

# Luke 11

## Teach Us to Pray — 11:1-13

- *It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place*—We've seen Jesus praying many times, often in the dark of the night or early morning, and at critical times in His life (Luke 3:21; 5:15; 6:12; 9:18, 28-29; 22:32, 40-44; 23:46). Yet nowhere in the gospels do we see the disciples being men of prayer. Jesus was alone in His practice of prayer.
- *after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him*—This was initiated by one of the disciples. Jesus didn't first teach them to pray. He prayed, as an example, and finally, as they observed Him praying, they asked how to do it. This disciple recognized it as a deficiency in his own life, and that Jesus thought it was very important.

## Thoughts and Applications

- Rather than you telling someone prayer is important, they should conclude that by watching you. Is prayer important to you? Do your children ever walk in on you praying?
- Also, notice this disciple was admitting his ignorance about praying and desired to learn. A child bombards us with questions—they crave learning. How often our adult pride stands in the way of admitting we don't know, therefore, giving up the opportunity to learn and grow.
- What would you say is the purpose of prayer? Obedience to God. To show your dependence on Him. To give praise to His name. A way of drawing near to God. To worship Him. To submit to His will.
- *“Lord, teach us to pray*—Obviously, if you want to learn something, you learn it from someone who does it often and well. I want to note here that this is a Jewish prayer, given under the Mosaic Law. It is not a Christian prayer—though, as with all Scripture, it is *profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness...* (2 Timothy 3:16).
- *just as John also taught his disciples*—Though we see John's disciples in several places (Luke 5:33; 7:18; Matthew 11:2; and Acts 19:1–6), there's no record of him teaching his disciples to pray or even of him praying. Though, from this comment, we know he did do that.

Though we are in Luke, I must mention Jesus' other comments on prayer in Matthew 6:5-7:

- *When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full*—The danger of public prayer is that you are praying to be heard by the people around you instead of praying to God.
- *But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you*—prayer should primarily be a private thing between you and God the Father.
- *And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words*—Rote prayers—not allowed!! That's a danger in praying the “Lord's Prayer.” If you pray it, don't let it be a meaningless repetition. Rather, it is a good outline of what your prayer should include. Matthew literally says, “you are, then, to pray in this way.”

*And He said to them, “When you pray, say*—Notice there is no prescribed time and place, or even how often you should pray. It's your choice. This should be the form of our prayers, when we pray.

- “*Father*”—Prayers are to be addressed to God the Father. This also shows our relationship to Him.

### Thoughts and Applications

The Trinity is involved in our prayers:

- We are to pray to God the Father, not to Jesus or to the Holy Spirit, and, for sure, not to Mary or any saints in heaven. [For example, that means you do not say things like, “thank You for dying for my sins.” God the Father did not die for your sins. You should thank Him for Jesus dying for your sins, that He was satisfied with Christ’s payment for our sins, that He loved us enough to send Jesus to die, etc.] **Think when you pray**—don’t be mindless!!
- We pray in Jesus’ name. *...we have confidence to enter the holy place* [the presence of God] *by the blood of Jesus* (Hebrews 10:19).
- *...we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us...He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the [our] spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God* (Romans 8:26-27). The Spirit takes our prayers and intercedes between us and God.
- *hallowed be Your name*—lit. “to set apart or sanctify” or “to treat as holy.” This is usually tied to the prophecy of the next phrase, “Your kingdom come,” at which time God will be treated as holy, kind of like a couplet. However, this phrase is BEFORE the kingdom phrase. Therefore, It seems more fitting that Jesus means that God’s name should be treated holy right now, especially by us, His children. Christians, of all people, should not be using God’s name in vain (in an empty way, lacking respect).

### Thoughts and Applications

Are we still horrified at the seemingly constant blasphemy we hear? Sometimes I immediately pray and tell God how sorry I am that His precious name was treated in such an unholy way—through my ears, into His presence in my heart!!

- *Your kingdom come*—Paul says *we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly...for the redemption of our body...with perseverance we wait eagerly for it* (Romans 8:18-25). Do we pray for the Rapture? Do we pray for the Second Coming, when Jesus will destroy evil and reign in righteousness? Where, *says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall give praise to God* (Romans 14:11)?
  - Matthew includes an expansion of this phrase with *Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven*—that means I am surrendering my will in favor of God’s will.

### Thoughts and Applications

Notice we are to pray for spiritual needs before we pray for physical needs. This first part of the prayer is about God—“Your” name, “Your” kingdom, “Your” will. Now we begin the section on “us.” Give “us,” forgive “us,” lead “us.”

- *‘Give us each day our daily bread*—probably meaning the food we need to eat each day. It sounds a little like manna—give us each day what we need for that day, which was the manna provision. It could be applied as supplying our needs. We know we need food. But it’s a question of what other things are our needs. Maybe health, protection on a journey, etc. He knows we need these things, why pray about it? Because we acknowledge God’s part in meeting these needs.

- *And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.*
  - Remember, He is talking to believers, who address God as “Father.” So this forgiveness is not about salvation but about fellowship with God in the 1 John 1:9 sense.
  - It’s not a forgive all our sins generally. That would just sweep sin under the rug. We need to ask forgiveness for specific sins.
  - If you don’t forgive, you will have bitterness (Hebrews 11:15).
  - Failure to forgive shows our unwillingness to treat others on the same basis of grace that God has treated us (Ephesians 4:32).
  - Failure to forgive is our failure to turn the matter over to the Lord and trust in His sovereign purposes and control (Romans 12:19-21).
  - Unforgiveness, as with any other sin, stands as a barrier to our fellowship with God.
  - Matthew says, “as we forgive...” Ephesians 4:32 says, *“forgiving each other, just as God in Christ has forgiven you.”* God forgiving us our sins each and every day is tied to us forgiving others each and every day. So we forgive **because** God has forgiven us.
  - The Amish, interestingly, say that if they don’t forgive others, then God will not forgive them (not in a fellowship sense, but in a works’ salvation sense). For example, a couple of years ago, a man shot several young Amish girls in a school. Nobody could understand how the Amish (especially the families) could forgive the man so quickly. They **had** to forgive, so God would forgive them. They even made the point that it is not **as** God had forgiven them. (From what I understand, they emphasize the gospels, rather than the epistles, therefore, they have a works/law mentality.)
  
- *And lead us not into temptation*—As in James 1:12-15, the word is πειραζο (*peirzaō*). It means “to test” or “to tempt.” Testing is from God, with the purpose of your maturity. Tempting is from Satan, with the purpose of your sinning. The word here, would be better translated “testing.” Why pray that? Because you may flunk the testing. Testing is a hard thing to go through. For example, Peter had the testing of denying Christ when Satan was sifting him like wheat. Peter was confident he would not fail. But Jesus knew that Peter would not pass the test. Jesus prayed that Peter’s faith would not fail, when he failed the test (Luke 22:31-34).

Jesus tells two stories, each beginning with *suppose*:

*“Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; and from inside he answers and says, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.’ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his **persistence** he will get up and give him as much as he needs—persistence in prayer is the point of this story. Prayer is not an option or for emergency use only. Prayer should be indispensable, a daily need in your life.*

*So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened. What are the things you are asking and seeking? Are you asking to be woman of prayer? Are you asking that God’s name be treated as holy? Are you asking for His kingdom to come? Are you asking that His will to be done on earth, in your life?*

*Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”* Perhaps what they were praying in Acts 1:14.

## **The Evidence — 11:14-16**

*And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute; when the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke*—The miracle was performed. The man speaking was evidence of the miracle. Responses:

- *and the crowds were amazed*—the usual response of the crowd. They were saying, “*This man cannot be the Son of David, can he?*” (Matthew 12:23). Who is Jesus? Eternity depends on that answer. This answer is closer to the truth than a “prophet” or “Elijah.”
- *But some of them* (Pharisees—Matthew 12:24) *said, “He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons”*—i.e., by the power of Satan.
- *Others, to test Him, were demanding of Him a sign from heaven*—What more could He do than what He has already done? But Jesus answers this in v. 29.

## **Thoughts and Applications**

This is what is commonly known as the unforgivable or unpardonable sin—to attribute the work of Jesus to Satan. This forms the turning point in Christ’s ministry. When the Jews said this, Jesus turned from them and began to focus more on the Gentiles.

## **The Beelzebul Charge — 11:17-23**

**Satan would not attack himself—**

*But He knew their thoughts and said to them, “Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and a house divided against itself falls*—Satan wouldn’t harm himself, would he?

- *If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand?* If Satan is casting out Satan, they why are they worried? Satan is defeating himself. But, of course, Satan would not do that.
- *For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? By Satan, also? So they will be your judges.* Evidently, there was so much demon possession at the time, even the Jews were casting them out. But what was their standard of evaluation?
- *But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you*—The very thing they do not want to admit. It’s one thing to not accept it. It’s quite something else to attribute Jesus and His work to Satan. That is unpardonable.

**Only One more powerful than Satan can take away his possessions—**

*When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are undisturbed.*

- *But when someone [God] stronger than he [Satan] attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied and distributes his plunder [casts out the demons].*
- *He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me, scatters*—If you are not for God, you are against God.

## **Thoughts and Applications**

There is no neutral ground. You are either for God or for Satan. It’s a dangerous place to be.

## **Neutrality toward Jesus Is Hospitality toward Demons — 11:24-26**

*When the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and not finding any, it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came’*—Jesus cast the demon out of the mute man, but if that man does not come to faith in Christ, he is available to the demon once again. Man in his own power cannot keep the demon away. Only Christ has power over the demon. Again, no neutral ground.

- *And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order—but empty, God is not there*
- *Then it goes and takes along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there—shows there are degrees of evil among the demons. And people can be possessed by many demons.*
- *and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first—because he has more demons in him, and he was free of demons at one time, so he had an opportunity to choose to stay that way by having faith in Jesus.*

### **Thoughts and Applications**

Man cannot get rid of demons. Jesus just showed that only God has power over the demons. But once the demons are gone, they look for empty places (minds) in which to live. That's one reason old people and children are more susceptible to demons. If the Holy Spirit does not live in a person, then they are available to demons.

### **A Woman's Misplaced Praise — 11:27-28**

*While Jesus was saying these things, one of the women in the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You and the breasts at which You nursed"—i.e., a blessing for Mary, the mother of Jesus, and her blessing in bearing and nursing Jesus.*

- *But He said, "On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it"—Her focus was on Mary. She should have been focusing on Jesus and obeying His words. God the Father said, "This is My Son, ...listen to Him" (Luke 9:35).*

### **Thoughts and Applications**

This ought to be very convicting to a Roman Catholic!! Often in a society, a queen mother will be honored. Even Bathsheba was honored as King Solomon's mother (1 Kings 2:19). But that's from a human perspective. If Jesus was a mere human, that might be appropriate, BUT Jesus is not a mere human. He is God. So He should get all the glory, not His mother.

### **The Sin of Sign-Seeking — 11:29-32**

*As the crowds were increasing, He began to say, "This generation is a wicked generation; it seeks for a sign—Sign-seeking means the words of God are not enough, they demand miraculous works. Even when Satan tempted Christ, it was to perform a miraculous work. But Jesus answered that the Word of God was sufficient. Jesus casting out the demon from the mute man was meant to be interpreted via His words after that.*

- *and yet no sign will be given to it—There are at least 20 some more recorded miracles. But they are really repeats of earlier miracles. No new types of miracles would happen—except for one—His own resurrection.*
- *but the sign of Jonah. For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites—Jonah's message to Nineveh was one short sentence, "Yet forty days and Nineveh will perish" (and probably not said very kindly!). They had no miracles. Just 7 words.*
  - *so will the Son of Man be to this generation—*
- *The Queen of the South will rise up with the men of this generation at the judgment—It sounds like the Queen was not a believer. She simply listened to Solomon's wisdom.*
  - *and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon—the wisest king on earth*
  - *and behold, something greater than Solomon is here—greater than all of Solomon's wisdom*

- *The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment*—They are at the judgment with the generation that lived at the time of Jesus.
- *and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah*— They repented after 7 words. Unbelievable. Yet what Jesus did was more awesome than that.
  - *and behold, something greater than Jonah is here*—Think of how much more the generation at the time of Jesus heard and saw. They are accountable for so much.

### Thoughts and Applications

- Notice that both of these examples are Gentiles. Yet because of what they believed, they will condemn the unbelief of the Jews.
- The belief that God commended was based on words, not works. No miracle was a part of the belief of these Gentile examples. When Jesus asked the disciples if they would leave Him, they responded, *“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life”* (John 6:68).
- People kept wanting more miracles rather than hearing the message Jesus was giving. One miracle was not enough. A person always wants more.
- In the story of Lazarus and the rich man in Luke 16, the rich man in Hades wanted Lazarus to go from the dead to warn his brothers. But Abraham (in Paradise) said, they have the Scriptures. That is enough.
- If they think Jesus cast out the demon because of the power of Satan, why do they want more of that?
- Seeking for signs is not evidence of faith, it is evidence of unbelief!!

### The Eyes Are the Problem — 11:33-36

*No one, after lighting a lamp, puts it away in a cellar nor under a basket, but on the lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light*—The purpose of light is to give light. Jesus was the light. He did not speak in secret. This generation of men will not perish due to lack of light, i.e., evidence of the truth. No one denied the miracle Jesus did in casting out the demon. It was their interpretation or conclusion that was so wrong. The evidence did not convince or convert these men. But the problem was not with the evidence Jesus produced but with the eyes that saw it. This is similar to the parable of the soils that did or did not receive the seed.

- *The eye is the lamp of your body; when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light*
- *but when it is bad, your body also is full of darkness.*
- *Then watch out that the light in you is not darkness.*
- *If therefore your whole body is full of light, with no dark part in it, it will be wholly illumined, as when the lamp illumines you with its rays.”*

### Thoughts and Applications

We need to clear our presuppositions from our minds so we can hear what God’s Word really says.

