

*Text of a message delivered by Grant Harris at Windsor Park Baptist Church on Sunday 2nd November 2025.
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Jesus, the Disruptor

Luke 5:1-6:11

Luke 5:1 – 6:11 contains six disruptive stories where Jesus completely overturns what is normal in society to show that His ways change the world with deep spiritual significance. For being disruptive, the societal leaders were furious and plotted his downfall. These stories show us that following Jesus is disruptive, both to our lives and to the world we live in, and we need to ask ourselves about what disruption Jesus is calling us to be involved in.

Introduction: Disruption

Like many of you, there have been moments in my life when something happens, and life is never the same again. One of those moments was when Jo told me that she was pregnant with our first child. I was a young banker in Palmerston North 33 years ago ... no mobile phones to text on, no internet, but we did have colour TVs! I was serving a customer when Jo walked into the bank, leaned over and whispered, “*I’m pregnant,*” and then walked out. That disrupted my day, and becoming parents was hugely disruptive, in all the right ways!

For many of us, deciding to follow Jesus has also been disruptive, again for all the right reasons ... it’s transformative, gives us hope and healing and perspective and identity, and that decision means that we have the opportunity to grow into experiencing life and life to its fullest, just like Jesus said we could.

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Recap: The Kingdom of God

As part of our pilgrimage through the Gospel of Luke in our series called **King and Kingdom Come**, last week Heather looked at Luke Chapter 4 Verses 14 - 44 where Jesus introduces the radical nature of the kingdom of God. She challenged us to think about how we're involved in the kingdom that has come, and the kingdom that is coming. I loved the quote she used from theologian N. T. Wright in his book, *Surprised by Hope*. He writes, *'The point of the resurrection ... is that what you do in the present, by painting, preaching, singing, sewing, praying, teaching, building hospitals, digging wells, campaigning for justice, writing poems, caring for the needy, loving your neighbour as yourself, will last into God's future ... they are part of what we may call building for God's Kingdom.'* It's a great quote and reflects our vision here at Windsor of putting our faith into action.

Six Big Stories: Luke 5 – 6:10

Today we're looking at a chunk of Luke that contains six remarkable stories with huge spiritual significance that show us just how disruptive Jesus was, and therefore still is. We begin in Luke Chapter 5 Verse 1 and go through to Chapter 6 Verse 10, ending with Verse 11 (ok I know some of you will jump to Verse 11 right now, so let's read it, ***"They were furious and began to discuss with one another what they might do to Jesus."*** "They" being the Pharisees and the teachers of the law – basically everyone who were important in that society were furious with Jesus, and we'll see why as we go through these six big stories.

The first story we see is in Luke Chapter 5 Verses 1 - 11 that could be titled,

1. The miraculous catch of fish

It's a remarkable story because Jesus directs exhausted fishermen to cast their nets, again, and they haul in a miraculous catch that nearly sinks their boats. It's a significant story because,

- Jesus reveals his divine authority over creation.
- For the first time Peter recognises his sinfulness and calls Jesus, ***"Lord,"*** and

- It marks the beginning of what we now call discipleship when Jesus says to this group of fishermen, ***“Don’t be afraid; from now on you will catch people.”***

The big idea is that we see Jesus calling ordinary people into His extraordinary mission, and it’s deeply disruptive to their lives. They ***“left everything and followed Him.”***

In the second story, Luke Chapter 5 Verses 12-16,

2. Jesus heals a man with leprosy

This is remarkable because Jesus firstly *touches* a man with leprosy, an unthinkable act under the purity laws of the day as no one touched anyone with leprosy. And what’s even more remarkable is that Jesus then instantly heals him. It’s a significant story because,

- Jesus demonstrates compassion over convention – for the first time in the Gospel of Luke Jesus restores those to whom society rejects, and
- It’s significant because this story affirms Jesus’ divine power to make people whole.

The big idea is that Jesus’ touch restores dignity and community to the untouchable. This point is a massive disruption to a society who put people who weren’t considered normal to the literal margins of towns – they didn’t look after them, but Jesus did.

In the third big story of this section, we see that ...

3. Jesus forgives and heals a paralysed man in Luke Chapter 5 Verses 17-26

This story is remarkable because we’ve seen nothing like this before. A group of friends, frustrated by the crowds, lower their paralysed friend through a roof; and rather than seeing this

as an inconvenience, Jesus forgives his sins and ultimately heals his body. It's a significant story because,

- Jesus claims authority to forgive sins, stunning the religious leaders.
- It's significant because these events reveal that spiritual healing is even greater than physical restoration, and
- It's significant because Jesus commends faith in action. The determination of the friends of the paralysed man moves the heart of God. As the crowd watching on affirm in Verse 26, ***"We have seen remarkable things today."***

The big idea we see in this story is that Jesus firstly wants to meet the deepest needs of our fragile and broken hearts; He wants us to experience forgiveness and inner healing. This was hugely disruptive to a society that was looking for quick wins and outward signs but who were encouraged to look inwards to see where real transformation happens.

