

Luke 12:1-21

Warnings and Encouragements

¹ Meanwhile, when a crowd of many thousands had gathered, so that they were trampling on one another, Jesus began to speak first to his disciples, saying: “Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. ² There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. ³ What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs.

⁴ “I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. ⁵ But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him. ⁶ Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. ⁷ Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

⁸ “I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God. ⁹ But he who disowns me before men will be disowned before the angels of God. ¹⁰ And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

¹¹ “When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, ¹² for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.”

The Parable of the Rich Fool

¹³ Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”

¹⁴ Jesus replied, “Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?”

¹⁵ Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.”

¹⁶ And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. ¹⁷ He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’

¹⁸ “Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹ And I’ll say to myself, ‘You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.’”

²⁰ “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’

²¹ “This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God.”

Luke 12:1-21

1. What individuals or groups are most feared in our society? Do these people ever act in a hypocritical way? (What's the meaning of hypocrisy?)
2. What is the yeast of the Pharisees? Why use the illustration of yeast? What eventually happens to bread made with yeast? (Hebrews 4:13)
3. What did Jesus say his disciples should and should not fear? (12:4-5) How does this tie in to the imagery about the sparrows and hairs on your head? (12:6-7)
4. How was the disciples' loyalty to Jesus linked to Jesus' loyalty to them? (12:8-9) What situations tempt people to not acknowledge Jesus before others?
5. What's the meaning of Verse 12:10? If you speak against Jesus, you can be forgiven, but if you speak against the Holy Spirit, you cannot be forgiven? Huh?
6. If you think you might find yourself in a position where you have to defend your views or your faith, is it better to rehearse and be knowledgeable about what to say or just let the Holy Spirit put the right words in your mouth? (12:11-12)
7. How did your family regard possessions when you were growing up?
8. Is "eat, drink, and be merry" a non-Biblical idea? (12:19, Ecclesiastes 2:24, 3:13, 5:18, 8:15, 9:7)
9. Against what did Jesus warn the crowd? (12:15) Why?
10. What signs of greed can show up in a person's life?
11. With what parts of the parable can you identify? What parts of the parable make you uncomfortable? (12:16-20)
12. Does this parable say you should not plan for retirement or that you should not save money or valuables?
13. Why is it difficult for us to accept the fact that our life and things are temporary? What step can you take this week to become less dependent upon your possessions?