- *The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes* (Psalm 19:8).
- *For in his own eyes he flatters himself too much to detect or hate his sin* (Psalm 36:2).
- *Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law* (Psalm 119:18).
- *Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil* (Proverbs 3:7).
- *They know nothing, they understand nothing; their eyes are plastered over so they cannot see, and their minds closed so they cannot understand* (Isaiah 44:18)
- *Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see* (Luke 10:23).
- *The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the*

*gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God (2 Corinthians 4:4).*

- *I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints (Ephesians 1:18).*

The key to interpretation is NOT to ask what the passage means to you. You must ask: What does it mean? When you find out what it means, then you apply it to yourself, where you are. Don't jump from observation to application!!

## **The Condemnation of the Pharisees — 11:37-54**

The Pharisees were the biblical fundamentalists of Jesus' day. The sect started in the inter-testament times. When the Jews were in the Babylonian Captivity and the temple had been destroyed, they began synagogues as places of worship. Because the priests functioned at the temple, laymen became the leaders of the synagogues. Most were educated as scribes, lawyers, rabbis, etc. They recognized that Israel's condition was the result of the sin of disobedience to the Mosaic Law (as the Mosaic Covenant clearly stated—Deuteronomy 28–30). So they tried to encourage obedience to the Law, thereby producing holiness and paving the way for God to establish His kingdom on earth. They believed in the supernatural, in Satan, angels, and the resurrection of the dead. They also believed in the inspiration and authority of the Old Testament, but they emphasized the Law and neglected the prophets. By Jesus' time, the "oral law" and their many interpretations of that Law (called the Talmud) became their primary focus. By the time of Christ, their traditions actually replaced the Law, and if the two conflicted, tradition won.

Jesus had several problems with the Pharisees. First was their self-righteousness. They felt they were spiritually superior to others and pleasing in God's sight. Second was their mishandling of the Old Testament Scriptures. Third was their traditions, to which they gave higher priority than God's revealed Word. Fourth was their resistance to Himself, and their efforts to discredit Him and to turn the nation from Him. [Deffinbaugh, *bible.org*]

## **The Inside vs. the Outside — 11:37-41**

- *Now when He had spoken, a Pharisee asked Him to have lunch with him; and He went in, and reclined at the table—*We don't know why the Pharisee invited Jesus to his house.
- *When the Pharisee saw it, he was surprised that He had not first ceremonially washed before the meal—*This was the washing required by the traditions of the Pharisees rather than by the Law itself. Mark 7:1-4 explains this a little more. *The Pharisees...had seen that some of His disciples were eating their bread with impure hands, that is, unwashed. (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the traditions of the elders; and when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves; and there are many other things which they have received in order to observe, such as the washing of cups and pitchers and copper pots.)* We don't know whether Jesus ever observed this tradition (I think He did not, as Mark noted Jesus' disciples did not observe it). But here, for sure, Jesus deliberately did not observe this tradition, to make clear the differences between Himself, His teaching, and His practices and those of the Pharisees.
- *But the Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and of the platter; but inside of you, you are full of robbery and wickedness—*
  - Jesus differs from the Pharisees in that He sees the inside as more important than the outside, the heart attitude as more important than outward appearances, man's motives and attitudes as more important than one's actions.
  - The Pharisees believed that a person is made holy by working from the outside, in. Jesus believed that holiness came from the inside, out.

- God’s intent with the Law was to be a matter of the spirit, on the inside of a person. For example, “do not covet” is a heart matter. Malachi points out that the Jews were bringing blind and lame animals to the sacrifices. They were outwardly obeying, but their heart was not. Malachi even said, “Try paying your taxes with those lame animals,” the government would not accept them, why should God accept them? The Pharisees, however, turned the Law into outward actions.

### Thoughts and Applications

A man who went out to a rural church to preach, where he spent the night at the home of a farmer. In the morning, the farmer’s wife fixed breakfast. She went out to the hen house to gather some eggs. When she came in with the eggs, this preacher noted that they had some of the barnyard on them, which the woman had not washed off. He didn’t worry about it, though, because she put the eggs into boiling water to cook. The pollution of that water couldn’t hurt the eggs, protected as they were by their shells. The woman then asked him if he would like a cup of coffee. He gratefully accepted, only to be [horrified] as he watched the woman put instant coffee into a cup and then pour the dirty egg water into it. What is on the inside of the cup is more important to us than what is on the outside. [Deffinbaugh, *bible.org*]

- *You foolish ones, did not He who made the outside make the inside also?*—The Pharisees’ logic was that God made the outside (of the cup). But Jesus is pointing out that using this logic, God made the inside also. Here the Pharisees were in trouble because they looked good on the outside but God knew that *inside of you, you are full of robbery and wickedness*.
- *But give that which is within as charity, and then all things are clean for you*—robbery is taking from others what doesn’t belong to you. So Jesus told them to start with charity, giving to others. That would begin their journey toward righteousness. Of course, they wouldn’t do that.

### The Three Woes Directed to Pharisees — 11:42-44

1. *But woe to you Pharisees! For you pay tithe of mint and rue [a plant with thick leaves] and every kind of garden herb, and yet disregard justice and the love of God; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.*
  - “Woe” is more of an expression of grief than it is a condemnation. Think of “woe is me.” It means misery, distress, sorrow, heartache, disaster, suffering, hardship.
  - The Pharisees majored in the minors. Try to imagine giving 10% of every single herb in your garden! It’s meticulous beyond belief.
  - Jesus didn’t say to not do this tithe, but He did put it in a priority. Of a higher priority was to practice justice and the love of God.

### Thoughts and Applications

This is true in all of life. You must set priorities. For example, what good is it to clean my house if I don’t pick up my child from school? There are first things and secondary things. Wisdom is to know which is which. Sadly, too many Christians put spending time with God in His Word as a secondary thing.

2. *Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the chief seats in the synagogues and the respectful greetings in the market places.*
  - Although Jesus said they were *full of robbery and wickedness*, people did not publically regard the Pharisees as such. They loved the approval of men more than the approval of God.
  - If they would tell the truth and teach the Scriptures accurately, they would have been hated and rejected, as the Old Testament prophets were and as Jesus was.



- I just read an article in *Worldview Weekend* about pastors with a “rock star” mentality—having body guards, being unavailable to talk to “common” people, etc. They love the chief seats and respectful greetings, but the “sheep” also want to give them the chief seats, etc.
  - By the way, it would seem that some, or perhaps many, of those in the market places who gave them respectful greetings would be Gentiles, whom they considered to be unclean. Therefore, in order to keep getting these important greetings, they came up with the “law” of washing their hands, to remove the Gentile defilement.
3. *Woe to you! For you are like concealed tombs, and the people who walk over them are unaware of it.”*
- Numbers 19:16 says, *...anyone who...touches...a human bone or a grave, shall be unclean...* Jesus said the Pharisees are like hidden graves, so the people touch them, unaware they are touching graves, i.e., becoming unclean. The self-righteous Pharisees thought they were holy and anyone touching them would be touching holiness. But Jesus said, Not so.

### Thoughts and Applications

Jude makes a similar comparison to the false teachers of our day. He says in verse 12, *These are the men who are hidden reefs in your love feasts [Communion] when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted.* The falseness of these teachers is hidden. They participate with us, even in Communion, but they are not true believers. They just have the appearance of being believers. Anyone who follows them becomes unclean, i.e., are being led away from God and His Word.

### The Three Woes Directed to Lawyers — 11:45-52

These are not lawyers in the sense that we understand the word. These experts were the teachers of the Law. They were a small group within the larger group of Pharisees.

- *One of the lawyers said to Him in reply, “Teacher, when You say this, You insult us too”*—By speaking of all the Pharisees, Jesus was also including these “experts” in the Law.
1. *But He said, “Woe to you lawyers as well! For you weigh men down with burdens hard to bear, while you yourselves will not even touch the burdens with one of your fingers*—In Psalm 119, David speaks of the Law as a delight, but when these experts got done with the Law, it turned in to a burden, an unbearable code of conduct. It was so complicated, even they could not understand or obey it. Remember, their motivation in their hearts was *robbery and wickedness*. Also, the purpose of the Law was not to make a person righteous but to point out sin and the person’s need of redemption (Romans 3:20). But the Pharisees turned it into something they felt self-righteous about keeping.

### Thoughts and Applications

For example, an adult might tell a child to lie about their age so they can get into an event for a cheaper price. If they succeed, usually the adult will feel a self-righteous pride at being shrewd and saving money, etc. They define it as “good,” but Jesus says it is robbery and wickedness.

2. *Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and it was your fathers who killed them. So you are witnesses and approve the deeds of your fathers; because it was they who killed them, and you build their tombs.*
- As already mentioned, the Pharisees emphasized the Law but ignored the prophets (which prophesied of the coming Messiah). Also, one of the main jobs of the prophets was to point

out sin in people and call for their repentance, to turn back to God. By building tombs for these prophets, they were giving the **impression** that they supported their message, when in reality, they wanted nothing to do with their message.

- *For this reason also the wisdom of God said, 'I will send to them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and some they will persecute, so that the blood of all the prophets, shed since the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation'*—This generation killed the prophet John the Baptist, they will kill Jesus, and the apostles. The Pharisees are no different than those who killed the prophets in the Old Testament. The very things they condemned, they were guilty of themselves.
  - *from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the house of God*—This is an extremely important verse. Here Jesus is declaring the Old Testament to be Scripture and giving its boundaries. The Hebrew Old Testament started with Genesis (Abel—Genesis 4:8) and finished with 2 Chronicles (Zechariah being the last recorded martyr—see 2 Chronicles 24:20-21). So Jesus was essentially saying, from the first murder to the last murder in the Old Testament. [The inter-testament Catholic Apocryphal books are not quoted in the New Testament.]
  - *yes, I tell you, it shall be charged against this generation*—the prophets prophesied of the coming of Christ. So in killing Christ, it was like killing the prophets and their messages.
3. *Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge; you yourselves did not enter, and you hindered those who were entering.*"
- The *key of knowledge* is the knowledge of the Scriptures. The lawyers were the self-appointed experts in the Mosaic Law, but they were withholding and concealing the truth of the Scriptures. And they were pushing people away from the Scriptures.

### Thoughts and Applications

The danger of having “experts” is that the lay person is told they cannot understand the Bible by themselves.

### Conclusion — 11:53-54

*When He left there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to be very hostile and to question Him closely on many subjects, plotting against Him to catch Him in something He might say*—Instead of repenting, they responded with rejection and resentment. They try to prove Jesus to be incompetent in the Scriptures. The cross is fast approaching.

### Thoughts and Applications

- How can people who seem committed to the Scriptures stray so far away from those Scriptures? By perverting those Scriptures. Doing what the Pharisees did by emphasizing one part of Scripture and ignoring the rest of the Bible. For example, Covenant Theology allegorizes prophecy. But Paul wrote, *there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!* (Galatians 1:7-8).
- Another danger is to focus on outward acts or appearances, rather than the heart. Often cleaning up only the outside tends only to corrupt the inside even more because pride and self-righteousness are added to our list of inner evils. But Jesus said that holiness begins inside and works out. For example, as parents we spend a lot of time trying to correct outward behavior of children, but how much time do we spend in the Word with them, instructing them in holiness of their hearts? It is the Spirit of God, working through the Word of God, which exposes our sins and produces holiness. Then that holiness works its way outward into one’s actions.

# Luke 12

We ended the last chapter with *the Pharisees began to be very hostile toward Christ (11:53)*.

## Hypocrisy — 12:1-12

- *Under these circumstances, after so many thousands of people had gathered together that they were stepping on one another*—Jesus had just been verbally attacking the Pharisees, the Jews’ religious leaders, now the crowd of people was crammed together, even stepping on one another.
- *He began saying to His disciples first of all*—the crowd may hear it, but the message is to the disciples
- *Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees*—Jesus warns the disciples to be careful. The hypocrisy of the Pharisees was like leaven—it’s a silent killer. It spreads, and it is unstoppable even if there is just a little bit.
- *which is hypocrisy*—Jesus had just described their hypocrisy as wanting to appear holy on the outside but inside they were far from holy—like whitewashed tombs.

## Thoughts and Applications

What exactly is hypocrisy?

1. Hypocrites adjust and accommodate their appearance to what people think or feel. It’s looking like you agree with someone’s (or group’s) values, when they are not your values.
2. When there is a discrepancy between what appears on the outside, which in reality is different from what is on the inside.
3. It’s deliberately appearing to be what we are not, i.e., it’s not accidental, it’s purposeful. It’s a deliberate charade.
4. Hypocrisy is acting in such a way that people will come to the wrong conclusion. Also, our words represent us in a way that is not true to fact.
5. Hypocrisy is sin. Jesus said, *...you are not to be like the hypocrites...* (Matthew 6:5).
6. It is a deliberate deception, with either a positive or negative motivation. Often, we are hypocritical either to achieve men’s praise (the Pharisees) or to avoid persecution (disciples).

## Hypocrisy to Hide the Truth — 12:2-3

*But there is nothing covered up that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known. Accordingly, whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in the inner rooms will be proclaimed upon the housetops*—In our time, we think we can hide our sins. Hiding the truth (hypocrisy) is pointless because sooner or later all truth will be evident to all. You cannot hide the Gospel. Trying to conceal it is like trying to hide the sun. It’s pointless.

## Thoughts and Applications

You may think with a particular person that you will not mention you are a Christian. And what does the person say, “So-and-so has mentioned you.....” It’s not secret, even if you try to hide it.

