

Luke 5:33 - 6:11 // Furious old Winers

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 14 September 2025

Preacher: Challum Finbow

[0 : 00] As said, our lesson today is from the Gospel according to Luke chapter 5, starting at verse 33. He told them this parable.

No one tears out a piece of a new garment to patch on an old one. Otherwise, they will have torn the new garment, and the patch from the new will not match the old.

And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins, the wine will run out, and the wineskins will be ruined.

No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins, and no one after drinking old wine wants the new, for they say the old is better.

One Sabbath, Jesus was going through the cornfields, and his disciples began to pick some ears of corn, rub them in their hands, and eat the grain.

[1 : 33] Some of the Pharisees asked, why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath? Jesus answered them, have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry?

He entered the house of God, and taking the consecrated bread, he ate what is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions.

Then Jesus said to them, the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath. On another Sabbath, he went into the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was shriveled.

The Pharisees and the teachers of the law were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath. But Jesus knew what they were thinking, and said to the man with the shriveled hand, get up and stand in front of everyone.

So he got up and stood there. Then Jesus said to them, I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath, to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?

[2 : 42] He looked round at them all, and then said to the man, stretch out your hand. He did so, and his hand was completely restored.

But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law were furious, and began to discuss with one another what they might do to Jesus. This is the word of the Lord. Thank you, God.

Thank you, God. Well, I was about to say good morning, but actually, good afternoon.

I'm Callum. I'm going to take you for the next wee while through what we have just read. Luke chapter 5 from verse 33. So it would be really helpful if you've got Luke 5 and 6 open in front of you.

We're going to be thinking under the heading, furious old whiners. And there's an outline in your sheep, your service sheep. But let's ask God to help us, shall we?

[3 : 51] Lord God, as we read your word, we ask for your spirit. Teach us, spirit, about the Son who redeems the Father.

We ask that you would do this for the glory of our Lord and for our good. May we respond well and as we ought.

We ask in Jesus' name. Amen. So keeping that open. Have you ever been to the pantomime? If you're not familiar with these British theatre productions of the slapstick humour variety.

And just the answer pantomime, here we go. What's happening here? You need me. You need what? Oh no, that's not.

Is that better? Yes. Okay, right. So have you ever been to the pantomime? So pantomimes, as you know, are exaggerated, pretty much nonsense that's funny.

[5 : 04] And they rely on audience involvement, don't they? Particularly around the baddies. When the baddie comes on, everyone moves.

So we're going to start off with a boo or cheer. So hopefully this technology will work. Boo or cheer? Boo.

Now I said, Silas, I have to tell you, you need to let go of your inhibitions. And the moment service. We're better than that. Okay? So booth analyst. Yes, booth analyst.

Next one. Hey! Yeah, Mario. Yes, we love Mario, don't we? Okay, so next one. How can you boo Bowser?

Bowser's my favourite character. But yes, he's the baddie, he would get booed. Yay! Yay! Yes, Mario and Gandalf saved the world. Yay, right. And next one.

[6 : 03] Or Middle Earth. Cruella. I had to make sure there was a female baddie, just for, you know, equality sake. So, oh, hang on, there's one more.

What are we supposed to make of these guys? We as a church have been reading Luke's carefully constructed historical narrative written to Theophilus to give him confidence about all he's heard around Jesus.

But now the Pharisees come in and they want to rain on the parade, don't they? These religious rulers, they come into the gospel at chapter 5, verse 17.

And they're calling Jesus a blasphemer straight away. Boo! Pharisees. We read that Jesus transforms the life of a paralysed man and then the life of a morally bankrupt traitor, Levi.

Levi celebrates this transformation with a party. And the Pharisees say, why do you eat with tax collectors and sinners? Boo! Boo! Boo!

[7 : 12] Boo! Boo! Boo! Boo! Boo! Pharisees. And then they complain, Jesus and his followers are too joyful. Boo! Boo! Pharisees.

And then we read in chapter 6, don't we? The disciples take a little bit of quantity. And the Pharisees accuse them of breaking the rest day, the sabbath day. Boo!

Pharisees. And then on another stop, or sabbath, they, sabbath, they are upset that Jesus heals the disabled hand of a man.

