

“Help for Holy Living”

Luke 12:1-12

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I. Introduction

- A. In the midst of the crowd and the growing confrontation, Jesus wanted to help His followers to live holy lives in a hostile world.
 - 1. He is speaking to His disciples (v. 1)
 - 2. Also, for us today who profess to be His followers
- B. In our text, there are four admonitions to help us live holy lives in a hostile world

II. Beware of Hypocrisy (Luke 12:1-3)

- A. “Beware” (v. 1)
 - 1. “Be on guard,” “look out,” “be cautious,” or “be on alert”
- B. “For hypocrisy” (v. 1)
 - 1. What is it?
 - 2. It’s called “the leaven of the Pharisees”
 - 3. Why the warning this time?
 - a) The danger is that, like leaven, it starts small but grows and permeates and puffs up
- C. Hypocrisy is “foolish” and “futile” (vv. 2-3)
 - 1. God’s truth is light and not leaven
 - 2. Don’t wait for the final judgement
 - 3. Confess your concealed sin to God
 - 4. The sin of hypocrisy and the snare of popularity have brought ruin to many a servant of God. Don’t let it happen!

III. Don’t Fear Men, Fear God (Luke 12:4-7)

- A. The fear of man (v. 4)
 - 1. A sinful fear
 - 2. The fear of man leads to hypocrisy
 - a) “The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe” (Proverbs 29:25 NKJV).
- B. The fear of God (v. 5)
 - 1. A sanctified fear
 - 2. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge (or wisdom)” (Proverbs 1:7).
 - 3. What is the fear of the Lord?
 - a) “Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him” (Psalm 33:8).
 - b) “*Awe, emotion in which is dread, veneration and wonder are variously mingled. A profound and humbly fearful reverence inspired by God.*” – Joseph Bayly
 - c) Illustration- Moses in Exodus 3:6 before the burning bush
 - d) (Isaiah 6)
 - e) Illustration- Martin Luther

f) Illustration- The Scottish reformer John Knox as he was being lowered into his grave. It said, "Here lies one who feared God so much that he never feared the face of man."

g) We need the fear of God in the church today

C. The fear of the Lord is a secure fear (Luke 12:6-7)

1. We are valuable to God. We are made in His image and objects of His redemption

a) He gave His life for us on the cross

b) "If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:31-32)

c) "Casting all your care upon Him, for he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7 NKJV).

d) Illustration- His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.

IV. Confess Christ Openly (Luke 12:8-9)

A. Jesus gave us a promise (v.8)

1. "If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved" (Romans 10:9-10).

2. True faith always moves from the heart to the lips

a) And once we confess Christ openly, we will find it easier to live the truth and avoid hypocrisy

B. Jesus issued a warning (v. 9)

1. Don't be a "secret service Christian"

2. Illustration- I witness by my actions

3. Illustration- My faith is a very personal thing

4. If we are true Christians, we must confess Christ openly

a) With no fear of man, only the fear of God

V. Rely on the Holy Spirit's Power (Luke 12:10-12)

A. A warning (v. 10)

1. Who is the Holy Spirit?

2. What does it mean to blaspheme Him?

B. A promise of the Holy Spirit's help (vv. 11-12)

1. The Holy Spirit is our "Helper" or "Comforter"

2. The Holy Spirit is our teacher

VI. Conclusion

A. Fear God the Father

B. Confess God the Son

C. Rely on God, the Holy Spirit