

Luke 12 pt. 1 vs. 01-12 ESV

In the meantime, when so many thousands of the people had gathered together that they were trampling one another, he began to say to his disciples first, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. ² Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. ³ Therefore whatever you have said in the dark shall be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops.

⁴ "I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do. ⁵ But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him! ⁶ Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. ⁷ Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows.

⁸ "And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God, ⁹ but the one who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God. ¹⁰ And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. ¹¹ And when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious about how you should defend yourself or what you should say, ¹² for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say."

1. In our last study, we looked at 7 rebukes that Jesus gave the Pharisees and scribes
2. As the crowds gather, Jesus turns His attention and speaks to His disciples
3. He's drawing a picture of what a disciple looks like
4. He speaks to them about what to expect as they interact with people

5. Part of our human nature is that we have a leaning toward being accepted, liked, respected, spoken well of
 - a. Because we have a sinful nature & this need of being accepted is so great, our tendency is to pretend in order to be accepted
 - b. We learn to pretend early on in life & we carry that into adulthood
 - c. This is because we know people are watching
 - d. Especially if you say you are a follower of God
 - e. People tend to have higher expectations if you say you're a Christian

I. Consistency

II. Concern

III. Confession

I. Consistency (vs. 1-3)

1. Beware of leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy
 - a. Leaven (yeast) is pictured as sin in the Bible
 - i. When the Israelites were ready to leave Egypt, God told them to get rid of all of the leaven in the house (Ex 12:15)
 - ii. Leaven is pictured in a negative light in the Bible
 - iii. The way it's used here is it's a picture of hypocrisy
 - b. A hypocrite was a stage actor who performed wearing different masks

- i. A happy face for one scene
 - ii. A sad face for another scene
 - 1. Regardless of his true feelings – it's just an act
 - c. Most actors began with small roles and got better and better
 - d. This is a warning about the sin of hypocrisy which begins small and ends up big
2. Chapter 11 closed with 7 warnings including 2 on hypocrisy
- a. Why the repeated warning?
 - b. Hypocrisy is a sin that grows and becomes deadly
 - c. It's subtle; It begins small and seems insignificant
 - d. Small lies become big lies until your whole life is one big lie
3. This is how the Pharisees chose to do life
- a. Being one thing on the outside and a different thing on the inside
 - b. It may seem harmless at first to pretend
 - c. We may do this to fit in, to be part of a group
 - d. After a short act, I need to put on a longer act, until my whole life is one big act
 - e. Eventually it will corrupt your entire being
 - f. This inconsistency will bring death
 - i. Death to who I really am because I'm always pretending

1. So my relationship with others is not genuine
2. And my relationship with God is not genuine
3. And yet, we can go through the motions

ii. It all springs from a desire to be accepted

g. **James 1:14** But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death

h. **Consistency is being the same on the inside as on the outside**

i. The same in private as in public

i. **Illustration:** Martin Luther gave a brief & powerful eulogy at a funeral of a pastor saying: "**What we preach, he lived**"

j. A man and a woman stopped to buy a meal and after they had paid for their food, they were handed a paper bag which, they assumed, contained their food. When they arrived at the place where they planned to eat, they opened up the sack and found that it contained the day's proceeds, and not their food.

k. The man closed the bag, went back to the place where he had been given the sack, and handed back the money, much to the relief of the employee who had mistakenly handed him the wrong bag.

l. The management of the business was so delighted at the man's honesty that they wanted to do something to honor the man. They started to call the press, so that a photographer could come and take

his picture. The man was very insistent that this not be done. Finally, because they seemed intent on calling the press anyway, the man explained his reluctance. "The woman with me is not my wife."
(Deffinbaugh)

- m. That's why Jesus rebuked the religious, because they had no intention of being honest & wanted to continue in their charade
4. Vs. 2,3 for there is nothing covered that will not be revealed or hidden that will not be known therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light and what you have spoken in the inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops
- a. There is nothing that's hidden from God
 - i. Every "secret" thing will be revealed
 - ii. We typically like to hide sins
 - iii. **Num 32:23** ... be sure your sin will find you out
 - iv. Like when you haven't thrown out the garbage, the odor emanates throughout the house
 - v. No matter how you try and mask it, the best solution is to get rid of it
 - b. This ties into hypocrisy of the heart because that's where we think we can hide and conceal the truth.
 - c. But the rottenness of sin has a way of exposing the garbage
 - d. What we have in our hearts and speaking privately will be revealed.