They think this is evil. Boo! Pharisees. Well, that's often how we end up cheating them, isn't it? As if they're sort of pantomime baddies, like exaggerated versions of us.

We all boo their self-righteous rule, rule-keeping sort of behaviour. And then we sort of go, well, hang on, I can be quite self-righteous and religious.

[8 : 16] Boo me. That's what we do. And there's some truth in that. There is a sinful bent in them and in us. But I'm going to suggest that if you saw a man who'd been paralysed, leaping, whose sins had been forgiven, or someone like Levi totally transformed, you'd be celebrating with Jesus.

You would embrace this. I don't think it would make you anti-Jesus, anti-Christ. Pharisees are not pantomime baddies.

They are half-hearted unbelievers. They do not believe Jesus is the Christ and the Lord. They see evidence of that right in front of their face.

They're willfully blind. They do not want what's described as new wine. For them, the old is better. In fact, by the end of the section read out at verse 11 by Innes, they are furious at Jesus.

And the new wine is brilliant. They are not pantomime baddies, but unbelieving, furious, old whiners who kill.

[9 : 36] We're going to look at this passage under two headings. Firstly, fully embrace the new. Fully embrace the new.

Last Sunday, Martin helped us to see that what Jesus did, what I've mentioned so far, was so audacious, so new that it brought upset to the established orders.

The worldview of the time, the categories being used to understand the world, were being altered by Jesus' teaching. Instead of ordering the unclean leper out of town, he graciously stretches out his hand to cleanse.

Claiming God-like authority to forgive the sins of the paralysed man, he then shows proof by healing. Next, instead of mixing with the religious, he goes to those who realise that morally they are sick.

And he doesn't just hand out a medicine for them to keep taking. He provides a one-time cure. All new. All new. And as we pick up Luke's narrative, Jesus has called Levi out of a life of moral bankruptcy.

[10 : 57] So that he now follows Jesus. Levi. Bit of a loaded Jewish name. Only Levites from the tribe of Levi were allowed to be priests for Israel.

And here was this Levi. Collecting the taxes of the invading Romans from his own people and making money from a traitor.

Outcast. Morally then, the old wine Pharisees have nothing that can transform this man.

But Jesus does. So we see in him, in Levi, life transformation. And so he celebrates with Jesus. And this kind of leads into what we're reading at verse 33.

The accusation from the Pharisees. You and your disciples, they should be praying and fasting. Not eating and drinking. Verse 35, Jesus says there will be time for that.

[12 : 07] For prayer and fasting. And heart pains in the head for these men. But it's not this time. Rather, they are in joyous days.

The joyous days of becoming a Christian. Of beginning to follow Jesus. And so Jesus says, can you make the friends of the bridegroom himself fast?

Fast. While he is with them. Well, of course not. It's right to celebrate being with Jesus the bridegroom. New relationship with Jesus equals feasting and joy.

Do you like a good time? No? Nobody likes a good time, no? You do like a good time, don't you? Do you have a favourite outfit that you like wearing for a good time?

Maybe it's getting a bit past it? To be honest, it's usually my wife Claire that tells me something I'm wearing is beyond its best. It's a bit moth-eat and callow.

[13 : 12] Aw, I like this t-shirt. Well, that t-shirt was good. But it served its purpose. To the grumbling Pharisee, Jesus tells a parable that works as an answer.

And a comment on their attitude. There are three new things. There are three old things. And each new thing is representing Christ and Christianity.

Whilst the old thing represents Judaism. Jesus says, no one tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old garment. Imagine Claire got me a new t-shirt and I tore a bit off the new one and sewed it on the moth-eating bit.

You just wouldn't, would you? No one does that, says Jesus. And then he says, if someone does do it, the new garment is torn.

And the new piece won't match the old. In other words, Jesus is saying, I'm not here to do minor repairs to what is already here. The old system has served its purpose.

[14 : 25] It's over. And in me, everything has been completely replaced. This needs to be fully embraced by us. Like my old t-shirt was good.

It served its purpose. And so I need to fully embrace the new. And try not to hold on to what was old. Martin helped us to see some of that last week.

He was saying that Jesus was overturning all the categories. He said he's thrown up all the cards in the air. In fact, Jesus is bringing a brand new deck.

To understand the world now. To worship the Lord now. You go through him. Through Jesus. New replaces old.