## Hypocrisy to Hide Fear — 12:4-7

- *I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do*—in fact, most of the disciples would be killed for their faith, just like the OT prophets were killed.
- *But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him!*—Jesus was not minimizing the fact that they would be killed but rather putting death into perspective. Physical death is not what should be feared. Spiritual death—where you spend eternity—that should be the true fear.

- *Are not five sparrows sold for two cents? Yet not one of them is forgotten before God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows—*A sparrow is the cheapest most common bird. Yet they are not forgotten by God. God has great care for His people. Nothing happens to them outside His knowledge, love, and care. To God, people are *more valuable* than animals!!! What a shocker!!!

### Thoughts and Applications

Because Jesus has the keys of heaven and hell, physical death only brings us into His presence. So what need is there, then, to fear men and be a hypocrite?

### Hypocrisy of Denial — 12:8-10

- *And I say to you [disciples], everyone [who is a believer] who confesses [to say the same, to pledge allegiance to] Me before men [an indication they are a believer], the Son of Man will confess him also before the angels of God—*
- *but he [unbeliever] who denies [to refuse to admit the truth or existence of] Me before men [an indication they are not a believer] will be denied before the angels of God.*
- *And everyone [unbeliever] who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but he [unbeliever] who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him.*

### Thoughts and Applications

- To confess Christ on earth may bring negative consequences, but for Christ to confess us to God is to bring reward.
- The hypocrisy here is when a person has accepted Christ, but then for some reason, perhaps persecution, they *deny Me before men*.
- Though what is known as the “unpardonable” sin in 11:17-23 is a historical sin committed against the physical person of Jesus when the Pharisees accused Him of being from Satan, here we see another sin that cannot be forgiven. This time, it is when an unbeliever is so hardened in their heart that they reject Jesus Christ as his or her Savior. It’s the Holy Spirit who convicts people of the need to accept Christ. So to reject Christ is to blaspheme, have disregard for, the Holy Spirit, who is convicting them to come to Christ.

### Hypocrisy during Religious Persecution — 12:11-12

*When they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not worry about how or what you are to speak in your defense, or what you are to say; for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.*

- Notice Jesus did not say “if” but “when”—persecution will be coming to the disciples.
- They were not to worry ahead of time about their defense. For one thing, they don’t even know what they will be accused of, so they can’t prepare for it. They also may have a tendency to be hypocritical thinking about it ahead of time. Also, they might be tempted to avoid situations and confrontations so they wouldn’t be persecuted.
- The Holy Spirit will be with them in a special way when the time comes. This is a promise to the disciples, not to us.

### Thoughts and Applications

- Jesus is not talking about hypocrisy in general but as to what pertains to the proclaiming of the Gospel. For example, the Pharisees perverted the message of the OT into a gospel of works rather than of faith. So they were leading people away from the Messiah.
- One of the most famous hypocrisies was of Peter when he visited Antioch (Galatians 2). Peter was eating with the Gentile converts, but when the Jewish converts came for a visit, Peter quit eating with the Gentiles. Paul called him out on it. Peter's action was an attack on the Gospel itself. Either the Gentile converts and the Jewish converts were all a part of Christ's body, the church, or they weren't. Peter was acting like they were not.
- If Jesus warned His disciples about religious hypocrisy at their time, we can certainly expect it is an issue also in our time. It might take the form of keeping quiet or of distorting the Gospel, saying it promises riches, healing, or whatever the person is looking for, when it doesn't.
- One form of hypocrisy is the most dangerous. It is the false teachers, who say they are Christian but they are not. They distort the Gospel. They preach a works' salvation.

### **Greed — 12:13-21**

- *Someone in the crowd [many thousands of people had gathered—v. 1] said to Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me”*—Perhaps he thought, with Jesus being so popular with the crowds, His answer would influence the brother, who was probably there as part of the crowd and would hear the answer.
- In Deuteronomy 21:17 we're told the inheritance was to be divided among the sons, with the first-born son getting a double portion.
- *But He said to him, “Man, who appointed Me a judge or arbitrator over you?”*
- *Then He said to them [the man and his brother?], “[1] Beware—keep your eyes open, be on the lookout, watch your step because this danger does exist.*
- *and [2] be on your guard—take positive action to ward off a foe—to resist it as an evil in your own life.*
- *against every [all possible] form [appearance, shape, kind, sort, type, category, brand, style] of greed [covetousness, gluttony, self-indulgence, appetite, craving, longing, lust—it's an insatiable desire for more].* Most people define greed as a desire for excessive wealth. But here Jesus broadens the definition to every area of life, not just wealth.
- Both of these brothers were guilty of greed, one for not sharing the inheritance with his brother and the other for not getting any of the inheritance.
- *for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions*—Life does not consist of things—even an abundance of things. If things don't satisfy, then more things won't satisfy more. With greed, there is never, ever enough.
- *And He told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man was very productive. And he began reasoning to himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?’ Then he said, ‘This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry”*—What's particularly interesting is that this man didn't appear to spend the money on himself in the beginning. He worked hard and had the discipline to save it. He thought of the future and prepared for it. Jesus did not condemn him for those things.
- *“But God—two of the most startling words in the Bible*
- *said to him, ‘You fool [mindless]!’—God didn't consider him wise at all. God thought he was a fool. The man failed to plan for the one certain 100% event each person will face—death.*

- *This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?*—The day is appointed for when you will die. You don't know when that is.
- *“So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”*
  1. The man seems to have no regard for God at all. The man did not even use wisdom or hard work to get his wealth. And he never thanked God for it.
  2. The man did not understand what to do with his wealth. First, it was to be used for sacrifices and offerings in worship of God. Second, when he already had full barns, why didn't he use the excess to minister to others? Instead, he hoarded even more by building even bigger barns.
  3. He was foolish in that he saw his riches as his security. It also seems that he was planning to retire. To sit around for many years and be at *ease, eat, drink, and be merry*. Just spend it on living the good life.
  4. But he made two bad mistakes: he thought he would possess his wealth in the future and he thought he would be alive in the future, to enjoy his possessions. Both of these were false. Someone else got his possessions, and he did not live to enjoy what he stored up.
  5. This rich man did seem to have some thought for the future, but that future did not include God, death, or the judgment to come. He only thought of his future as far as his own earthly life and interests went.

### Thoughts and Applications

- Your view of the future determines your present conduct. The rich fool was correct to think and plan for the future, but he had the wrong future in mind.
- The rich fool planned to *eat, drink, and be merry* because he thought he would live. Others think they should *eat, drink, and be merry* today because they are going to die (1 Corinthians 15:32). However, the Bible says to lay up treasure in heaven, the eating, drinking, and being merry is for our future in heaven, not for now.
- What does your life consist of? Satan wants to convince us that our life consists of our possessions. But Satan is a murderer and a liar (John 8:44). He tried to convince Eve that what God said was life was really death, and what God said was death was really life. He uses the same reasoning today. And people believe it!! Jesus said, you *must deny yourself*, not indulge yourself (Matthew 16:24). The more a person looks to earthly treasure for security, sustenance, or significance, the less concern she or he will have in seeking satisfaction from God.
- And what's with the idea of retirement? We may change what our work is as we get older, but to think that now you can sit around in some kind of extended vacation is to waste your most productive years—when you know the most and have the most to give in ministering to others. And you can still learn!!
- A person is not ready to live until he or she is ready to die.

### Possessions — 12:22-34

- *And He said to His disciples*—They did not have many possessions. Yet even a poor person can be preoccupied with the accumulation of possessions. A poorer person has their version of greed just as a richer person has their version. But Jesus covered both when He said *be on your guard against every form of greed*.
- *“For this reason*—What He said in verse 15, *Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions*
- *I say to you, do not worry* [lit. mind being distracted] *about your life, as to what you will eat; nor for your body, as to what you will put on*—the rich man stored up large amounts of food for his

plan to have a future of pleasure and abundance. The poor can be just as preoccupied with getting food for their next meal or with clothing to wear.

- *For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing*—this is the truth, whether you are rich or poor. So worrying about that is wrong.

### Thoughts and Applications

- Just to illustrate that you really think this, consider a child seriously ill in a hospital room. Would you be worried about what they eat or what they wear? Life is more than that.
  - When Jesus had gone 40 days without eating, remember what Satan tempted Him to do? To command the stones to become bread. But Jesus said, “*Man shall not live on bread alone*” (Luke 4:4). Jesus was saying that life is more than just physical existence. If obeying God’s Word required abstaining from food, Jesus would gladly choose to do that. It was the path of true life.
  - In John 14:6, 32-35, Jesus said Moses gave the Israelites manna, but God gives us the true bread, which gives eternal life, and Jesus then said, “*I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.*”
1. Food illustration—*Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap; they have no storeroom nor barn, and yet God feeds them; how much more valuable you are than the birds!*—The raven is an unclean bird to the Jews, so they would look down on it as “unworthy.” Also, these birds do not work for food by sowing or reaping, and in contrast to the rich man, they don’t store any food for the future either. Yet God provides for its daily needs.
- *And which of you by worrying* [different word we get “meteor” from—lit. “up in the air” or “suspended in space” (spaced out)] *can add a single hour to his life’s span? If then you cannot do even a very little thing, why do you worry about other matters?*—Worrying accomplishes nothing.

### Thoughts and Applications

I must admit—adding a single hour to my life span doesn’t seem like a *very little thing* to me, especially compared to food to eat or clothes to wear. But Jesus’ point is that worrying cannot accomplish any of those things or anything else. To worry means to let one’s mind dwell on difficulties or troubles, to cause to feel anxiety or concern. Let’s use an extreme example: if the doctor says you may have a cancerous tumor, and you must wait for the test results, will worrying make the tumor not exist? Worrying accomplishes nothing.

2. Clothing illustration—*Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; but I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these*—these beautiful flowers do nothing to create their beauty. *But if God so clothes the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace*—In fact, their life is very short—here today, gone tomorrow. And their future is grim—cast into a furnace.
- *how much more will He clothe you? You men of little faith!*—Faith is the opposite of worry. Worry disregards God’s care, His love, and His promises.

### Thoughts and Applications

One difficult aspect of this is that possessions are material temporal things. You can see them. Faith is rooted in what is not seen (2 Corinthians 4:18; Hebrews 12:1). It’s eternal. So when we seek after material things like food and clothing, we are seeking after things we can see, and are, therefore, living by sight rather than by faith. *So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ*

(Romans 10:17). Heaven and earth, and its material possessions, will pass away, but God's Word is eternal.

- *And do not **seek** what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not keep worrying. For all these things the nations of the world eagerly seek; but your Father knows that you **need** these things.*

### Thoughts and Applications

What is the difference between “needing” and “seeking”? Needing is a basic necessity. Seeking is to desire, to search for something. For example, you “need” clothes, but what clothes do you “seek”?

- *But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you—Don't worry about material things. Replace worry with faith. Acquire faith by making God's Word a priority in your life.*
- *Do not be afraid, little flock—Jesus compared the disciples to a “flock” of sheep or goats—some of the most helpless animals, and together they were “little.” Their faith was not to be in themselves, or even themselves in a group. Faith was to be in the Good Shepherd. He protects and provides.*
- *for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom—Seek the very thing that God has chosen to gladly give you—His kingdom.*
- *Sell your possessions and give to charity—it's the mentality, be a giver, not a hoarder*

### Thoughts and Applications

1. Notice He said to “*sell*” your possessions. Jesus did not command the disciples to give their food or their clothes to the poor. [Actually, John the Baptist said, *Let the man who has two tunics share with him who has none; and let him who has food do likewise* (Luke 3:11).] It seems to me that what He suggests we sell are the luxury, or unnecessary, things. Often, we worry about necessities such as food and clothing, while our closets and storage rooms are overflowing with things that could be (and should be?) sold and then you would have money to give to help others. Also, we are so good at adding to the list of what is “essential.” (Have you ever gone to Sams and spent \$200 and come home with no food?) This section started by telling us to not worry about necessities like food and clothing, like we are barely surviving. But it ends by telling us to sell off some of our stuff. We are so good at giving the impression we are in dire straits, that we have even convinced ourselves we are in trouble, and so we worry about these material needs.
  2. If we are going to “sell” something, we need a buyer, i.e., it must have value to us and to someone else. The “Goodwill mindset” is that we give away to the poor that which we don't want and what no one else wants either—what didn't sell at the garage sale! What we sell (of value to you) will be more painful than what we give away (what you didn't want anyway).
  3. People often sell one thing in order to buy another thing. Jesus says that we should sell our stuff so that we invest in heavenly treasure, what is far more valuable than our earthly stuff.
  4. Also, if our money is tied up in stuff, it's hard to give. But if you sell your stuff, then you are liquid, you have the money to use to obtain heavenly treasure.
  5. “Sell” and “give”—giving should cost you something. It's a sacrifice of worship to God. Most people give out of their surplus. Giving should make a difference in your lifestyle. *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...* It cost God to give to us.
- *make yourselves money belts which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*



## Thoughts and Applications

- Why didn't Jesus here say, "Don't worry, pray, 'Give us each day our daily bread'"? We won't pray for our daily bread because we don't need to. If we were really in need, we would pray. Our lack of prayer is almost in direct proportion to our affluence. It's a sad fact of life that we "ask not because we have." James says that when we ask, we don't ask for our needs, ... *you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures* (James 4:3).
  - Jesus didn't say, as He did to the rich young ruler, to sell **all** their possessions. He just said to sell possessions.
  - Later in Luke, Jesus will again be talking about possessions. This passage is just one lesson on it. We are to use money shrewdly, and selling may not always be the best thing to do. His point here is to use your money and your treasures to gain eternal treasures. Sure, you can accumulate treasure on earth, but then you have your treasure now, and it is not eternal. Why not invest in eternal treasure? We all care about our lifestyle on earth, don't you care about your lifestyle in heaven for eternity?
  - Jesus doesn't ask us to do anything which He has not done Himself, and more. No one will ever have given up as much as He did in leaving heaven. No one was ever as rich as He, nor have they become as poor as He (Philippians 2:5-8).
  - Notice the contrast of values in this text:
    - Life is more than food
    - The body is more than clothing
    - We are of greater value to God than birds or the lilies of the field
    - Treasures on earth are of little value, because they do not last
    - Treasures in heaven are of great value, because they last
    - Seeking God's kingdom is much more important than seeking material things
- Satan is constantly trying to reverse our values. He wants us to act like the rich man, and keep packing away our treasures in our storerooms. Only God's Word can be trusted to define our values.
- God doesn't care how much you have. Whether you have a little or a lot, God wants your devotion to be to Him above all, and He wants you to use what He has given to you for His kingdom.
  - J. I. Packer said, "Life's surest certainty is that one day we will leave worldly pleasure, profit, and privilege behind. The only uncertainty is whether these things will leave us before our time comes to leave them."

