

Our goal in studying the Bible is two-fold. One part of the goal as we read is to engage with our **mind**, to grow in our knowledge of who God is as he has revealed himself in his word. The other part of our goal is to engage with our **heart**, by responding to God as we read with our love, praise, gratitude, confession, needs, questions, and desires.

Engaging with our mind *and* heart as we seek the help of the Holy Spirit helps us grow in an intimate relationship with God through Jesus our Savior as we see him more clearly, know him better and love him more.

Day 1- Read Luke 12

- How is God revealed in this chapter? What is he like? Who is Jesus shown to be? What is he like?

Pray: Spend time in adoration and thanksgiving.

- What is human nature shown to be like in this chapter? Is this true of you in your life right now?

Pray: Spend time in confession and repentance.

- What does this passage of Scripture show that you need from God? How does your heart need to move to align with what you see in Scripture? Is there something you need to believe? Is there action you need to take?

Pray: Spend time asking God for what you need to live for him.

Meditation: *Luke 12: 48b "Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more."*

Day 2- Luke 12:1-12

1. In chapter 11 Jesus had been warning the Pharisees about their empty religious practices, pride and self-righteousness. Now he warns his disciples (as well as us) to

beware of the sin of hypocrisy that has invaded and permeated the hearts of the Pharisees. Look up the word *hypocrisy* in the dictionary and write its' meaning here.

2. Why does acting a part or not being truthful about who you are, not work in the long run according to Jesus in verses 2-3?



The fundamental hypocrisy of the Pharisees was taking them to hell. They looked pious on the outside, but inside their hearts were corrupt and far from God. But even as believers we need to be on guard against hypocrisy. In the New Testament we are exhorted to put away hypocrisy, to be genuine, and sincere. What people see on the outside of us should be the same as what's on the inside.

Hypocrisy can go two ways; one way is like the Pharisees; the other way is the way Peter acted when he denied Jesus. He was pretending not to be a follower of Jesus. He wasn't being truthful about who he was, he was acting a part. Both kinds of hypocrisy come from caring more about what people think than about what God thinks.

The antidote to hypocrisy is to fear God not man and to live knowing that God sees all and anything we are trying to hide will be revealed one day.

Reflect on these thoughts to help you see any hypocrisy that might be present in your life: (The first four questions are based on thoughts from Mike McKinley in *Luke for You*)

- ❖ Do you ever pretend to be more holy than you are?
- ❖ Are you ever unwilling to confess sin and ask for help?
- ❖ Do you ever judge people based on your own self-made rules for holiness?
- ❖ Are you comfortable with certain private sins as long as they don't come to light?
- ❖ Do you ever hide the fact that you are a believer?
- ❖ Do you ever back down from the truth in God's word because you are afraid of being rejected?
- ❖ Do you ever compromise your standards to fit it?

3. At this point Jesus' ministry was mainly one of warning and judgment. Things were getting dicey around Jesus. The last verses in chapter 11 tells us the Pharisees were pressing Jesus hard, provoking him and lying in wait for him. The disciples may have been afraid of what the powerful religious leaders thought, so Jesus warns them about hypocrisy and also about who they should fear and who they should not fear.

-Who should we not fear? (v.4) Why?

-Why does Jesus tell us to fear God? (v.5)

-At the same time, why as believers, should we not be afraid? (v.6-7) How does this bring comfort to you?

-How does the cross reconcile the two facts that we should fear God because he can send us to hell and we should not be afraid because he loves us?

For Discussion: Before believers come to saving faith they are enemies of Christ, why then is it true that one who speaks a word against the son of Man can be forgiven?

Scholar's Note: "Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is that self-righteous persistent refusal to embrace the offer of salvation in Christ: his ministry of restoring his Father's broken creation. It is to set one's face against the Spirit's testimony to Christ as the Son of Man with the authority to forgive sins. The problem is the human heart settled in opposition to God. Without repentance there is no forgiveness."¹

4. In verse 11, what does Jesus tell his followers not to be anxious about?

-What promise follows in verse 12?

