

The Gospel of Luke

Lesson 26: Luke 12:1-34

Amidst growing tensions, Christ encouraged His disciples to maintain eternal perspective. Life is but “*a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away*” (James 1:10), but “*of His kingdom there will be no end*” (Luke 1:33). If this was lost, they’d easily fall prey to their fears, forfeiting kingdom abundance.

The fear of man and the pursuit of material possessions have this in common: they rob man of eternity. The first sacrifices eternal peace on the altar of momentary acceptance; the second forfeits everlasting riches for temporary treasures.

It has been aptly said that “a man has but one life to lose, and one soul to save; and it is madness to sacrifice the salvation of the soul to the preservation of the life” (Clarke).

Read Luke 12:1-12.

1. Define hypocrisy. Why is it aptly likened to leaven?
2. Consider Jesus’ audience. Why might the disciples be susceptible to the Pharisee’s ways?
3. According to verses 2-3, what will become manifest?
4. What reasons do the disciples have to fear? (v.4, 11)

5. How does the fear of man lend itself to hypocrisy? (Consider Peter in Galatians 2:11-14ff.)

6. Jesus assures His disciples (vv.6-7) before He cautions them (vv.8-9). Why must they fear God when they are tempted to succumb to the fear of man?

The “*blaspheme of the Holy Spirit*” (v.10) is the attributing of Christ’s power, works, and testimony to Satan (Luke 11:15, etc.). It is not a sin once committed, but a “settled disposition of life” (Guzik).

Continue reading: Luke 12:13-21.

7. Based on Christ’s reply and illustration, what did the man desire? (v.13)

8. Define covetousness and then read Deuteronomy 5:21. Translate this command into modern terms.

9. What underlying belief fuels covetousness? (Luke 12:15)

10. Verse 15 states that the quality of being (happiness and comfort) is not found in the acquisition and the accumulation of more than one presently possesses. What does it mean to be content? Why is this a struggle for many?

11. Read Hebrews 13:5. In this passage the word *content* means “to be satisfied or to show satisfaction with things as they are”. How does the statement “*I will never leave you nor forsake you*” apply to this concept?

12. Also read Colossians 3:5. To what does this verse equate covetousness? Why?

13. Turn now to Genesis 3 and read verses 1-6. What did Eve desire? Ultimately, whose provision did she question? What resulted?

14. Does all covetousness yield a similar return? Why or why not? Consider 1 Timothy 6:6-10.

15. Return to Luke 12. Examine verses 16-21. What errors are found in the rich fool’s thoughts and actions?

16. How are the rich fool (vv.20-21) and the Rich Young Ruler in Matthew 19:21-22, alike?

17. What additional insight is found in Ecclesiastes 2:18-19 and James 4:13-15?

18. Why isn't the fool rich toward God? (Luke 12:21)

Read Luke 12:22-34.

19. Verse 22 begins, "Therefore... do not worry about your life". What three areas can easily lead to excessiveness and greed? (vv.22-23) Why?

20. According to Christ, can an excessive focus of one's attention upon these matters add to one's stature (the span between life and death)? (v.25; Job 12:10) Reread verse 21, what will occur instead?

21. In what ways does the desire and acquisition of material possessions affect both the rich (vv.13-21) and the impoverished (vv.22-34)?

22. Describe God's provision for the raven and the lily (vv.24, 27-28). Why is it difficult to trust God for these things?

23. What is God's promise to those who seek first His kingdom? (vv.30-32)

Interestingly, Hebrews 11:6 tells us that God is “*a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him*”. The term *rewarder* reveals that God “makes payments in return for services rendered”.

24. Reread verses 33-34 of Luke 12. What will become of earthy treasures (accumulated stored wealth)? How is one liberated by believing in God’s promise?

25. Finally, read 1 Timothy 6:17-19. What instructions are given to those whom God has blessed?

Charles Spurgeon once said, “When men have more than they require for their immediate need, and begin to lay up in storehouses, the dry rot of covetousness, or the blight of hard-heartedness is apt to follow the accumulation; but with God’s blessing it is not so. Prudence arranges the saving, liberality directs the spending, gratitude maintains consecration, and praise sweetens enjoyment.”