## Be Ready and Wait — 12:35-48

### Three Characteristics of Waiting (12:35-36):

1. *Be dressed in readiness*—lit., "having their loins girded," their outer robe would be tucked in so they could work.
2. *keep your lamps lit*—the image is of a lamp burning in the house of the master for him to see and for them to see him, i.e. make preparations, ready for the master's coming home
3. *Be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast, so that they may immediately open the door to him when he comes and knocks*—the master would be full of joy, having come from a marriage feast, and his servants would joyfully welcome him home.

### A Promised Blessing (12:37-38)

*Blessed are those slaves whom the master will find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at the table, and will come up and wait on them. Whether he comes in the second watch, or even in the third, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves—*It almost seems impossible—the master will serve those slaves. He will wait on them at the table, that’s why they are blessed. Even if it is the second or third watch, for the believer, waiting only enhances the expectation of the Master’s arrival.

### **Thoughts and Applications**

- Serving, in our culture as well as the Jewish one, is seen as a demeaning task. But Jesus elevated it to a place of great privilege and honor.
- Leading is not a contradiction to serving but is a form of serving. Our culture views leadership as an opportunity for others to serve you, but the Bible says leadership is a form of service (Mark 10:42-45; 1 Peter 5:1-3).
- We know Jesus came to serve at His first coming (Mark 10:45; Luke 22:27), but He will also serve at His Second Coming. He will reward those He finds faithful.
- Serving is not demeaning. It is to our glory.

### **Words of Warning (12:39-40)**

*But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into. You too, be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect.*

- In the previous example, Jesus is portrayed as the master. In this example, He is portrayed as a thief. In the first, the master owns the house, in the second, the thief is viewed as the unwanted, unauthorized taker and the owner loses all his possessions. In the first, the master is welcomed and let in the door. In the second, the thief is not welcome and enters by breaking in.
- In the first story, there is a loving bond between the servants and the master. The servants await His return because of who He is. In the second story, the home owner does not know the thief and he doesn’t want to, either. He hopes the thief never comes because His coming will mean loss for the owner.
- Obviously, the servants in the first story are believers. Those in the second story are those who have rejected Jesus and do not want to see Him, because His coming only means the loss of those things which they value the most, which will be taken away, like the rich fool lost his possessions.
- One thing is the same in both stories: neither the servants nor the homeowner know the time that the Lord will return. The delay in His coming produces two different results: for the believer, the anticipation and expectation grows; for the unbeliever, the response is in verse 45.

### **Peter’s Question (12:41-44)**

*Peter said, “Lord, are You addressing this parable to us, or to everyone else as well?”*

- *And the Lord said, “Who then is the faithful and sensible [uses her mind] steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes—*It seems like the sensible steward is referring to the disciples. The master is Jesus at His Second Coming. The servants are “his,” so they would be other believers in heaven.
- *Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions—*Reward in heaven.

### **Thoughts and Applications**

Each one of us is given a stewardship (a family, no family, health, sickness, wealth, no wealth, spiritual gifts of mercy, service, teaching, etc.). Stewardship is a responsibility for looking after something that belongs to someone else. Everything belongs to God. He's given you the responsibility of part of it. What you do with it here on earth will determine your responsibilities in heaven.

### **Warning about Divine Judgment (12:45-48)**

*But if that slave says in his heart, 'My master will be a long time in coming,' and begins to beat the slaves, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk; the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers. And that slave who knew his master's will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes, but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.*

- This is a difficult passage. Let's start at the end. This slave will be put in *a place with the unbelievers...will receive many lashes...* Matthew 24:48-51 adds, *where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth*—most certainly the Lake of Fire, commonly known as hell.
- The question is, Who is the servant? Obviously, it is someone who is an unbeliever because they end up in hell. It seems to me this passage is teaching that there are unbelievers who know a lot about Jesus, yet they don't accept Him as their Savior. Probably many people who sit in our churches today. Because they know more about Jesus and rejected Him, much will be required of them. Those unbelievers who do not know about Jesus will still go to hell, but their punishment will somehow be less (see Revelation 20:11-15). Yes, that means degrees of punishment in hell.

### **Thoughts and Applications**

- Those who eagerly anticipate Jesus' Second Coming are those who eagerly accepted His first coming as Savior.
- One thing we can know for sure prophetically: Jesus is going to return, but we don't know when. I like this beautiful chorus: Coming again, coming again. May be morning, may be noon, may be evening, and may be soon. Coming again, coming again. Oh what a wonderful day that will be, Jesus is coming again!!
- Jesus also emphasized that His return would be at an unexpected time. Unbelievers will use this time to live in more sin. For believers, we must live like He could appear at any moment. We should be in a constant state of readiness.
- What we do here on earth now affects what we will be doing in heaven for eternity.
- With knowledge comes accountability and judgment. Those who have more knowledge of the revelation of Jesus Christ and reject Him will have a greater punishment than those who have little or no knowledge of Jesus Christ. However, both will go to the Lake of Fire because Jesus said, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but through Me"* (John 14:6).
- We have to prepare for the events in our lives—be ready for whatever happens by choosing our perspective ahead of time—it should be vertical, eternal, theological. Think first of God in the morning when you awake. Think first of God as you drive the kids to school. Think first of God when you encounter whatever you do in the day. We must change how we think before something happens.
- We must also change how we react when things do happen. Do you worry or do you have faith that God is in charge and there are no victims or accidents?

## **Christ's Coming — 12:49-59**

*I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled!*

- Fire in the Old Testament was used as a judgment of God (see Genesis 19:24; 1 Kings 18:24, 38; 2 Kings 1:12; 1 Chronicles 21:26; Psalm 21:9; 78:21-22; Isaiah 10:16-19; 30:27-33; 31:9; 66:16-19; Jeremiah 15:14; 21:12-14; Lamentations 4:11-13; Ezekiel 20:47-49; Joel 2:1-3; Amos 2:4-5; Malachi 4:1). Fire in the New Testament is also used as a judgment of God (see Luke 3:9, 15-17; 9:54; Revelation 13:13; 20:9).
  - Fire is closely linked with the presence and power of God.
  - Fire is often used as an instrument of God's wrath against sinners, both Jews and Gentiles.
  - Biblical prophecy speaks of fire yet to come.
  - The future fire of God's judgment is closely linked to the coming of Jesus as Messiah.
  - Or it could mean the fire when Jesus destroys the earth (2 Peter 3:3-10).
- So we must conclude that the fire Jesus is speaking of here is one of God's wrath upon the earth.
- Why does Jesus wish the fire was already kindled or started? Because the pouring out of wrath is just prior to the establishment of His kingdom on earth. Jesus said in Matthew 24:21, *For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.* OR it is the fire of destroying this earth and then the beginnings of the new heaven and new earth.

### **Thoughts and Applications**

Jesus hates the evil on this earth and wishes for it to end—more than we even do. He could eliminate the evil, suffering, pain, disease, death, sorry, decay, but He's waiting to first collect all the chosen who will choose to trust in Christ (2 Peter 3:3-10).

*But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!*—Before the pouring out of wrath upon the wickedness of man and Satan, which is before the kingdom, Jesus had a baptism to undergo—His death on the cross. He Himself will suffer the wrath of God as payment for man's sins. Each person has a choice: accept Christ's payment for their sins or be the object of the coming outpouring of God's wrath in the day of judgment.

*Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division; for from now on five members in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.*

- The Gospel divides members of a family, normally the closest of human bonds.
- It seems there is a new bond—those who are believers bond together, and those who are not believers also bond together in opposition to Christ—*three against two and two against three.*
- There is a crossing of lines of authority. Normally, a Christian's faith would enhance our submission to authority (son to father, etc., as in Ephesians 5:21–6:10). But we must obey God rather than men, putting allegiance to Christ over earthly authorities.
- Following Christ will bring emotional pain and persecution from those we humanly love the most—our own fathers, mothers, and children.
- Truth only unites those who believe in truth. Mostly, truth divides people. When a person becomes a new believer, we should warn them that this could cause a division between them and those with whom they once enjoyed peace and harmony.

*And He was also saying to the crowds, “When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, ‘A shower is coming,’ and so it turns out. And when you see a south wind blowing, you say, ‘It will be a hot day,’ and it turns out that way.*

- People are familiar with the concept of judging the future based on the present. For example, they know how to predict the weather. If you see a rain cloud, you predict it will rain. It doesn’t take long deliberation. The conclusion is obvious. The evidence is clear.
- This is not rocket science. It’s obvious to the “lay” person. You don’t need to be an expert.

*You hypocrites! You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and the sky, but why do you not analyze this present time?*

- A hypocrite is someone who acts inconsistent with what they believe. They believed they could predict the weather from the clouds, yet they would not conclude Jesus was the Messiah from His miracles/signs. If you can do it with one, you can do it with the other.
- With the mountains of evidence Jesus had put forth, the “lay” people should have come to the conclusion He was the Messiah. They didn’t need to be the “expert” Sadducees or Pharisees to understand the miracles Jesus performed.

*And why do you not even on your own initiative judge what is right?—They should have come to the right conclusion even if their leaders did not. The people were guilty of letting their leaders think for them.*

### **Thoughts and Applications**

If there is one thing to apply here, that is so common today—people let their leaders think for them. The pastors have become gurus, small “popes” walking around telling us what to believe and what to do. But Jesus says, *why do you not even on your own initiative judge what is right?* You are responsible for yourself and what you believe!!! For example, recently I heard of a conversation. One person was explaining the truth of what a particular pastor did. The other person said something like, “I won’t believe it because that would mean my pastor lied.” So they would rather have this high opinion of their pastor than know the truth! And they knew they were making that decision!

*For while you are going with your opponent to appear before the magistrate, on your way there make an effort to settle with him, so that he may not drag you before the judge, and the judge turn you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. I say to you, you will not get out of there until you have paid the very last cent.*

- In Matthew 5:21-26, Jesus says a very similar thing in the context of actually going to court. And Paul also says a similar thing in 1 Corinthians 6.
- In this context, however, I think Jesus is using this as an illustration of what He’s been talking about. Settle your accounts before you go before a judge, because if you get to the judge, you will suffer the consequences and be sent to prison, and there is no escape.
- So Jesus is telling this crowd to settle their account with Jesus right while they can. Because the Judge is coming, at a time when they least expect it. If they end up before Him as Judge, they will end up in the fire of the wrath of God, and there will be no escape. They will pay for what they have done in the flesh.

*Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless (2 Peter 3:11-14).*

## Luke 13

With Jesus' journey to Jerusalem and the cross, He moved deeper into the heart of darkness, and the problem of evil becomes more evident in Luke. In chapter 13, there is another shift. From this point on, Luke presents Jesus more as a storyteller than a miracle worker. Miracles decrease and parables increase. The spiritual darkness surrounding the Holy City makes divine activity more difficult. It's the absence of faith in Jerusalem and the surrounding area that causes a decrease in miraculous signs.

### The Galileans Killed — 13:1-5

- *Now on the same occasion*—where we left off in chapter 12, warning about the coming final judgment.
- *there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices*—We do not know exactly who these people were, but they were Jews, worshipping at the Temple in Jerusalem. Pilate's soldiers killed them, for a reason unknown to us. Their blood mixed with the sacrifices could be figurative or literal, the point is the same. In this instance, it was a deliberate evil killing of "righteous" (or, at least, "religious") people.
- *And Jesus said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this fate?"* The common thought (in Job's day and even today) is that it is the *greater sinners* who suffer such fates. However, if sin leads to a horrible death, then **all** people should suffer this kind of death.
- *I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish*—They had a horrible death, but if these living people don't repent and turn toward Christ, they will have a horrible eternal death.
- *Or do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem?* A tower would be a place where guards were posted, to defend the city from attack. What place could be safer? Yet, the very thing that was meant to protect them, caused their death. It was an accidental death. But Jesus points out a similar fate of the Jerusalem Jews as the Galilean Jews who were murdered, as Jerusalem Jews were perceived as more righteous than Galilean Jews.
- *I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish*— They had a horrible death, but if these alive people don't repent and turn toward Christ, they will have a horrible eternal death.

### Thoughts and Applications

- These deaths were not opportunities to judge the morality of those who died. Rather, they were opportunities for those who are alive to examine their own lives, as death is 100%.
- These people died in a place that was supposedly "safe." So their deaths were unexpected, tragic, and premature. The one group even died while making sacrifices in the Temple!! The other group standing next to a tower used to guard the city. The point is, death can come at any time, even when you are at a place where you feel "safe."
- However horrible a physical death may be, it is but a moment in time. Eternal death is so much worse. All who do not accept Christ, will face that horrible eternal death.
- If you believe that sin is the basis of all calamities, you better repent right away because your calamity might be next!!
- Sin does actually lead to calamity—eternal calamity at the final judgment. Again—repent!
- Jesus is probably using these two calamities to predict the calamity that will soon fall upon the whole nation as Rome destroys the temple in 70 A.D. and the Jews are dispersed out into the Roman Empire.