-How do you think this promise applies to you?

Day 3- Luke 12:13-34

5. How does what Jesus says in verse 15b, give you a clue to why Jesus refuses to make a judgment about the man's inheritance? (The Greek word for life that Jesus uses is *zoe* which means meaningful, purposeful, eternal life².)

Scholar's Note: Covetousness- inordinately or wrongly desirous of wealth or possessions; greedy

6. What does Jesus' admonition to *take care* and *be on your guard* against covetousness, tell us about the nature of covetousness?
7. What did the way the man used his money show he treasured or valued above all in verse 19?

Scholar's Note: "The word "fool" (aphron, v.20) is not used lightly but in the OT sense of one who rejects the knowledge and precepts of God as a basis for life."³

For Discussion: If the man treasured God above everything, what are some ways he would have handled the blessing of an abundant harvest?

Digging Deeper: Read the following verses:

1 Timothy 6:17-19 "As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life. "

-How do these verses that Paul wrote to Timothy help those who have much in this world know how to avoid covetousness and be rich toward God?

8. List all the reasons you can find in verses 22-30 that Jesus tells his followers not to worry.

Picture and Ponder: "Worry is the emotional reward of material preoccupation."⁴



At this point in Luke we should be getting used to Jesus' upside down kingdom where his followers love those who hate them, do good to those who are evil, rejoice when they are persecuted, where the mysteries of God are revealed to the poor and lowly, and where the King of creation will die a criminal's death.

Jesus tells us how we can actually have the power to live without worrying and it is right in line with the ethics of his upside down kingdom. He says as his followers we must seek God's kingdom first (v.31), and live a life of giving (v.33). This is the opposite of what the world teaches us. The world says to be free from worry we must build up our own kingdom, gather as much for ourselves as we can and hang onto it tightly.

We can freely and confidently live this kingdom ethic that totally defies the logic of the world because Jesus tenderly promises us that God will joyfully give us the kingdom we seek, and that he will provide what we need as we seek it.

- ❖ How does what we worry about reveal where our hearts find joy and satisfaction?
- ❖ Why does worry fueled by fear insult God?
- ❖ Describe what it looks like to seek God's kingdom first.
- ❖ In what ways do you have giving built into your life?

Day 4- Luke 12:35-48

Flowing out of his warning against material greed and preoccupation, Jesus adds, in verses 35-48, another dimension to seeking God's kingdom first, another way to inoculate against the temptation to focus on this world and what it has to offer.

Scholar's Note: Weddings in ancient Israel did not start or stop at a specific time. When the preparations were complete, the guests were summoned (cf. Matt. 22: 2- 4). The celebration could cover up to seven days, depending on how many people were there and how long the food lasted.⁵ ...the time of the master's return could be anyone's guess.⁶

9. What adjectives would you use to describe the servants in Jesus' analogy in verses 35-36?

10. What surprising blessing do Jesus' servants, who are ready and waiting for his return, receive in verse 37? How does this make you feel?

11. What does Jesus tell us about the timing of his coming in verse 40? How is it possible to be ready for this?

12. From what we have studied in Luke so far, what do you think a life that is vigilant and prepared for Jesus' return looks like?

13. In verse 42, what are the attributes of the servant who Jesus will bless when he returns?

Picture and Ponder: A resolution of Jonathan Edwards- "Resolved, never to do any thing which I should be afraid to do if I expected it would not be above an hour before I should hear the last trump."⁷

14. What, in verse 45, caused the faithless servant's true colors to be exposed? What things do you try to get away with when you think no one is watching?

15. Verse 48b says, “to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more.” What has God given you and entrusted you with?

Day 5- Luke 12:49-59

16. The baptism that Jesus is talking about in verse 50 is his death on the cross. What is the anticipation of that event causing?

Digging Deeper: Read the following verse:

Luke 2:14 “Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

- Who experiences the peace of God according to this verse?

- How would you divide all of humanity into two categories?