Bye bye old t-shirt. So you get new garments to wear for your faith. No mending of the old.

[15 : 30] And you know what no one else does as well? Verse 37. They don't take new wine and put it in old wineskins. Well, Jesus has clearly been hanging around Glasgow too.

Because no one puts new wine into old wineskins round here. You just drink it straight at the bottle. Okay, haha. But that is not the point.

Animal skins were used to hold liquid. The problem with putting wine in these skins was that the wine reacts with the skins.

And once the wineskins being used, if you put a new or a different wine in, it bursts the skin. And you've got wine all over your new top.

So new wine, it ruins old skins. So new wine needs new containers. This might be making you feel a bit fuzzy.

[16 : 32] What is Jesus really saying? Well, it's not a comment on how wines age were. Think of it like this. Brand new wine.

Jesus in his kingdom is here. And that is just as well for Levi. For the old wine apparently was not for him. On the other hand, it was for the Pharisees.

The old wineskins. They are the old wine guys. The old winners. And the new wine Jesus brings is just right for Levi. He knows he is so stinking in terms of his sin.

He has no hope. He's kept the law well enough to be good enough for God. He's just the right container for the new wine that preaches good news for sinners, which is forgiveness in Christ.

Two weeks ago when Andy preached, we read about Peter, didn't we? And such was the magnificence, the power of Jesus, that Peter was made just right in order to accept the new wine.

[17 : 44] And hanging about Jesus at the miraculous catch of fish, Peter realised his moral bankruptcy. And he said to Jesus, depart from me, for I am a sinful man.

When Jesus helps us see who we are by showing us who he is, then we're ready for the new wine.

But old wineskins believe that by keeping the laws, they're already good enough.

Such belief is actually a perversion of the old covenant relationship, but in essence, the old winners don't want the new wine. They believe they're already righteous, and so they cannot hold the new wine.

In fact, verse 37 says, it will ruin or destroy them. Levi and Peter, therefore, have embraced the call to follow the new.

- [18 : 49] The Pharisees reject it. Well, which are you? You a good boy? Good girl?
- Maybe your culture, or how you were brought up, might make you find this hard to say, I am a sinner. You've been told your whole life you're a good boy.
- It can be hard for people who appear to be good, and let me tell you, you appear quite nice people. It can be hard for them to really say, like Peter, like Levi, I am a rotten sinner.
- I need Jesus. I know I'm not good enough for heaven. School can do that to you. Good boy, be a good boy, be a good girl.
- The aim of our national curriculum is to produce people who are responsible citizens, confident individuals, effective contributors, and successful learners.
- [20 : 00] In other words, good, upright citizens. Good boys and girls. without us ever understanding, it is the new way that is Christ that makes us good.
- Instead we say, well done, have a certificate for moral excellence. You're a good person, unlike you. Now I'm not saying we shouldn't reward good behaviour.
- I was a teacher, and I did it a lot. But we need to think about how this might have shaped us. Church can inadvertently suggest also, we don't need God's love to be good.
- Especially if moralistic teaching is the main course at Sunday school. You know, be good like Daniel. Work hard like Dorcas.
- Be brave like Esther. And if we haven't taught our children that true goodness starts when Jesus, through the Spirit, enters our hearts, then suddenly we have brought up a generation of moralists who think they are good, and they don't really need Jesus.
- [21 : 20] It's cute, but deadly. just like us. Our children need to hear that they are sinners and need Jesus.
- They need to hear this way more about be good, or we will grow rule-keeping, religious people, old winers who struggle to embrace the new.
- And that is scary when you read verse 39, because no one after drinking old wine wants the new. For they say that old is better.
- Old wine sounds addictive. To the self-righteous Pharisee, old wine was preferable than new wine than Jesus. And Pharisees were children once too.
- When the new wine of God appeared, they could not see past it all. And so friends, this morning, I want to tell you, it's afternoon, I want to tell you, embrace the new wine by looking at Jesus, recognising who you are, and asking for his forgiveness.
- [22 : 36] And when you do that, point number two, expect fury. Expect fury. I mentioned that this gospel is written to give one of Jesus' followers, Theophilus, certainty.
- We now underestimate what a main job it is for people like him to understand what's happening in their time. So, work with me here.
- I want you to imagine it's AD 65. you're in a coffee shop in the Roman world. Caffee Nero. Now, hang on.
- Nero is no friend of Christians. And seeing how you're meeting up with most excellent Theophilus for coffee, you've decided to play it safe and go for a Starbucks. Like Theo, you've become intrigued by what you've heard of Jesus.
- But something big is holding you back. His own people, the Jews, they reject him. In fact, it's more than rejection.
- [23 : 49] They're furious at this Jesus movement. They hate him. They hate them. They stir up trouble with the authorities so much. So you've seen Christians expel from their work, from societies, from cities.