In the fourth big story in Luke Chapter 5 Verses 27-39, we see...

4. Jesus calling Levi to follow Him and then a banquet with sinners follows

It's a remarkable story because Levi is a despised tax collector, and yet Jesus calls him to come and follow Him. Levi immediately does as he is asked and then hosts a banquet full of other tax collectors and other unlikely characters.

- This story is hugely significant because it shows that grace calls unlikely people.
- It's significant because Jesus redefines community by sharing meals with those considered unworthy.
- It's significant because the parable of new wine and wineskins reveals that Jesus brings a *new way* by not just reforming the old but renewing everything.

The big idea that Jesus' mission is about grace, not religion, and that new wine needs new lives is incredibly disruptive to a world that lived by rules and regulations on who was in, and who was out.

In the fifth big story of this section, we see ...

5. Jesus in the grainfields on the Sabbath in Luke Chapter 6 Verses 1–5

It's a powerful story because when the Pharisees criticise the disciples for plucking grain on the Sabbath, Jesus defends them, citing David's actions and declaring, ***"The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."*** It's transformative because,

- Jesus reclaims the Sabbath's purpose as being about rest and mercy, not rigid rule-keeping.
- It's significant because as ***"Lord of the Sabbath"*** Jesus claims divine authority over sacred time as the focus shifts from law to life and we see that the Sabbath serves people, not the other way around.

The big idea is that Jesus restores the heart of worship as being rooted in freedom and not legalism, which is so disruptive to those who like to keep rules because that's how it's always been.

The last story we see in this section is Luke Chapter 6 Verses 6 - 10 where ...

6. Jesus heals a withered hand

In this story, we're in the synagogue on the Sabbath and Jesus calls a man with a shrivelled hand to stand before everyone, and despite opposition, Jesus heals him. This is significant because, again,

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- Jesus confronts religious hypocrisy head-on because healing on the Sabbath demonstrates that doing good is always lawful.
- This story is significant because the scene escalates conflict with the religious leaders, which starts to foreshadow the events of the cross.

The big idea in this last story is that Jesus' compassion never takes a day off, and that love fulfils the law, which is wildly disruptive.

These six big stories paint an impressive picture of who Jesus is and what His kingdom brings:

1. Jesus **calls** disciples (5:1–11).
2. Jesus shows **compassion** by restoring the broken (5:12–16).
3. Through **forgiveness**, Jesus heals from the inside out (5:17–26).
4. Jesus welcomes sinners with **grace** (5:27–39).
5. Jesus redefines Sabbath by giving **freedom** from religion (6:1–5).
6. Jesus shows **courage** by challenging hypocrisy and bringing wholeness (6:6–10).

Thematically, this section moves from *calling & cleansing* to *forgiveness & fellowship* to *freedom & faithfulness*. It's a portrait of a Saviour who restores, redefines, and revolutionises what life with God looks like.

Like the famous Sermon on the Mount that we read in Matthew Chapters 5 - 7, or the shorter Sermon on the Plain that Caleb will look at next week, all of these stories and events are building a catalogue of powerful examples that the ministry of Jesus is bringing heaven to earth in ways that completely overturn the patterns and rhythms of what society thinks is normal.

Here's my summary: **Jesus disrupts what is normal so much that He normalises disruption.**

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Summary: Uncomfortable Disruption

By consistently acting outside the expected norms, Jesus redefines what “*normal*” is for his followers. The new normal is one where the status quo is challenged and individuals are called to a life of sacrifice, love, and a commitment to a new way of living that leads to love for the marginalised and includes kingdom principles that have eternal consequences, and for those of us who call ourselves followers of Jesus, we’re brought into this divine story by being the hands and feet of Jesus in our day. And based on everything that we’ve already seen in the Gospel of Luke, this is challenging and disruptive, and we know that it’s challenging and disruptive because when we read these passages there is a little part of us that becomes like the Pharisees and the teachers of the law because we don’t want to consider what this all means for our lives because it’s ... uncomfortable. And it’s ... disruptive.

The kicker to this whole section is the verse you went to at the beginning ... Luke Chapter 6 Verse 11, “***But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law were furious and began to discuss with one another what they might do to Jesus.***” The preceding six stories that Luke writes are just too much for the religious leaders of the time, they couldn’t cope with the disruption to their comfortable, religious lives.

Application

We’ve followed the trajectory of Luke for a few weeks now, and honestly, if you’re interested in following the ongoing trajectory of Luke, it’s going to continue to disrupt how we think about the world and how we live our lives as followers of Jesus, particularly when we think about God’s love for the marginalised and the hurting.

If we call ourselves Christians, and if we read the Word of God, and if we listen to the voice of the Spirit of God, I wonder what might disrupt us, because we have enough evidence from the Gospel of Luke that Jesus disrupts what is normal so much that He normalises disruption.

- Maybe you’re bring disrupted to work out what forgiveness looks like to someone that has hurt you, because Jesus says that there is freedom in forgiveness.