- How does this help you understand the division Jesus is talking about in verses 51-53?

Picture and Ponder: “We must not miss how extraordinary Jesus’ teaching here really is. Teachers do not normally claim priority over family relationships, but Jesus does. There are many places in the world where a person’s decision to follow Christ means that they will be cut off by and from their families. In other places, one person’s decision to follow Christ may introduce awkwardness into the life of a family or tension into a marriage. Those things are very difficult to deal with, but none of them constitute legitimate grounds for not following Jesus. We simply cannot hold any loyalty above our loyalty to Christ; he is no ordinary teacher and his disciples may have to pay a very high price in order to follow him.”⁸



If you have children or a spouse or parents or siblings that have wandered away from God or rejected him, you know the terrible pain that this causes in your life and heart. This is not the occasion for despair, but for fervent, persevering prayer and hope in our merciful God. Keep your loved ones in prayer and your eyes on God with these verses:

"For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy." Daniel 9:18b

"As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid look to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the LORD our God till he shows us His mercy." Psalm 123:2

"May your mercy come quickly to meet us for we are in desperate need." Psalm 79:8

"As for you, O LORD you will not restrain your mercy from me, your steadfast love and your faithfulness will ever preserve me!" Psalm 40:11

"Wait for the Lord. Be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord." Psalm 27:14



Jesus points out to the crowd that they know how to read the signs for the coming weather (vs. 54-55) and if they are smart they try and resolve a conflict with an opponent to avoid condemnation and penalty (vs. 57-58), but they won't do the same in regard to their spiritual well-being.

The word Jesus uses in verse 56 for *time* "has the sense of an opportunity that has been presented, or a season that has begun but will only last a certain amount of time."⁹ They refuse to see that the time for salvation is now (2 Cor. 6:2) and that they need to be reconciled to God before they pay the ultimate penalty.

Paul says in 2 Corinthians 6:2, "Behold, now is the favorable time, behold, now is the day of salvation." If you have not repented of your sins and put your trust in Jesus as your Savior and King you can do that today, right now. We don't know if we will have tomorrow, so be reconciled to God today!

Even if you have surrendered your life to Jesus and are following him maybe there are still some issues God has been talking to you about that you keep putting off. Reflect on these thoughts:

- ❖ What is an area in your spiritual life that you have been procrastinating on?

- ❖ Is there a sin or weakness that you have been turning a blind eye to that needs attention now?

- ❖ What kinds of things in our daily earthly life do we not procrastinate on or turn a blind eye to? Why is this true?

One Thing: Look back over this week's study. Pick one thing that God impressed on you, convicted you about, or something new that you learned and write it here.

How will knowing this impact the way you think and act?

¹ Cole, Graham, *Engaging with the Holy Spirit*, p.29 quoted in *Luke 1-12 For You*, McKinley, Mike. The Good Book Publishing Company 2016

² MacArthur, John F. (2011-02-21). *Luke 1-24 MacArthur New Testament Commentary Set* (MacArthur New Testament Commentary Series) (Kindle Location 17453). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

³ *Expositor's Commentary*

⁴ Hughes, R. Kent. *Luke, That You May Know the Truth, Preaching the Word series*, (Crossway, Wheaton Ill. 2015)

⁵ MacArthur, John F. (2011-02-21). *Luke 1-24 MacArthur New Testament Commentary Set* (MacArthur New Testament Commentary Series) (Kindle Locations 17876-17878). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

⁶ Hughes, R. Kent. *Luke, That You May Know the Truth, Preaching the Word series*, (Crossway, Wheaton Ill. 2015)

⁷ (The Works of Jonathan Edwards, Volume One, page 21) McKinley, Mike (2017-05-01). *Luke 12-24 For You: For reading, for feeding, for leading* (God's Word For You Book 14) (p. 19). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

⁸ McKinley, Mike (2017-05-01). *Luke 12-24 For You: For reading, for feeding, for leading* (God's Word For You Book 14) (pp. 23-24). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

⁹ *Ibid.*

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