- There is the danger that we Americans have the same kind of pride as these Jews did—thinking God is blessing us because we are so “good.” But if we experience God’s goodness in our lives, it is in spite of our sin and out of His grace, not because of our goodness. The kingdom of God comes to the earth because of the righteousness of Christ and the grace of God through His Son.

### **The Tree with No Fruit — 13:6-9**

*And He began telling this parable: “A man had a fig tree which had been planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and did not find any. And he said to the vineyard-keeper, ‘Behold, for three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree without finding any. Cut it down! Why does it even use up the ground?’ And he answered and said to him, ‘Let it alone, sir, for this year too, until I dig around it and put in fertilizer; and if it bears fruit next year, fine; but if not, cut it down.’”*

- A fig tree is supposed to produce figs. If it doesn’t, it is useless. In fact, it’s taking up valuable soil that could be used for other plants that do produce fruit.
- This seems to be a parable about the Jews. The three years may mean the three years of Jesus’ ministry to them. Soon He will be gone, and the Jewish nation itself will be destroyed in 70 A.D. by the Romans.
- This points to the previous verses. Just as those Jews died unexpectedly, so the Jewish nation will also die unexpectedly. They thought that as God’s people, they would have a kingdom and last forever, but they won’t. As Romans 11 points out, the Jews will be cut off, and the church will be grafted in. The judgment on the nation will be soon. And if the people don’t repent and turn to Christ, they will also be eternally destroyed.

### **Healing the Bent Woman — 13:10-17**

- *And He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath*—This is the last time Luke tells of Jesus teaching in a synagogue.
- *And there was a woman who for eighteen years had had a sickness caused by a spirit; and she was bent double, and could not straighten up at all*—This is the first time we see a woman possessed by a demon. Usually we see demons causing all kinds of frenzy, but here it is the opposite. The woman is paralyzed in a bent double position, unable to straighten.
- *When Jesus saw her, He called her over and said to her, “Woman, you are freed from your sickness.” And He laid His hands on her; and immediately she was made erect again and began glorifying God*—Also unusual, Jesus initiated the contact out of His compassion and laid His hands on her. We haven’t seen him touch someone possessed by a demon. Notice, He also did not cast the demon out. Instead, He made her erect, but notice He used the word “freed” from the sickness/demon.
- *But the synagogue official, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, began saying to the crowd in response, “There are six days in which work should be done; so come during them and get healed, and not on the Sabbath day”*—The official was “indignant” (lit. “furious”), but He didn’t address Jesus. Instead, he was angry at the crowd, telling them to come on another day, other than the Sabbath, to be healed. He considered healing to be work, even though Jesus just said a word and did not physical work.
- *But the Lord answered him and said, “You hypocrites*—meaning this synagogue official and his buddies (it’s plural).
  - This woman was most likely a regular at this synagogue for 18 years and had not found healing on any other day. AND this was the day Jesus was there. In fact, the Sabbath was the normal day for gathering and worshipping in the synagogue, not other days.

- When the woman was healed, she was glorifying God. The official was in charge of the synagogue, of getting the people to glorify God, but here this woman was doing that very thing, and he was trying to stop it.
- *does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the stall and lead him away to water him? And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?*—They did work on the Sabbath in taking care of their animals. But that was “ok.” They cared more for their animals than they did this woman. They “bent” the law for their animals, but had no compassion for the bent woman.
- *As He said this, all His opponents were being humiliated*—it’s an ongoing action—they were being embarrassed, and they were not sorry for what they had said.
- *and the entire crowd was rejoicing* [again, an ongoing action] *over all the glorious things being done by Him.*

### Thoughts and Applications

- It seems to me the official Jews had the same attitude in both accounts. They had no sympathy for the Galileans who were killed. Rather, they thought they must deserve it because they were “greater” sinners. So with this woman. They had no sympathy for her in her condition. The officials were alive and well, obviously more “righteous” than all these people. But Jesus called them hypocrites. They may have looked good on the outside, but inside they were full of wickedness. Judgment was coming, and it would be against these self-righteous Jews. The kingdom of God will be removed from them and given to the Gentiles.
- This seems like a picture of the Jews being bent over, being crippled by Satan, and Jesus freeing them so they could walk straight. But that meant coming to Jesus in faith, which they didn’t want to do.

### Two Parables — 13:18-21

- *So He was saying, “What is the kingdom of God like, and to what shall I compare it?*—This is the point of the two parables. To describe the kingdom of God, which includes believers from all ages.
- *It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and threw into his own garden; and it grew and became a tree, and THE BIRDS OF THE AIR NESTED IN ITS BRANCHES*—In Matthew 13:31-32, the emphasis of this parable is the smallness of the seed and the greatness of the resulting tree. But here the emphasis is different.
  - The man “threw” the seed into the garden. Maybe it was in compost, and he didn’t even realize he was throwing it into his garden—he obviously did not purposely put a seed of a plant that would grow to a huge tree, taking up space, etc. in his garden. He did not plant it, in contrast to the previous parable of the fig tree, which was purposely planted, tended and nurtured, as the Jews were in the Old Testament. Because of this care, it was expected they would produce useful (to God) fruit.
  - The Jews were the cared for fig tree, which would be cut down because it was useless, it did not produce fruit for God, the owner. In its place, was the mustard seed (the kingdom of God). The mustard tree would replace the fig tree. The Gentile church age would replace the Jews as the kingdom of God.
- *And again He said, “To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened.*



- The emphasis here is not on the time but on the inevitability. The kingdom of God is sort of secret, like the leaven is. Yet in the end, like leaven spread to all the flour, the kingdom of God will be spread throughout the whole world.

### Thoughts and Applications

The well-tended fig tree seems to me to be the **nation** of Israel, which God protected and fed, keeping it alive for hundreds of years, yet it was without the fruit of holiness and dedication to Him. These were all very visible things, like the tending of the fig tree. People walked by and noticed. In contrast, there's the mustard seed. It wasn't carefully planted, it wasn't tended, yet it grew until it filled the whole world. That's the kingdom of God in our church age. The seed is planted in a **person** here, and a person there, and over 2000 years, the kingdom has filled the whole world. But no one really saw it happening. And because of the way it spread, no one could stop it from spreading either. It's not like the fig tree (nation of Israel). It can't be cut down. It will end, but only when Jesus takes us home to be with Him at the Rapture.

### The Narrow Door — 13:22-30

- *And He was passing through from one city and village to another, teaching, and proceeding on His way to Jerusalem—and the cross, nearing the end of His ministry here on earth*
- *And someone said to Him, “Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?”*
- *And He said to them, “Strive—We know this is not works salvation. This means to be diligent about entering into the kingdom. Time is short. You may lose your opportunity to believe.*
- *to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.”* Matthew 7:13-14 tells us Jesus said, *Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.* Jesus said, *“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me”* (John 14:6). Jesus Himself **is** the narrow way. It's true—*only a few find it.*

### Thoughts and Applications

- Throughout history, since the beginning, it's only been the remnant who were saved. The majority of people, even of Israelites, followed the broad road and wide gate to destruction.
- How can they *seek to enter and will not be able*? There are many people who want to be in the kingdom of God but aren't able because they refuse to have faith in Jesus. They want to get there some other way, via another religion, works, etc.
- *Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, ‘Lord, open up to us!’ then He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know where you are from.’*—the point is, there is a time when the door is shut, and it will not be open for you, no matter how much you beg for it to be. That's why you need to strive to enter while you have the opportunity. For example, death shuts the door or hardening your heart does also.
- *Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets’*—They thought that association with Jesus was enough. But both John the Baptist and Jesus said they needed to identify with Jesus, not just be in His presence.

### Thoughts and Applications

How many people think they will be in the kingdom because of their association with Christianity? Because they belonged to some church? Because they come from a Christian family? But they never identified with Christ, they never entered through the narrow gate.

- *and He will say, 'I tell you, I do not know where you are from; DEPART FROM ME, ALL YOU EVILDOERS'*—They are not part of God's family. In Matthew 7:23, He says, *"I never knew you."* You will not get into the kingdom of God if He doesn't have a relationship with you and doesn't know where you are from (some other religion, for example).
- *In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth*—the rich man in Hades, in Luke 16:19-31, describes it as a place of torment. It's the consequences of sin for those who do not go through the narrow gate.
- *when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves being thrown out*—They thought just because they were descendants of Abraham, that meant they would be in the kingdom. Not true. This is also described in Luke 16. The rich (Jewish) man could see from Hades to Paradise, and he even saw and talked to Abraham, but there was a great chasm fixed so no one could cross over.
- *And they will come from east and west and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God. And behold, some are last who will be first and some are first who will be last*—The most common interpretation is that Jesus is talking about the Gentiles, whom the Jews consider to be last, worst people, yet they will be first in the kingdom (prophetically, the church is resurrected into their eternal bodies first before the believing Jews).

### **Herod, Jerusalem, and Jesus — 13:31-35**

- *Just at that time some Pharisees approached, saying to Him, "Go away, leave here, for Herod wants to kill You"*—We don't know their motive in bringing this news to Jesus. All through the book they've wanted to do away with Jesus. Perhaps, they thought this warning would chase Jesus away from Jerusalem, and their problems with Him would leave with Him.
- *And He said to them, "Go and tell that fox*—Usually, foxes are known for being sneaky predators, coming into chicken coops (or whatever) during the night, killing and leaving undetected. Herod, though king of the Jews and supposedly for their welfare, was really only out for himself and what he could sneakily get from the people (like a typical politician?!?).
- *'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I reach My goal.'* *Nevertheless I must journey on today and tomorrow and the next day*—the point is, Jesus was not going to stop. He was going to keep doing His ministry until He arrived in Jerusalem, knowing He would die there.
- *for it cannot be that a prophet would perish outside of Jerusalem. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her!*—there's been a long line of prophets killed, now the Son of God will be killed (see the parable in Matthew 21:33-41).
- *How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it!*—Jesus loved and cared for Jerusalem and its people and He desired their salvation.
- *"Behold, your house is left to you desolate*—But they rejected Jesus, so He would also abandon them. But His death on the cross was God's means of restoring His people.
- *and I say to you, you will not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'"*—which will happen at the Second Coming.

### **Thoughts and Applications**

Jesus knows what it feels like to have those you love reject Him. He experienced that also. It breaks your heart, but you cannot create their faith. They have the free will to choose Jesus or not. But one day, *Every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall give praise to God. So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God* (Romans 14:11-12). Keep praying for them and witness when you are able to.

# Luke 14

## Being Healed — 14:1-6

- *It happened that when He went into the house of one of the leaders of the Pharisees on the Sabbath to eat bread, they were watching Him closely*—The atmosphere at this meal is already hostile, as the leaders of the Pharisees were watching Jesus, to try to catch Him breaking their traditions, what they called “the law.”
- *And there in front of Him was a man suffering from dropsy*—For sure, this man was not someone the Pharisees would have normally invited to the meal. He was a “plant” by them, to tempt Jesus into healing and “breaking their law.” (Dropsy is a mild abnormal accumulation of fluid in the tissues and joints of the feet and legs, more severe if in the hands and lower arms, most severe if also in the face. There is pitting when you put pressure on the skin with your finger, for example. Sometimes women have the mild form—in their feet—during pregnancy.)
- *And Jesus answered and spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, “Is it lawful (proper) to heal on the Sabbath, or not?”*—According to the Mosaic Law, it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath. The Sabbath was made for man, for his benefit and blessing. This was a principle of the Law. However, Jesus was asking if it was good manners, proper, common decency.
- *But they kept silent*—Why? It wasn’t because they had no beliefs or teaching about it. They, for sure, didn’t want to discuss the matter with Jesus in order to learn from Him and possibly change their minds. So they kept silent and watched what He would do, hoping He would heal the man so they could have an accusation against Him. Also, if they said it’s not proper, they would have to admit their traditions were more important than compassion for people. If they said it was proper, then they would be giving Jesus permission to heal. An ethical checkmate!!
- *And He took hold of him and healed him*—lit. pulled the man to Him with both arms
- *and sent him away*—lit. released him (the opposite of pulled to Him). Luke used this word in 13:12, *Woman, you are freed from your sickness*. The word can mean “sent away” also. But in this context, released or freed from his sickness seems to be the better meaning. However, now that the man was healed, he was no longer the center of attention in this gathering. Perhaps he did go away.
- *And He said to them, “Which one of you will have a son or an ox fall into a well, and will not immediately pull him out on a Sabbath day?”*—Now Jesus asks them about their practice.
- *And they could make no reply to this*—did they recognize their own hypocrisy? They tell others not to “work,” such as Jesus healing, but for them, saving their animal on the Sabbath was ok.

## Thoughts and Applications

- I wonder how many times sick people or other people in need are “used” for an agenda that has nothing to do with actual compassion for them.
- Also, there is the danger of valuing your animal more than people. That’s acting like a Pharisee.

## Being the Guest — 14:7-11

- *And He began speaking a parable to the invited guests when He noticed how they had been picking out the places of honor at the table*—At first the Pharisees were watching Him closely, now Jesus was watching them. Usually, the most honored guests are seated to the left and right of the host, then according to rank move further down the table, with the lowliest at the other end.
- *saying to them, “When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for someone more distinguished than you may have been invited by him, and he who invited you both will come and say to you, ‘Give your place to this man,’ and then in disgrace you*

*proceed to occupy the last place*—This is similar to Solomon’s proverb in Proverbs 25:6-7. The Pharisees obviously determined their worth by comparing themselves to each other.