If he's the Christ, the Jews have been waiting on. If Jesus is all you suspect he is, what gives? Well, your skinny lad has arrived.

Theophilus is bringing out his manuscript that Dr. Luke has written him and he says to you, I understand now. It was always this way.

It is always this way. And you say, what? Those who were privileged, Theo says, under the old system are hardly ready to enthusiastically accept the new.

What? Look, says Theo, this is what Jesus says about them. No one, after drinking the old wine, desires new. For he says the old is good.

[24 : 56] Can you explain further Theophilus? Yes, the Jews, and in particular, their leaders drank of the old. For those who it benefited, for those not excluded, the old wine, the old way was good, but the new way, the new wine is a threat, and the penny drops in you.

And so you say, so to them, old is best, new is offensive. So the old wine don't just not want the new, they hate the new.

And Theo says, I think so, because look at verse one. One Sabbath, Jesus was going through the grain fields, and his disciples began to pick some heads of grain, rub them in their hands, and eat the kernels.

And some of the Pharisees asked, why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath? And you say, they aren't supposed to work on the Sabbath, but this is over interpretation, isn't it?

Rubbing heads of grain to eat, that's not against the law, is it? This is added. And Theo says, that's right, but notice that's not what Jesus says. He says at verse three, have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry?

[26 : 17] And you replied, he's comparing himself to David, God's newly anointed king, who's on the run from old king, but established king, Saul.

God is replacing him. He was persecuting David. There's some connections there with Jesus and the Pharisees, you think. And Theo says, keep going, read the next bit.

he entered verse four, the house of God and taking the consecrated bread or the special bread of presence, he ate what is lawful only for priests to eat.

And he also gave some to his companions. And your brain is beginning to put it together. You say, David is hungry. But this is also a power move.

It says, he is the Messiah who makes holy. So likewise, Jesus is the new God given authority able to dispense the bread of presence, the holy bread a priest would do.

[27 : 27] Yes, says Theo. And therefore, like David, Jesus is saying as Messiah that the law, God is presence with him.

Good, says Theo. So in answer to the charge of breaking the law, Jesus is basically saying, I am the new David, consecrated, able to make holy.

And then, says Theo, he goes even further. Look at verse 5. The Son of Man, that's Jesus, is Lord of the Sabbath. Wow, you say.

No wonder the Pharisees are furious. No wonder, says Theo, those who still follow these teachings, hate Jesus. The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.

Well, I hope you enjoyed your skinny latte. I'm sure on Starbucks, they won't have what we have here, which is the Ten Commandments written on the wall. Jesus has just said, did you notice, I am Lord of the Ten Commandments.

[28 : 31] I am Lord of the law. This really is new. only the Lord God, Yahweh, can say this without it being blaspheming.

There is a man saying, I am Lord of the Fourth Commandment, the law. This is a statement showing divinity, showing his complete authority to reject their misinterpretation of the Fourth Commandment.

And so to those who love old wine, this is way too much. He is threatening everything we hold dear. He needs to stop or we need to act.

Religious fury is rising. And so Luke gives us another Sabbath story. Remember folks, the Sabbath is a good thing.

A stop day for the people of God to come together physically to worship God as a people, a day made for our benefit. And this Sabbath story we're about to read shows the Pharisees, not like pantomime baddies, but like predatory animals.

[29 : 45] They're waiting to pounce. At verse 6, on another Sabbath he went into the synagogue and was teaching. And a man was there whose right hand was shriveled.

The Pharisees and the teachers of the law were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus. So they watched him closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath. But Jesus knew what they were thinking and said to the man with the shriveled hand, get up and stand in front of everyone.