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- Perhaps you're being disrupted to not linger in the pit of grief and loss, but to instead learn the rhythms of managing a new normal because the Spirit of Comfort is upon you.
- I hope that some of you are being disrupted to consider what a kingdom of God mentality looks like when it comes to your careers – what does it mean to see our work through a Christian lens when it comes to policy development within the legal frameworks of our country; or what does it mean for those who work within the finance industry to consider what a Godly economic framework looks like within the capitalist philosophy that we're so convinced is the foundation of a free society but that continues to create an unequal wealth gap so quickly that the word oligarch is not too far away from being imagined, even in our little country. Or what does a Jesus lens look like for those in urban planning when privacy and security is the opposite to doing life and faith together as we see exemplified in Acts Chapter 2. Or what does it mean to look at the world of education through the eyes of learning some of the most important lessons that humanity could ever learn such as knowing who we are and where we come from?

You see what Jesus is starting to do in the Gospel of Luke is to upend what was deemed normal and normalise a way of looking at, and living in the world according to values and principals of His Father, who loved the world so much that He sent His only Son into the world, so that whoever believes in Him, and follows Him, will have life, and life to its fullest.

Let me share one recent moment where I've felt deeply disrupted by what I've seen in our world.

Two weeks ago, I was at a cemetery in South Auckland for the unveiling of a Māori Pou carved to create a memorial garden to honour the lives of babies lost to abortion, a project that has been the heartbeat of Marina Young and her Buttons Project for many years that works in tandem with Haven, one of the ministries of the Windsor Park LifeCare Trust. It was a significant event. Afterwards, a few of us were standing a few metres away at the base of a tree that had been used for similar purposes for the last few years when the sexton of the cemetery walked over with a small box of ashes that she was going to sprinkle around the base of the tree. She told us

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that they were the ashes of the babies from yesterday's abortion clinic here in Auckland. She sprinkles those ashes every day, we were there for just one of them.

While I know that abortion is a complex issue to navigate, being there that day has disrupted me and I can't stop thinking about it. I'm processing my response as a follower of Jesus, and as someone who believes in the sanctity of life. I'm being disrupted because I live in a nation that has some of the most liberal abortion laws in the world, that are now our normal, but I don't think it's the normal according to the kingdom of God. But honestly, I'm not sure what my action to take it just yet, but I am certainly being disrupted.

Like becoming a parent for the first time; like deciding to follow Jesus for the first time, we see that disruption for the sake of God's kingdom is completely normal for those who want to see heaven on earth. I hope that's me, and I hope that I continue to be disrupted for sake of the world I live in, because if I'm honest, the ways of our world certainly aren't working out all that well, especially for the broken and the marginalised, and that's why we need a disruptive Saviour, one who keeps reshaping our hearts until heaven breaks through on earth.

May we be willing to be disrupted, again and again, until His kingdom fully comes. Let's pray for disruption as we continue to hear the Gospel of Luke.

Amen.

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Reflecting on Sunday 26th October 2025: Last week Heather talked about the rhythm of going to a solitary place, like Jesus did, to pray. And at the end of the service she had everyone say The Lord's Prayer together. In your quiet moments over the last week, has The Lord's Prayer been something that you've remember this past week, or where did you go over the last week that has helped you grow closer to God.

These questions help you think more about this message. We hope they might be a conduit for conversation and reflection, encouraging us to wrestle with how this message might practically work itself out in our lives.

1. **Personal Disruption:** Can you think of a time when following Jesus or taking a step of faith disrupted your life in a positive way? How did it change your perspective or priorities?
2. **Kingdom Impact:** Which of the six stories from Luke 5–6 resonated with you the most, and why? How does that story challenge the way you live out your faith today?
3. **Challenging Norms:** In what areas of your life or society do you see the “normal” conflicting with God's kingdom values? How might Jesus be calling you to disrupt that norm?
4. **Action and Response:** The message talks about being disrupted to act on issues like forgiveness, justice, or mercy. What is one area where you feel God is calling you to respond or step out this week?

If you'd like to chat with someone about your spiritual journey or anything else going on in your life, please contact us at care@windsorpark.org.nz; **we're better together** and **no perfect people are allowed**.

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Below are some further resources that may take the message further and deeper and enable you to explore other viewpoints on the same theme. We also encourage you to engage with the preacher if there are further questions you have or if you'd like clarification on anything. Email info@windsorpark.org.nz and we'll direct your query to the appropriate person.

1. There are a range of different articles that all speak about how being disrupted by Jesus helps are grow spiritually. Here are a few you can check out:

- **When God Interrupts Your Plans:** <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/when-god-interrupts-your-plans>
- **Be Like Jesus: Embrace Interruptions:** <https://blog.tms.edu/be-like-jesus-embrace-interruptions>
- **When God Disrupts Your Life:** <http://www.thesurrenderedlife.net/latest-articles/when-god-disrupts-your-life>

2. This message mentions that the Sermon on the Mount is a disruptive message. The Bible Project have a detailed study called, **What Is the Sermon on the Mount? Jesus Teaches About the Good Life**. Check it out here: <https://bibleproject.com/articles/what-is-the-sermon-on-the-mount/>