- *“But when you are invited, go and recline at the last place, so that when the one who has invited you comes, he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher’; then you will have honor in the sight of all who are at the table with you.*
- *“For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted”*—In God’s kingdom, it’s humility that results in reward. The prideful will be disgraced.

### **Thoughts and Applications**

Jesus doesn’t ask us to do what He has not already done. *He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him* (Philippians 2:5-9). Paul wrote, *I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment* (Romans 12:3). As soon as you say (or think), “I deserve...,” you are in trouble.

### **Being the Host — 14:12-14**

- *And He also went on to say to the one who had invited Him*—He was the only one with a reserved seat. But those he invited were ones who could elevate his standing in the community.
- *“When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, otherwise they may also invite you in return and that will be your repayment. But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”*

### **Thoughts and Applications**

This was a parable addressed to the host of a meal of Pharisees. But we can apply what it is teaching. Don’t do things with the motive that you will be repaid here on earth—if you do, you have your reward. But think about doing things that cost you something and you won’t be repaid. You are doing it for God. You will be rewarded in heaven. Store up treasure in heaven. [Some people today would read this parable as a social agenda—help the poor. But that isn’t the point Jesus is making at all.]

### **The Guests Who Didn’t Come — 14:15-24**

- *When one of those who were reclining at the table with Him heard this, he said to Him, “Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!”*—Of course, he assumed he, as a good Pharisee, would be one of those in the kingdom of God.
- *But He said to him, “A man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many; and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come; for everything is ready now.’”*—They had already agreed to come to this meal.
- *But they all alike began to make excuses. The first one said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.’ Another one said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.’ Another one said, ‘I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come.’*—Now, when the meal was done and on the table, they back out. They each have an excuse, which they considered unavoidable. They made a priority judgment that left the host in a difficult position—with a table full of food and no one to eat it.
- *And the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the head of the household became angry and said to his slave, ‘Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.’*

- *And the slave said, 'Master, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' And the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, so that my house may be filled.*
- *For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner''—a strong condemnation of the Jewish leadership to whom Jesus was talking.*

### Thoughts and Applications

- The invited guests were the Jews, whom God invited, by the prophets, into the kingdom of God. They said at first they wanted to be in God's kingdom. But then the leaders started pursuing their own agendas. They, like these Pharisees, assumed they would be in the kingdom because (1) they were Jews and (2) they were the crème of the Jews—the Pharisees. However, in order to get into the kingdom, they needed to respond to the call of God. But they did not respond. So their places would be given to others, the least desirable in their Jewish terms, such as those whom Jesus had healed. Then, just as the parable described, the invitation went out beyond the Jews, to the Gentiles.
- The Pharisees are right in one respect, the object is to be in the kingdom of God. But they were wrong in the **way** to get into the kingdom. Many people think they are going to heaven, but they are wrong in the **way** to get into heaven. Jesus is the **only** way (John 14:6). It's not who you are (from a Christian family, or good members of a church, for example), and it's not what you do.
- Also, there seems to be an emphasis on self-interest. The Pharisees were thinking of themselves as they used a sick man to entrap Jesus. They were thinking of themselves as they sought the best seats for themselves. The host was thinking of himself when he invited others who would also invite him to their meals. Those who did not accept the invitation did so because of selfish reasons. Our culture promotes self-interest, self-esteem, pride. Christians often seek places of honor, where they will be recognized for their work. Who carries out the non-glamorous ministries? I think of my grandfather, who for 20 years or more faithfully spent every Saturday afternoon cleaning the church. Sometimes we grandkids helped him straighten the hymnbooks in the racks, etc. He would get on his knees, scrubbing black marks off the linoleum.
- Jesus was so compassionate. Not only did He embrace this sick man, Jesus didn't use the circumstances as an excuse to not heal him. He did what was right **in spite of** the circumstances. (An interesting concept—you won't hear that from those who are "led by circumstances.")

### Discipleship — 14:25-27

- *Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them—We don't know where Jesus was, but He was heading to Jerusalem. Here He addresses the crowds near Him.*
- *"If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple—In the parallel account in Matthew 10:34-39, Jesus defined "hate" as He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. So "hate" would be defined as "to love less than." So it would read, "If anyone comes to Me, and does not love his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, and even his own life less than Me..."*
- Who are we to "hate", i.e., love less than Jesus? All people we would normally, naturally, love: relatives, family, even yourself.
- *"Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple—As mentioned earlier in the book, it seems that your own cross is your life situation. In fact, it may even be the father, mother, wife, husband, brother or sister of the previous verse!!*

### Thoughts and Applications

“Discipleship is not a matter of how much we have to offer, but of renouncing all that we think we have to offer” ~Deffinbaugh. Cults want their followers to give up all their possessions to the cult leader, so their leader has all their stuff. But Jesus doesn’t need or want your stuff. He wants it the other way. You do not bring anything to Him, but we are to leave it all behind, trusting only Him and his faithful provision of all that we need, to do what He wants us to do. For example, don’t look to your husband to give you the love you need. Look to God and trust Him for the love you need, then He will provide what you need to *agape* your husband (giving love, expecting nothing in return)—see 1 Corinthians 13. This is just my observation of women over the years—if you feel empty, it’s because of your expectations of being filled by others or things. If you look to God and trust Him, He will fill your heart, and you will be a giver instead of an “expector.”

### Discipleship Is a Decision — 14:28-32

- *For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace.*

### Thoughts and Applications

- If you don’t count the cost, you will not be able to finish. Both the builder and the king failed to finish and ended in humiliation and shame. Jesus wanted people to calculate the cost of following Him as His disciple. It would include a cross for them to bear, too.
- You need to sit down and reflect rather than act quickly. Jesus wasn’t trying to get a large crowd of uncommitted followers. Quick decisions are for unthinking commitment. But slow, deliberate decisions are for those who want long-term commitments.
- When Jesus reached the cross, He was abandoned by His disciples. If they failed, what makes us think we can be committed when our family and friends forsake us, or some other overwhelming life situation hits us? We don’t have the resources in and of ourselves to be a disciple of Jesus, any more than we had the resources to gain eternal life. That’s why Jesus said discipleship begins with renouncing your dependence upon family and to depend fully on Christ alone. The key element in discipleship is dependence, for without Him, we can do nothing.

### Conclusion — 14:33-35

*So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions. Therefore, salt is good; but if even salt has become tasteless, with what will it be seasoned? It is useless either for the soil or for the manure pile; it is thrown out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”*—Great quantities of salt do not make up for its loss of saltiness. So, too, great numbers of disciples do not guarantee great impact. The world will take little notice of a large group of people who think, feel, and act like them. But it is those disciples who are Christ-like, whose lives are distinctive that matter. Notice, again, it’s the response of the individual person that Christ seeks. No group.

# Luke 15

## The Setting — 15:1-2

- *Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near Him to listen to Him*—Tax collectors were Jews who collected taxes from Jews for the Romans or for Herod. They were hated by the Jews. They would even defraud people. Famous tax gatherers who became believers were Levi, a disciple, and Zaccheus. Sinners could be immoral people such as prostitutes, or even poor people, from outlying villages. These people were drawn to Jesus.
- *Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, “This man receives [lit. “to welcome favorably” and “to look forward, wait for”] sinners and eats with them”*—The Pharisees sought the places of honor and saw themselves as the elite of Judaism. They considered themselves to be the “saved” “righteous” ones, and used their own laws to separate themselves from who they considered to be the undesirables in their society. So they saw Jesus as neglecting them and socializing with the undesirables. They even called Jesus a glutton and drunk (7:34). Also, by doing this, Jesus was condemning the Pharisees and their teachings.

## The Lost Sheep — 15:3-7

- *So He told them this parable*—Jesus spoke the following parable in response to the Pharisees’ grumbling that Jesus received sinners.
- *What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’ I tell you that **in the same way**, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.*

## The Lost Coin — 15:8-10

- *Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I had lost!’ **In the same way**, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”*

## Thoughts and Applications

- In both parables:
  - Sinfulness is not stressed, but **being lost** is the point.
  - What’s lost is a possession (a sheep and a coin).
  - The owner takes the initiative, seeking to find the lost possession.
  - The owner seeks diligently and persistently.
  - The owner rejoices and invites and expects his neighbors to do the same.
  - The rejoicing of the one who has found the lost possession is likened to the rejoicing of heaven to the salvation of one sinner.
- The traditional interpretation of these two parables is that God is the owner. But that just doesn’t seem to fit. The Bible teaches that God is most concerned with the righteousness/maturity of the 99. He’s not ever pictured as leaving them, to save one more. Also, if God was the owner, it seems like the message is that 100 were saved, and one of the 100 lost their salvation, so He went after that one. Also, not what the Bible teaches.
- This interpretation seems more reasonable:

1. Jesus began the parables with the words, “What man among you...” and a “woman.” So Jesus was not describing God’s response to the lost but the Pharisees’ response to a possession of theirs that was lost.
  2. It’s the Pharisees, who were lovers of money (Luke 16:14), who leave what they have to find what was lost, who experience over-excitement and celebrate finding what was lost.
  3. “In the same way” shows a comparison of joy of the Pharisees over finding things and God’s joy at finding a repentant sinner. The Pharisees would certainly understand the first part of the parable and think, “Of course!!”
  4. The parables show how obsessed humans are about their possessions. In contrast, God is obsessed with repentant sinners.
- The final point is the same in both interpretations. In heaven, there is much joy when a sinner repents. So the Pharisees, who grumbled at Jesus spending time with the “sinners,” did not have the same values as those in heaven. They thought of themselves as the *ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance*. Yet, the joy in heaven was about repentance. For the Pharisees, that meant no repentance and therefore no heaven. So Jesus was spending time with those who were most likely to repent and go to heaven.
  - The next parable will show the loving, forgiving heart of God (in the father), the repentance of the sinner (in the younger brother), and the joylessness of the Pharisees (in the older brother).

### **The Lost Son — 15:11-32**

The first two parables describe how the Pharisees cared so much about their lost possessions. This parable exposes why they are not concerned about lost people. Many people read this parable with warm fuzzy feelings over the repentance of the younger son and the love and welcome of the father. However, in this context, those very things are what the Pharisees are grumbling at Jesus about—the repentant (undeserving) son and the loving welcoming father (Jesus).

*And He said, “A man had two sons.*

### **The Younger Son**

- *The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.’ So he divided his wealth between them*—Usually, the estate was divided when the father died. However, while he was alive, Abraham gave gifts to his other sons, while leaving his estate to Isaac (Genesis 25:5-6). We don’t know why the younger son wanted to leave or why the father agreed to give him the money. Those questions are irrelevant to the story.
- *And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered [to waste in a foolish manner] his estate with loose [immoral] living*—The older son said the younger son spent the money on prostitutes (v. 30). The Pharisees would have immediately understood. Jesus was criticized for associating with those kinds of people—sinners, far away from God, squandering their lives in immoral living, prostitutes. The older son did none of that. Also, notice he went to a distant country, i.e., he left the land of Israel, where God would bless His people, the Jews. He went and lived among the heather as a heathen. There is no attempt to minimize the seriousness or the foolishness of the sins of the younger son. Jesus ate with sinners, but He never minimized their sin.
- *Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished*—when he had spent everything and was most vulnerable, a famine occurred.
- *So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine*—Of course, this would be the ultimate uncleanness to the Jews. Obviously,



this son must have been among Gentiles for there to even be pigs. But then to be reduced to feeding these unclean animals in an unclean land. Doesn't get much worse.

- *And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him—probably carob pods, from tall evergreen carob trees, from the Mediterranean area, known for high heat endurance. (Also popular in Arizona.)*
- *But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger!—* It seems like the younger son's repentance began when he ran out of money and began to experience the painful consequences of his actions.
- *I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight—* He realized he sinned against God as well as his own father.
- *I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men."*
- *So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him—*The father was watching for the son. He didn't make him grovel. All without knowledge of what the younger son had done.
- *And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'—* He repented. It means "to change direction." He had gone away from the father, but now he returned to the father. His true repentance is seen in his sense of unworthiness. He claims no rights as a son. He only hopes for mercy. There are no demands.



### **The Father**

- The father had given the son what he asked for. He allowed the son to go his own way, even when he could have prevented it (at least he could have refused to finance it).
- *But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate—*This meal is obviously referring to the kingdom meal the Pharisees had thought they were going to be present for (14:15). But it's the repentant sinners who are at the meal.
- *for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.' And they began to celebrate—*As the joy in heaven in the previous two parables.

### **The Older Son**

- This son represents the Pharisees and scribes, who grumble at Jesus' eating with sinners.
- *Now his older son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. And he summoned one of the servants and began inquiring what these things could be.*
- *And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.'*
- *But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him.*
- *But he answered and said to his father, 'Look! For so many years I have been serving you—i.e., working. He thought that the basis for obtaining his father's favor was his works (also the Pharisees' problem). He did not need to work to win his father's approval, he needed only to be a son.*
- *and I have never neglected a command of yours—Really?!?! What arrogance. He just refused to obey the command, even pleading, from his father to come to the feast for the younger brother.*
- *and yet you have never given me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends—*Like the Pharisees, this brother expects, even demands his father's approval and blessings. What the

older brother did not think he needed (repentance and salvation) he resisted and resented in others, and so he could not, he would not share in the celebration.

- *but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him*—He thought the younger brother should be disowned because of his works (sins). However, it wasn't the younger son's sins that resulted in the father's celebration, it was his repentance and return. The older son not only failed to comprehend mercy, but he resented it (a lot like the prophet Jonah felt).
- *And he said to him, 'Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours*—While the younger brother had only the fellowship of pagans and pigs, the older brother had the fellowship of his father. But that was not enough for him. He wanted to party with his friends. Even "all that is mine is yours" didn't seem to be enough for the older brother.
- *But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found*'—

### Thoughts and Applications

Differences between the two sons:

1. The younger son left home. The older son stayed home.
2. The younger son was wasteful. The older son was productive.
3. The younger son lost his inheritance. The older son did not.
4. The younger son did not any longer feel worthy of his father's blessings. The older son did.
5. The younger son realized his sins. The older son felt righteous.
6. The younger son repented. The older son resented.

