company of people who chase the praise of man in this life only to find the displeasure of God in the next.

Now, I need to be clear as I finish up here. It's not wrong to want to be liked or even to be well thought of or want to have a good reputation. But when it comes to our relationships with other people, we have got



to answer the serious and most important question posed in Galatians 1:10, *"Am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I was still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Jesus Christ."* In essence, Jesus is saying if this present evil age, this sinful culture, and world system under Satan takes a good look at you and your life and your message and has no problem with it ever at all, woe to you. Because it means a compromise has likely taken place in your walk with God and you might actually be included among the false prophets with whom there is no dawn. Because without Christ, you have bad company. With Christ, you have great resources, great hope, and great company but without Christ, you have no resources, no hope, and bad company. Therefore, you must come to Christ, for He alone by His power and compassion can transform your life in eternity.

And as we've seen here in verses 20-26 how Christ draws us into having a yearning hope with him, it is by means of these divine assurances and these divine admonitions that apart from him, we can do nothing. But with him, we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. Drawing near to Jesus, this is the reality that makes all the difference, both in this life and in the life to come. And so, friends, as we bring this passage to a close, Jesus has laid before us both divine assurances and divine admonitions not to discourage us but to draw us to himself today. These blessings and woes are tools in God's gracious hands to pull back the veil and the self-deceptions over our eyes to help us see our true spiritual state, so that we might run to him without delay.

And so, I just want to finish by speaking plainly to the two types of individuals that Jesus is addressing here in this sermon. First, to the unbeliever who is self-deceived. Friend, if you walked in here this morning assuming that you were naturally rich before God, spiritually fine, spiritually secure, spiritually good enough, Jesus is urgently waving a red flag of warning in your face today. He is telling you with great earnestness and love in his heart that you have no resources, no hope, and no lasting company apart from him. He is telling you that self-righteousness and self-reliance is a fatal delusion, one that will snap underneath you like a spider's thread someday. But listen to the good news. Jesus exposes your spiritual poverty so he can meet you in that moment. He reveals to you your emptiness so that you can come to him and find in him all your soul's desires and needs.

And so, if you sense this morning the Spirit speaking to you, showing you your sin, showing you your poverty, showing you that you have nothing to offer God but your need for forgiveness and grace, then the invitation is open to you to come. Draw near to Jesus this morning by faith. Don't settle for any empty comfort. Come to the Prince of Peace, the Sovereign who saves, who has the power and compassion to change your soul. Come to Jesus, who alone became poor so that you by his poverty might be made rich. Come to the one who satisfies the hungry soul and fills it with good things. And there are so many other applications I could give to us as believers. Are you drawing near to Jesus on a daily basis, recognizing that you still have absolute need for him, that nothing has changed apart from him? You are still poor, blind, naked, miserable. And it is only your relationship with Christ that gives you the riches and the strength and the grace that you need every day. That's a whole other sermon that I could give. This is the one, the application I want to give this morning though.

Brothers and sisters, we've been reminded today of the blessings that we have in Jesus and the wonderful position of blessing that we are in in Christ. If you are in Christ this morning, as we've been seeing over the last several weeks, you do have great resources. For yours is the Kingdom of God. If you have Christ, you do have great hope. One day you will laugh. In Christ, you do have a great company for courage, the company of all those who have been faithful unto death in the past. But the temptation is strong, even with all the blessings we have been given in Christ, to remain quiet, to avoid trouble, to just live in such a way that all people might speak well of us.

Can I say that's a particular, I know I'm going to step on toes, a particular temptation when it comes to the holiday season? I just want us to have a holiday of peace. Great! Call on those you love to come to the Prince of Peace then. Don't settle for any empty comfort. Be faithful with the gospel, as Christ and as so many have been faithful with the gospel with you. The temptation is strong, and Jesus is telling you today that this is not the path of the discipleship. This is not the path of the, this is the path of a false prophet and Jesus is calling on us to do what he does here, to lovingly warn those who are self-deceived by sin, to gently but earnestly speak the truth to them, even when it might cost, and to stand with Christ even when it might sting.

There are people you're going to meet this holiday season all around you, neighbors, co-workers, family members who truly believe, who still believe that they are rich naturally before God, that they have no need for the greatest gift that has ever been given. They're satisfied now, but they will be hungry. They're laughing now, but if nothing changes, eternal sorrow waits. And God has by his grace and good providence placed you in their life, not to remain silent, not to echo the world's applause or lies, but to echo heaven's warning and heaven's gracious invitation extended to all sinners.

So, believer, I want to challenge you to do, to do what Jesus does here. Lift up your voice and speak the whole truth in love. Don't let temporary amusements keep you from pointing them to eternal joy. And don't let a fear of man silence the hope of Jesus in your mouth this Christmas season. Jesus proclaimed both blessings and woes, so that sinners by both means might come to him and find that yearning hope. And Jesus calls on you to join him in that mission. Come to Christ and confess him. For this is our good news. Jesus is the blessed one. And coming to him makes all the difference in this life and in the life to come. Hallelujah.

This is the word of God from Luke 6:20-26, which I consider a great honor to have been able to share with you today, and which I now commit to your further study and your faithful obedience until Jesus, the morning star of all of our hopes and joys, return.

To that end, as the men come forward for communion this morning, let's pray.

Father, I thank you for the journey you've taken us on over these last few weeks. Consider the great blessings that are found in Christ, and this morning to consider the great warnings that are found outside of him. Father, I pray that if there is someone here today who has not confessed their sinfulness to you and run to the salvation and forgiveness that is freely offered to them in Christ, I pray that this morning

your spirit would convict their souls, that they would cry out to you for forgiveness and find true and lasting peace through the sure righteousness and finished work of Jesus Christ upon the cross. And Father, I pray for the rest of us, thank you for the faithful proclamation of the gospel here by Jesus. And help us, Father, to be faithful in our proclamation of the gospel as well. Father, as we have those that we love the most around us, help us to love them enough to have real conversations with them, and help them to be able to see that the reason why we share these assurances and these admonitions is because what we speak is true, and we truly love them. Help us to be faithful, Father, we pray in this way, to come to Christ and to confess him.

We ask in Jesus' name, Amen.

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