- i. That may mean here in this life or on judgement day
 - e. As far as being on earth, you may have moments when you're alone
 - f. **There is never a moment when you're truly alone**
 - g. **Nothing ever escapes God's presence – ever**
 - h. Whatever you're working so hard to hide will eventually come to light
 - i. **1 Cor 4:5** Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.
 - j. But if how you're living privately is good, you have nothing to fear
 - k. Jesus is teaching us that what we should be living in the light
 - l. No longer walking in habits or patterns that are destructive, addictive, embarrassing in hiding
5. If we learn that everything we think & say privately will be revealed, it will help us see the truth and prepare us to humble ourselves before God
6. Many live this double standard because of fear what others think & don't want to lose friends
7. This world is more real to them and they don't stop to consider that God is watching

II. Concern (vs. 4-7)

1. Don't be so concerned about what others think, a true friend loves you regardless
2. **I say to you, My friends...**
3. Jesus calls His disciples His friends
4. That's why He was so kind to the "sinners" – truly the friend of sinners
5. This is not just mentioned in the N.T
6. **Isaiah 41:8** "But you, Israel, *are* My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, The descendants of **Abraham My friend**.
 - a. Abraham was a pagan
7. Along with being our savior and Lord, Jesus calls us friends and tells us not be afraid of those who kill the body
8. I want you to live in such a way that you are not afraid of people and what they think
 - a. **Prov 29:25** Fearing people is a dangerous trap, but trusting the LORD means safety.
 - b. Don't be afraid of people
 - c. Regardless of what they do; even if you're threatened & killed for your faith.
 - d. A clear understanding of who God is will give you the proper perspective
9. The most that others can do is kill you physically; don't fear him

10. John Chrysostom was an early church father and a man of faith
 - a. He was exiled by the Empress Eudoxia; Chrysostom responded with:
 - b. "What can I fear? Will it be death? But you know that Christ is my life, and that I shall gain by death. Will it be exile? But the earth and all its fullness are the Lord's. Poverty I do not fear; riches I do not sigh for; and from death I do not shrink."

11. Only fear God who has the power to cast you into hell
 - a. No person has that power
 - b. Only God who will judge every person has that ability
 - c. It brings God no pleasure in destroying the wicked
 - d. And the very God who'll send unbelievers there is delivering the salvation message in person
 - e. When the message is that important, you deliver it in person

12. God is not angry or distant or harsh

13. He is a loving caring creator who takes everything into account
 - a. Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God.
 - b. But the very hairs on your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows
 - c. The tenderness of God looks at the most dispensable things like sparrows and doesn't forget any of them, even the free one
 - i. In **Matthew 10:29** we read that two sparrows are sold for a copper coin.

- ii. Here we learn that five sparrows are sold for two copper coins.
 - iii. In other words, an extra sparrow is thrown in free when four are purchased
 - iv. And this odd sparrow with no commercial value is not forgotten in the sight of God.
 - v. If God cares for that odd sparrow, how much more does He watch over [us] (**MacDonald**)
- d. The very hairs on your head are all numbered – that’s detail
 - e. Of the approximate 100k hairs on each person’s head (which changes daily), God is aware of each of them
 - f. God is concerned about the things that we think don’t really matter
 - g. In other words, we’re to put our trust in God, He knows and sees everything
 - i. Nothing will happen outside of His command
 - ii. If He allows challenging times, then He’ll make it work together for good

III. Confession (vs. 8-12)

1. I tell you, whoever acknowledge Me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God
2. History tells us that multiplied millions have met the challenge to publically confess Christ and gave their lives instead of deny Christ

3. Today, there are millions around the world persecuted for their faith
4. We may get there one day, but in this comfort of freedom, our lives need to bring honor to Jesus, not disgrace
 - a. **The first way to confess Christ is to be baptized**
 - i. Make a public declaration that you now belong to Jesus
 - b. **We confess Jesus as Lord by living in a way that honors God**
 - i. Spending time with the Lord and with other believers
 - c. **Also by speaking of Him to others & sharing your faith**
 - i. At the very least, answering questions to everyone who asks you
5. Disowning Him here means being disowned by Him in heaven
 - a. Many will hear, "I never knew you"
 - b. We're warned time and again because it's going to happen
6. All blasphemy will be forgiven except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit
 - a. One of the ways we blaspheme the Holy Spirit is to reject Jesus
 - b. Rejecting the only One who can forgive means eternal damnation
 - c. If you're concerned that you've blasphemed the Holy Spirit, you haven't
7. If you're taken into custody for your faith, don't worry about what you'll say
 - a. God will give you the words at that moment
8. This teaching is not a list of do's and don'ts
9. It's a picture of how a disciple is to live

- a. Live consistently – no hypocrisy
 - b. Live as one concerned only with what God thinks, no fear of man
 - c. Live confessing your faith in Christ – not ashamed of the gospel
10. The honest disciple will realize that that this is a tall order, we're not quite there yet
11. The truth is that there's a level of hypocrisy and everyone
- a. We sometimes care more what people think
 - b. We're sometimes ashamed of the gospel
12. If we look at Peter's life, we'll see
- a. He was not consistent – he still had to deal with hypocrisy
 - b. He was concerned for his life – when the garrison came for Jesus
 - c. He was ashamed of Jesus in front of a servant girl
 - d. Peter was one of Jesus' closest disciples
13. None of this took Jesus by surprise
- a. He knows that His followers will work through these issues
14. That's why Jesus is taking His disciples to Jerusalem
- a. Because this is where he will deal with the hypocrisy, the sin, the inconsistency on the cross.
 - b. This is where the old nature will be crucified with Christ
 - c. As Paul learned & said, I have been crucified with Christ...