Similarities in the two sons:

1. Both sons wanted a celebration. The younger son partied with the pagans in a foreign land. The older son protested to his father that he had not been given a party.
2. Both sons wanted to celebrate without their father. The younger brother left his father, his family, and even his nation to party in a foreign land with the wrong kinds of "friends." The older brother refused to celebrate with his father (and younger brother), but he wanted to have a banquet with his friends.
3. Neither son seems to have appreciated or loved their father, even though he loved both of them. They only saw the father for what they could get from him.
4. Both sons were materialists. The younger son wanted to spend his inheritance on himself. The older son saved his inheritance but had anger toward his brother for spending his. They both loved money, they only differed in what they wanted to do with it, and when.
5. Both sons were sinners. The sins of the two sons were different in their outward manifestations, but inwardly, they had the same roots. We would look at the older brother and see him as a hard worker, no rebellion, and we would commend him. But at the celebration, we see that his inward attitudes and motivations were just as evil, even more evil because there was much self-righteousness concealed behind his outward conformity to his father's will and to his hard work.

Conclusion: The older brother (Pharisees) was angry with the father (Jesus) because he felt he did not get what he deserved (a banquet—a seat in the kingdom of God), while the younger brother (repentant sinners) got what he did not deserve (a banquet—a seat in the kingdom of God). The older brother's works didn't work, but the younger brother's repentance did. That's God's grace—it is given to unworthy people, sinners, who do not trust in their good works but repent and come to Jesus.

# Luke 16

## The Parable of the Unjust Manager — 16:1-8a

- *Now He was also saying to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and this manager was reported to him as squandering his possessions—i.e., using the master’s money in a wasteful, dishonest, and foolish manner. This is a true charge. No evidence contradicts it.*
- *And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an accounting of your management, for you can no longer be manager’—the manager was fired, but the master wanted him to get the accounts in order for the master before the manager left.*
- *The manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig; I am ashamed to beg—he must think of some way he can make use of his master’s goods during this short time to prepare for his own future.*
- *‘I know what I shall do, so that when I am removed from the management people will welcome me into their homes’—i.e., take care of him in the future, after he is out of a job*
- *And he summoned each one of his master’s debtors, and he began saying to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ And he said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ And he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ And he said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty’—these debtors were in on the scam with the manager. It was a good deal for them. He appealed to their greed.*
- *And his master praised the unrighteous manager because he had acted shrewdly—It’s surprising that after being ripped off by his manager, the master is able to praise the manager for acting shrewdly. This praise is not for any good he did for his master or for the ethical aspects of what he has done but simply for his shrewdness (wise, sharp, clever, savvy, streetwise). He wisely used his present opportunities to prepare for his future.*

## Jesus’ Commentary on the Parable — 16:8b-13

- *for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light*
  - Both the unrighteous manager and his master valued the same thing—shrewdness
  - Both the manager and the master were part of the group Jesus called *sons of this age*, i.e. unbelievers
  - Neither the manager nor the master were part of the group Jesus called *the sons of light*, who were believers
  - Unbelievers are more wise (*shrewd*) in their relations with other unbelievers (*their own kind*) than believers are in their relations with their own kind (other believers).

## Thoughts and Applications

Of course, shrewdness, or wisdom, would not be the same for both groups. In the parable, the manager was dishonest, lying, actually stealing from his master, but that is considered wise by unbelievers. What’s wise for believers? Jesus tells us that in the next verses—it’s faithfulness.

*And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings.*

- Jesus tells us two things about wealth: it will fail and there is a “wealth of unrighteousness.” Money itself is not evil, but it is often associated with evil. For example, the Pharisees equated having wealth with being righteous. Paul said, *the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil* (1 Timothy 6:9-10).

- The manager was wise in making friends who would welcome him into their home after he was fired from his job. Jesus seems to be saying we believers should use money to make friends, who may come to Christ and welcome you into heaven. The manager was a slave to the money. But we can make money be our slave—i.e., use it for eternal purposes.

**Wisdom for believers is to use your money on earth (your present circumstances) to invest in eternal treasure (your future).**

*“He who is faithful in a very little thing [managing money] is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much*

- What you do with a little bit of money is what you would do with a lot of money. For example, what do you do when the cashier gives you 25 cents too much in change? It’s a little bit of money. What’s “a lot” of money? \$1? \$5? \$10? \$100? Where do you draw the line? The amount of money is irrelevant. It’s a heart issue. Are you an honest person? Twenty-five cents or \$100, it doesn’t matter. (You can apply this to other areas also: your time, your friends, etc. If you are ok with having one unrighteous BFF, there is a greater heart issue—see 2 Corinthians 6:14f).

**Compared to how you will spend eternity, wealth, and things on earth, are little things.**

*Therefore if you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous wealth (present money on earth), who will entrust the true riches to you? (future heaven things)*

**God is watching how you manage your money. It’s one of the criteria for the judgment of rewards in heaven, such as reigning with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom.**

*And if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own?*

**Money on earth is not really yours. You will leave it behind to someone else. But your future in heaven is yours for eternity.**

*No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth*

**The love of money, serving it, and the love of God, serving Him, cannot co-exist. They are opposed to one another. So love God and let money serve you, as you are serving God. Use money (and things on earth) to invest in your eternal future. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also (Mathew 6:19-21).**

### **Pharisees Scoffing — 16:14**

- *Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money—the only other place this is mentioned is 2 Timothy 3:2, in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money*
- *were listening to all these things and were scoffing at Him—It’s because they loved money that they were scoffing (to belittle, scorn, ridicule, make light of, lit. “to turn up one’s nose”) at Jesus, who was a poor man, teaching them about money.*

### **The Heart Problem — 16:15**

- *And He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men—Jesus just identified the Pharisees as the scoundrels of the previous parable, who shrewdly played by the world’s rules to gain money and power, to justify (declare righteous) themselves to other people*

- *but God knows your hearts*—Jesus said the Pharisees were looking good on the outside, to impress people, but inwardly, they were *full of robbery and wickedness* (9:39), and as God, Jesus knew that.
- *for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God*—what is considered “good” or “valuable” on earth is “detestable” in heaven. Therefore, the Pharisees were detestable in the sight of God.

### Thoughts and Applications

“It is Luke’s opinion that in the attitude toward money, the cracks are likely to show in what is otherwise an outwardly impressive veneer of righteousness, impressive even to ourselves” (WBC).

### The Breakers of the Law — 16:16-18

- *The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John*—John the Baptist ended the dispensation of the Law and prophets. Because the Law and the Prophets were at the end of the Old Testament, they summed up all the time of the Old Testament. They provided mankind with a standard of righteousness, which no one could keep. Therefore, they condemned all mankind as sinners. However, the Pharisees prided themselves on preserving the Law, at least their version of it, and by it said they were righteous.
- It’s interesting because the prophets were constantly confronting the Israelites about their heart issues before God. But the Pharisees mostly ignored the prophets and enhanced the Law. Their fathers killed the prophets, and they will kill Jesus.
- *since that time the gospel of the kingdom of God has been preached*—by Jesus and the disciples
- *and everyone is forcing his way into it*—Matthew 11:12 says a similar thing: *and from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force*. “The religious leaders of Jesus’ day (**forceful men**) were resisting the movement introduced by John, Jesus, and the apostles. **Forcefully advancing** (βιάζονται) could be rendered in the passive, “is violently treated.” (The verb **lay hold of** [ἀρπάζουσιν] means “to grasp” in the sense of resisting or laying claim to it on their own). Those leaders wanted a kingdom, but not the kind Jesus was offering. So they were resisting the message and attempting to establish their own rule” [BKC].
- *But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail*—Matthew 5:18 puts it, *not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished*. For example, let’s use the word “Fun.” If you had a little stroke, you get “Pun.” Add another stroke, “Run.” Another stroke, “Bun.” So not only is every word in the Bible important and inerrant, but every letter and even every stroke of a letter. Every single thing that the Bible prophesies will be accomplished. No detail will be left out.
- *Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries one who is divorced from a husband commits adultery*—The Pharisees were actually breakers of the Mosaic Law, with their additions and traditions which they added to the Law, such as divorce.
  - The Pharisees had a very liberal view of divorce. The House of Hillel (extra-biblical laws and traditions) followed by the Pharisees, said a man could divorce his wife “even if she spoiled his dish” or “even if he found someone else prettier than she” (Swindoll, “Luke”).
  - Notice this verse is about getting re-married, not divorce per se.
    - If a husband divorces his wife and marries another, he commits adultery
    - If a man marries a woman who is divorced, he commits adultery
    - So “technically,” if a wife divorces a man, and that man marries a woman who has never been married, he does not commit adultery.

- But we know God “hates” divorce (Malachi 2:16). However, you can’t always control whether divorce happens. What you can control is getting re-married. That’s what the Bible speaks against (Mark 10:1-12; Romans 7:2-3). (And, from my understanding, it’s the act of getting re-married, not being re-married, i.e, you don’t “live in sin” if you re-marry.)
- Is divorce sin? Yes. Is getting re-married sin? Yes. Is lusting in your heart sin? Yes. Is breaking your word sin? Yes. Is coveting sin? Yes. *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us* (1 John 1:9-10).

### **The Rich Man and Lazarus — 16:19-31**

This is not a parable because (1) Jesus does not state it is a parable, (2) Lazarus is mentioned by name, and parables are “a man,” etc., and (3) no parable lists an Old Testament person by name, as Abraham is here. So, I believe this is a real event.

- *Now there was a rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, joyously living in splendor every day*—This man was wealthy and enjoyed all the benefits of his wealth. He lived in luxury. From what we learned about the Pharisees, this rich man would be perceived as a righteous man, who would surely go to heaven because they equated riches with righteousness.
- *And a poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man’s table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores*—in striking contrast to the rich man, Lazarus was virtually a beggar. He was longing for food, whatever crumbs that fell from the rich man’s table. He was also covered with sores, which the dogs licked. He was the kind of person the Pharisees would label a “sinner,” whom they assumed would be headed for hell. All because the Pharisees judged by outward appearances.
  - Laid (lit. “dumped”) at the rich man’s gate. Lazarus was very aware of the “blessings” of the rich man. And as the rich man walked through his gate, he was aware of Lazarus, but chose to ignore his need. Instead, he used his wealth to indulge himself.
- *Now the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham’s bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried*—It’s only after they died that God’s judgment was evident. Now the roles of the men were exactly reversed. On earth, the rich man, for sure, had a fancy funeral. Lazarus may not have even had a funeral. Just a body dumped into a potter’s field. But spiritually, it was different.
  - This is a place where people’s souls went after death, before Christ died. The believers went to the good side, called Paradise or Abraham’s bosom. The unbelievers went to the bad side, also called Hades. As we read this story, we’ll see a better description of this place. It was necessary for several reasons: (1) Believers could not go to heaven until Jesus died. Once He died, was resurrected, and ascended into heaven, Paul said that now *to be absent from the body and to be home with the Lord* (2 Corinthians 5:8). (2) Unbelievers are awaiting the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15), where they will be judged for the deeds they did in the flesh. Their destiny is the Lake of Fire, but there is some sort of levels there, based on their judgment. Jesus says that all those in Hades will be taken to the Great White Throne.
  - Notice the poor man, at death, is carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. He was alone in life and death, but not after death. We can assume, I think, that the same thing is true today. For believers, we are carried by the angels into the presence of God in heaven.
- *In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom*—So in Hades, they could see each other in the opposite place, and the Hades part where

the unbelievers are is a place of torment, evidently an equal torment among the people because their judgment has not yet happened.

- *And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.'*
  - Both Lazarus and the rich man are Jews, calling Abraham their father.
  - Abraham is a real person, though dead for some 2,000 years.
  - The rich man is in agony in a flame.
  - The rich man wants mercy, some relief from his suffering, water to cool his tongue, as Lazarus wanted crumbs from the rich man's table on earth.
  - The rich man could call out to Abraham, even though he was *far away*.
- *But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony'*
  - Obviously, the having or not having of wealth does not determine which place you end up in.
  - Lazarus was being comforted, possibly because he could hear and see Hades in the distance or possibly because of the suffering he had in his life on earth.
- *And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, so that those who wish to come over from here to you will not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.'*
  - Between the good and the bad side there is a *great chasm* (a deep canyon)
  - This chasm is fixed, i.e., there is no changing it or getting over it.
  - No one on the good side, who want to comfort and help those on the bad side, are able to.
  - And no one on the bad side can cross over to the good side—their eternal destiny is fixed once they have died.
- *And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, that you send him to my father's house—for I have five brothers—in order that he may warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment'*—I once heard of a sermon entitled, “Who in hell cares?” The answer is: “Everyone.” There was no second chance for this man, so the next best thing would be to warn his brothers so they wouldn't go to Hades. Also, notice there is no reincarnation or going back from the dead. *It is appointed for men to die once...* (Hebrews 9:27).
- *But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them'*—i.e., they have the Scriptures, which tell them how to spend eternity with God and not in Hades.
- *But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!'*—The rich man wants a miracle—he assumes that if someone raises from the dead, his brothers will believe, but we know this is unlikely. When the other Lazarus was raised from the dead, the Pharisees, *from that day on they planned together to kill Him [Jesus]* (John 11:53).
  - Interestingly, the only one to mention “repent” is the rich man. He finally understood in death the truths he had chosen to ignore in life. He desperately wants his brothers to repent.
- *But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead''*—Man's failure to believe is not due to any lack of evidence but due to a closed heart.