So he got up and stood there. He's got backbone Jesus, doesn't he? And then Jesus said to them, I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath, to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it.

You can just feel the awkwardness in that room, can't you? What a question to ask. Do good, save life, well, obviously that's the right thing.

Do you notice do and save are verbs? Doing on the Sabbath? Don't, say the Pharisees. The law of the Sabbath does good.

[31 : 00] And as in chapter five, when Jesus stretched out his hand to touch the leper and make clean, now verse 10, he looked around at them all and he said to the man, stretch out your hand.

And he did so and his hand was completely restored. Praise God, praise Jesus. Verse 11, but, but the Pharisees and the teachers of the law were furious.

They began to discuss with one another what they might do to Jesus. Followers of Jesus expect fury.

Furious old whiners, willfully blind, haters of Christ, this is not pantomime or exaggeration. This is fury leading to hateful action.

This is the fury that follows the early church around, putting her followers in jail, to the swords. No wonder it caused uncertainty for people like the worthless.

[32 : 17] Now, clearly, not all unbelievers initially react furiously to Christ. But if you graciously, and it needs to be gracious, if you graciously push hard enough at the old whin you hold to, fury is there.

If you've embraced the new, expect fury from those holding on to the old. This is the type of fury we see from states like China, or religions like Islam, who hate their people embracing Christ.

And they by all means try to stop it. Believing Jesus is a threat, they bulldoze churches, they imprison pastors, their actions show the truth.

Those who benefit from old whin will be furious at those who follow Jesus. And there's all sorts of old whin.

Old whin like, but I'm a good person. How dare you suggest I'm going to hell if I don't accept Jesus. Old whin might hate being told Christ died to save them.

- [33 : 42] How dare you suggest I need saved. Old whin might hate being told they were created and therefore they belong to God. How dare you suggest I'm not God of my life.
- Fury arises when the old hears that self is not God. That's dangerous for our young are being taught that the inner self has to be obeyed.
- To be authentic the heart has to be followed. But when the new is taught that the heart of man is rotten, that the fruit of the spirit is self control and not self expression, well expect fury.
- fury. Expect fury but be brave and be gracious. Make a video inviting people to a new church in the east end saying Jesus loves Glasgow even more than Glaswegians do.
- Expect fury. Old wine might be anything people protect that they feel gives them value.
- [35 : 04] We could have so many more examples. But if when Jesus heals a paralysed man and a man with a withered hand and he resets a traitorous villain, if that causes fury, then followers of Jesus expect fury.
- For as for Jesus, so for his people. So that's encouraging, isn't it? I've just told you, fully embrace the new and expect fury.
- Well, why would you? With so much old wine fury, why follow Jesus? In the previous service, Alex and Rebecca dedicated Marcus to Jesus.
- Why would they? With all that's happening in our world, why invite more fury into your life? Or your bodies?
- Why embrace the new? I hope you know the answer. Because he's worth it. Because he is joyous.
- [36 : 22] Because he makes us joy-filled new whiners. What else is there to do when you've seen the absolute beauty of Jesus than to declare yourself morally bankrupt and to follow him?
- To get up and follow the one who forgives the sins of his enemies even as they persecute? Who, by being near Jesus and recognising the darkness isn't out there, the darkness is in here, who wouldn't want to follow the one who says, I've not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance?
- Who wouldn't want to follow the one who has made claims only God can and then proves himself? New wine is brought by the sin-forgiving great physician, by the joy-giving bright room.
- It's brought by the Lord of the Sabbath because he is Lord of all. He looks furious disbelief in the eye and he says, I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath?
- To do good or to do evil? To save life or to destroy? And he says, stretch out your hand. Jesus is new wine.
- [37 : 56] If that makes your heart sink, then this new wine, which will be a joy everlasting even as you endure temporary fury, that new wine, it's already yours.
- Lord God, help us to react to this correctly. Lord, we want to fight fire with fire.
- We want to fight fury with fury. Lord God, you did not so. You have not done so.
- We have experienced your grace. You've been gracious to our fury. Lord God, may we react correctly to this, to bow down, to declare you God, to declare ourselves a sinner, to accept your grace.
- May we never be furious old winers, but joyful, joy-filled new wine lovers. We ask that you would do this in our hearts.
- [39 : 16] We ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.