

The Gospel of Luke

Lesson 22

As Jesus continues on his journey to Jerusalem, He encounters increasing opposition, rejection and hostility from the religious leaders of Israel. For example, when Jesus was driving out a demon, so that the man who had been mute began to speak, Luke records that some in the crowd said, "By Beelzebub, the prince of demons, he is driving out demons" (Luke 11:15). In response to this opposition, Jesus pronounces a series of six woes against the Pharisees and teachers of the law.

He warns that they major in the minors by ignoring and neglecting the important principles of justice and love of God while adhering to the forms of Jewish religion for personal appearance, gain, and recognition. These leaders love the most important seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplace, load down people with burdens they could hardly carry, kill the prophets and fail to properly teach the people the things of God by taking away from them the keys of knowledge. Luke records that as a result the Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to oppose Jesus fiercely and to "...besiege him with questions, waiting to catch him in something he might say" (Luke 11:54).

As we begin this lesson, may we repent of our own form and appearance of religion, and instead focus our hearts and minds on the One who is "The Way," "The Truth," and "The Life," Jesus of Nazareth, who has redeemed us through His work on the cross, reconciling us to God, and who has promised never to leave us nor forsake us.

Warnings and Encouragements

1. Read Luke 12:1.
 - A. Jesus warns his disciples to "...be on guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." Why do you think He speaks to his disciples first?
 - B. Using a dictionary, define:
 - (1) Yeast
 - (2) Leaven
 - (3) Hypocrisy
 - C. Why is hypocrisy like yeast (leaven) and why is it so dangerous?
2. Read Luke 12:2-3 and Matthew 10:24-27.

- A. In Matthew 10:27, by way of encouragement, what does Jesus command His disciples then and now to do regarding what He whispers in their ears?
- B. What do you think Jesus means when He says, “What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight” (Matt. 10:27)? Do you have a personal example that illustrates this principle? Please explain.
- C. From Luke 12:2-3 and Matthew 10:26, what does Jesus say will be the result of attempts to conceal or hide thoughts, attitudes, words or actions from God?
- D. What do the following Scriptures reveal about our accountability to God?
- (1) Hebrews 4:12-13
- (2) Hebrews 9:27

3. Read 2 Samuel 11:1 through 12:13 and 16:20-22. Describe how the principle that “nothing is hidden from God” is illustrated.

4. What encouragement in dealing with sin is offered in Psalm 32:1-7?

5. Read Luke 12:4-7 and Matthew 10:28-31.
 - A. What term of endearment does Jesus use in addressing His disciples?

 - B. What factors does Jesus say we are to be aware of in deciding whom to fear?

6. Read Luke 12:8-10 and Matthew 10:32-33. How does Jesus encourage His disciples then and now in being bold to acknowledge Him before other people?

7. Read Luke 12:11-12 and Matthew 10:17-20.
 - A. What does Jesus say will happen to His followers?

B. What does Jesus say they are not to do?

C. Why?

D. How are Jesus' words a comfort to disciples, including us?

8. Read Acts 23:12 through 26:32.

A. How are the principles outlined in Luke 12:11-12 and Matthew 10:17-20 illustrated in the life of the apostle Paul and his defense of the gospel?

B. How might you apply these principles in your life? If you have an illustration of having done so, please share it.