### Thoughts and Applications

1. It wasn't the rich man's riches that sent him to Hades any more than it was the poor man's lack of riches that sent him to Abraham's bosom, but rather whether or not these men believed the Scriptures—Moses and the prophets. Jesus affirmed the superiority of Scripture to all other supposed authorities. It has the most compelling information to prepare us for death.
2. Hades (and hell) are real places. God's justice demands that the wicked must bear the wrath of God in hell or accept Jesus and His payment on the cross for our sins. There is no escape.
3. The person who ignores the Word of God in life will not be ignored by the God of the Word in eternity.

# Luke 17

## Stumbling Blocks — 17:1-19

- *And He said to His disciples, “It is inevitable that stumbling blocks [lit. “to spring forward and back, slam shut, close on something”] should come—something like a rabbit trap, with a spring-loaded door.*
- *but woe to **him** through whom they come!*—those who lay the traps, whether intentionally or not. This stumbling block is pointing someone to something other than the Bible to find “truth.” Jesus is referring to the Pharisees here, who were leading people away from God.
- *It would be better for **him** if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea*—a horrible death. Millstones in Capernaum were basalt stone, from the volcano of the Sea of Galilee. It’s a heavy, dark stone, often used as foundations in constructions, as well as grinding grains. A pole is put through the millstone and it turns on the table rock by either a human or animal, and it crushes the grains. Capernaum has many of them, and it is right on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, so a very vivid picture for the disciples. Matthew 13:40-42 says *just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age the Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks...and will cast them into the furnace of fire...* These are the false teachers and false prophets, leading people away from the knowledge of God and His Word.
- *than that **he** should cause one of these little ones to stumble*—“little ones” refers to those who are needy or emotionally wounded or ignorant of spiritual matters, immature believers



## Thoughts and Applications

- Because Luke uses the pronouns *him* and *he* rather than **you** (disciples), it seems he is referring to unbelievers, such as the Pharisees, or false teachers in our day who lead the unsuspecting away from the Word of God.
- Believers can also be stumbling blocks when we speak or act as an unbeliever. For example, Peter was a stumbling block to Jesus when he tried to turn Him away from the cross (Matthew 16:23). Jesus said, *Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.* Peter was speaking as Satan would, not as God would.
- Sometimes we **are** to be a stumbling block. Paul wrote, *But we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to Gentiles* (1 Corinthians 1:23). But, in this case, we are trying to communicate the truth of God’s Word, and, to some, that will be a stumbling block.

## Ways We Can Cause Others to Stumble (Deffinbaugh, bible.org)

1. Competition—cf. Matthew 18:1ff.; also Mark 9—when we seek to get ahead of our brethren, we will not seek to build them up, but rather to tear them down; we construct ways in which to see to it that our brethren fall. (Note that the disciples’ arguing over who was the greatest brought about our Lord’s words about stumbling blocks in both Matthew and Mark.)
2. False teaching—Malachi 2:8; Romans 16:17; James 3; Revelation 2:14.
3. Flattery—Proverbs 7:21-22; 26:28; 29:5.
4. Ungodly rebuke & counsel—Job’s friends/Peter & Jesus (Matthew 16:23).
5. Use of liberties which are detrimental to weaker brethren—Romans 14:20; 1 Corinthians 8:9; 10:32; 2 Corinthians 6:2.
6. Passing judgment on others—Romans 14:13.



7. By abusing our position or power / setting a bad example—James 3. Sexual, physical, psychological abuse of children.
8. By not living in the light, but continuing in the deeds of darkness: 1 John 2:10. 2 Corinthians 6:3 (cf. vv. 1-13).
9. By “judging,” I take it, imposing standards above the Scriptures—cf. Romans 14:13; cf. James 4:11-12.

### **Protect Your Relationships against Lingering Resentments — 17:3-4**

- *“Be on your guard!”*—“to be in a state of alert, be concerned about, care for, take care,” in the present tense, ongoing alertness.
- *If your brother*—a fellow believer. We are not responsible for those we don’t know, but when it is someone close to us, we are responsible to do something about their sin. Also, Jesus is reminding us that this person is our *brother* and still our *brother* when they sin. We can’t be like the older brother in the parable of the prodigal, and disown those close to us who sin.
- *Sins*—I think this could also possibly mean a personal offense against you, not only actual sin against God.
- *rebuke him*—call attention to the wrongdoing and define the consequences if ignored. It’s in the aorist, indicating immediate action. Don’t let the offense fester, endangering the whole relationship. The goal is repentance and reconciliation. It’s very hard to do, but it’s the right thing to do.
- *and if he repents, forgive him*—lit. “release him,” i.e., set the person free from the consequences of his action. Aorist, again, do it immediately, on the basis of his/her verbal repentance. Don’t look for some other “proof” of repentance. Confront quickly. Forgive quickly.
- *And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, ‘I repent,’ forgive him*—It doesn’t necessarily mean the same sin. He may sin repeatedly and habitually in other ways. How can we forgive this much? It’s an act of faith and obedience to God.

### **Thoughts and Applications**

The writer of Hebrews said, *See to it that...no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled* (12:15). Confront, repent, forgive—then no bitterness.

### **Grow toward Maturity in Faith — 17:5-6**

- In this context, it seems like the disciples are wondering how they can forgive that much. Must be they need more faith. So that’s what they ask Jesus for.
- *And the apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!”*—They want more quantity of faith
- *And the Lord said, “If you had faith like a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree (known for its hold on the soil), ‘Be uprooted and be planted in the sea’; and it would obey you*—Jesus replied that it is not quantity of faith, it’s the nature of faith. You can have just a small amount of faith, like a mustard seed. They needed to exercise the faith they already had in Jesus, the Messiah. Jesus did not give them what they requested. He did not increase their faith.

### **Thoughts and Applications**

It’s not that your faith doesn’t grow. We know from Romans that *faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ* (10:17). Faith can come only through the Scriptures. But you need to exercise the faith you already have. God may test that faith, as He did to Job.

### **Serve the Kingdom without Expecting Gratitude — 17:7-10**

- *But which of you, having a slave plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come immediately and sit down to eat’? But will he not say to him, ‘Prepare*

*something for me to eat, and properly clothe yourself and serve me until I have eaten and drunk; and afterward you will eat and drink?*—Perhaps think of this as an employee and employer.

- *He does not thank the slave because he did the things which were commanded, does he?*—When an employee does his job, he shouldn't expect to be thanked for doing what he's supposed to do.
- *So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which we ought to have done'*—We are to see ourselves as unworthy. Jesus earlier said to deny yourself. Therefore, who are we, to not forgive? As servants of Christ, we are supposed to forgive. We are to be exercising the faith we already have in obedience to Christ.

### **Thoughts and Applications**

God is our Superior. He has brought us into His household as a gift of His grace. Service to Him is our duty, our responsibility, our privilege. Our very best efforts or works will not gain us God's gratitude. We will never impress God by what we do. We can never put Him under obligation to us. [The Pharisees, however, taught that their "good" behavior was to be rewarded—they "deserved" material blessing from God. They actually put God in the position of debtor!!] God has forgiven us by His grace. We don't deserve it. It was so helpful to me to realize by forgiving, I was not saying what that person did was ok. Forgiveness is an act of grace—it's not holding the consequences of their behavior against them, not because they deserve it but *forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you* (Ephesians 4:32). Faith operates in the realm of grace, and grace should produce gratitude. This is the motive for forgiving others.

### **Cultivate a Grateful Attitude — 17:11-19**

- *And it came about while He was on the way to Jerusalem, that He was passing between Samaria and Galilee. And as He entered a certain village, ten leprous men who stood at a distance met Him*—These men probably banded together as outcasts, even living in Samaria. Nine of them, it implies, were Jews, to whom Jesus told to show themselves to the priests when they were healed (Leviticus 14:1-32). But one of them was a Samaritan.
- *and they raised their voices [from a distance], saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" And when He saw them, He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests."*
- *And it came about that **as they were going**, they were cleansed*—Their healing took place as they responded to the command of Jesus to go.
- *Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice, and he fell on his face at His feet, giving thanks to Him. And he was a Samaritan*—What an embarrassment to the Jews, that the Samaritan acted more godly than the Jews did (very similar to the "Good Samaritan" story).
- *And Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine — where are they? Was no one found who turned back to give glory to God, except this foreigner?"*
- *And He said to him, "Rise, and go your way; your faith has made you well (lit. "saved")."* It seems that all ten lepers were physically saved from leprosy, but only one was spiritually saved, the one who gave glory to God and fell in worship of Jesus.

### **Thoughts and Applications**

Be a grateful person. The servant in the previous paragraph was not to expect to be thanked for doing what he was supposed to do. In this paragraph is the reverse. Nine of the lepers received God's grace, but did not give Jesus gratitude, praise, and worship. I think we don't give thanks because we really think we deserve whatever. But if you consider yourself an unworthy servant, you will be a thankful person. [What an encouragement to Theophilus. The Jews experienced God's grace, but it

was the Gentile/Samaritan who was saved and worshipped Jesus. He was saved not because of who he was or any works. It was by faith in Jesus Christ.]

### **The Signs of the Kingdom — 17:20-25**

- *Now having been questioned by the Pharisees*—One wonders at the sincerity of these men. Jesus only answered them briefly, compared to the disciples in the next paragraph.
- *as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, “The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or, ‘There it is!’ For behold, the kingdom of God is [emphatic tense] in your midst”*—The kingdom is not far from its King!! Jesus didn’t explain more to them. People who reject the King, don’t need information about the kingdom. And here, Jesus is saying His first coming and His Second Coming are all part of the kingdom of God coming to the earth.
- *And He said to the disciples, “The days shall come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it*—The disciples believed in Jesus and His kingdom. But before they see that kingdom, Jesus is going to disappear (after His death, resurrection, and ascension). The disciples will *long to see* Jesus, who walked among them.
- *And they will say to you, ‘Look there! Look here!’ Do not go away, and do not run after them*—While the King is absent, people will claim the kingdom has come in one form or another, but they will be wrong. Don’t listen to them. These are false messiahs.
- *For just as the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day*—Lightening illustrates both the dramatic suddenness and the broad visibility of Jesus’ Coming. There will be no mistaking His Second Coming. And it also suggests the supernatural aspect of His Coming—from the heavens. You won’t mistake it.
- *But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation*—But first, the Jewish people right there in front of Jesus will reject Him and kill Him.

### **Thoughts and Applications**

The King of God’s kingdom was on earth, but He was rejected by the Jews living at His time. So He was killed, resurrected, and ascended into heaven. So now we, the people of His kingdom, long to see Him. He will return. And there will be no mistaking it. It will be a worldwide act of God.

### **Two Old Testament Illustrations — 17:26-37**

- *And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it shall be also in the days of the Son of Man [Second Coming]: they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all*—In Noah’s generation, the people did not listen to Noah’s warning about the Flood. Instead, their lives carried on as normal, “secure” in their future. The emphasis is on normal life, not on their wickedness. Then they perished.
- *It was the same as happened in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all*—Again, the emphasis is on their normal life, not on their wickedness.

## Thoughts and Applications

- In both these cases, the wicked people were going about life as usual. Noah had preached (2 Peter 2:5), the people then saw the ark being built for 120 years. Lot was a righteous man, living in Sodom (2 Peter 2:7-8). The wicked people didn't like Lot *acting like a judge* concerning their wickedness (Genesis 19:9). They had opportunities to believe, but they didn't do it. So there will be many opportunities to believe during the Tribulation: for example, the 144,000 sealed men, the 2 witnesses in Jerusalem, the angel flying around the world with the Gospel message.
- In the 7 years before the Second Coming, there will be the Tribulation. It's interesting that in spite of all the wars, death, wrath, etc., the wicked people of the antichrist who take the mark of the beast, will still be carrying on life as usual. (Believers will be martyred or hiding.)
- *It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed*—People will be going about their daily living.
- *On that day, let not the one who is on the housetop and whose goods are in the house go down to take them away; and likewise let not the one who is in the field turn back. Remember Lot's wife*—People love their “stuff.” Lot's wife turned back to Sodom. That's where her treasure was. She gave it one last, longing look. And she was gone.
- *Whoever seeks to keep his (earthly) life shall lose it (in eternity), and whoever loses his life (becomes a believer) shall preserve it (in eternity).*
  
- *I tell you, on that night there will be two in one bed; one will be taken, and the other will be left*—Could be a married couple or children.
- *There will be two women grinding at the same place; one will be taken, and the other will be left*
- [*“Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other will be left.”*]*]*—This verse is not in many manuscripts, but it is basically a quote of Matthew 24:40.
- This is like the time of Noah and Lot. Who was taken then and who was left? The wicked were taken away in judgment, and the righteous were left alive. So at the Second Coming. The wicked are taken, i.e., killed. The righteous are left alive to go into the Millennial Kingdom.
  - I often hear these examples used to explain the Rapture—where the one taken is Raptured and the one left on earth is the wicked. That is not the context of these verses. Jesus is talking about the Second Coming and the kingdom. He is NOT talking about the church age and the Rapture!!!

*And answering they said to Him, “Where, Lord?” And He said to them, “Where the body is, there also will the vultures be gathered.”*—I don't understand their question of “where?” But Matthew 24:28 says, *Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather*, and this is quoted as an assurance of the Second Coming. Wherever you have a dead body (think about animals killed, laying on the road), soon the vultures will gather there. It's a sure thing. After the description of the Second Coming, we read in Revelation 19:17-18, *And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, “Come, assemble for the great supper of God; in order that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great.”* So the Second Coming of Jesus is a sure thing that all the world will see, *just as the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky.*

“Prophecy is like a road map. It tells you where you are, where you are going, and how to get there alive” (Swindoll).