

## Notes And Helps to Instructors

Thank you for volunteering to lead a group through the treasures of God's word! You may feel overwhelmed or inadequate, but you can do this! The leader notes are designed to help you grow in knowledge and love for Christ and for you to help pass what you have received to your group. Here are some suggestions to help equip you to grow in your teaching and leading ability.

- These lessons could simply be read, and a group would receive something but that is not how they are designed. The notes are designed to grow you as a leader so you might tailor the lesson for the needs of your group. Some groups may not have much of a knowledge base in the bible, so the concepts must be brought down to their level. Other groups may have a large knowledge base and you may challenge them with more information. The key is to know your group. If you begin leading a group in one way and find that it is not connecting, it is alright to modify and bring down or raise up the level of information.
- The more preparation you do the stronger you will be as a leader. Let the study material be a joy for you! Let it feed you as you prepare! The more you are fed the more you have to give to your group.
- There is no set time on how long a lesson may take. Lessons could be slowed down and take several weeks to finish. Perhaps in leading a group, one question captivates the group and leads to a fruitful conversation. If that happens, that is good! You are in no hurry. If you can finish the material in a week, then great! But if it takes several, that is great as well! The important thing is that they receive deeply from the gospel of Jesus.
- Pray about your lesson! Pray as you prepare! Pray as you teach! Remember we do not teach or exercise our gifts in our own strength. The Holy Spirit is the one who opens the heart and mind. Pray for the Spirit to move in your heart and the heart of the group.

May our merciful Triune God bless your study and your group that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith-- that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

In Christ,

Prison Discipleship Ministry

## Lessons in Luke -- Lesson 6 – Jesus and Fear

### Introduction:

In these lessons we are looking at the ministry of Jesus found in the Gospel of Luke. Simeon prophesied over baby Jesus that He would raise up many weak persons and bring down many proud persons (Luke 2:33-35). We see our next example of this in Luke 12:1-5.

### Read this passage at least five times then answer the questions as best you can:

<sup>NKJ</sup> **Luke 12:1** In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first *of all*, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. <sup>2</sup> "For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. <sup>3</sup> "Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops. <sup>4</sup> "And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. <sup>5</sup> "But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him! (Luk 12:1-5 NKJ)

Leaven is another word for yeast. We put yeast in bread so that it can permeate all the flour and make the bread rise. What is the “yeast” of the Pharisees? What does Jesus mean by this?

The yeast of the Pharisees is hypocrisy. Hypocrisy has permeated every part of their being. The Pharisees believed that they were keeping the law of God, but in reality, they were breaking it daily in their hearts. Jesus called them out on their hypocrisy in Matthew 23. Read that chapter and hear just how deep it goes. Jesus called them out again in Matthew 5:17-48 and 6:1-18. Read these sections and hear his words to them. Also, read Mark 7:1-13 where they kept the traditions of the elders, and so they believed they were keeping the law of God, but Jesus showed them their hypocrisy that in keeping their traditions they have made void the law of God.

Jesus called them hypocrites because they proclaimed their outward righteousness, but they inwardly were the worst of sinners. Their self-righteousness had blinded them to their true spiritual state. They were filled with pride and looked down on others; however, they were sinners and more filthy than those they looked down on.

In verses 2-3 Jesus talks about things “covered/revealed,” “hidden/known,” “spoken/proclaimed.” How does this explain the Pharisees and their hypocrisy?

The Pharisees did a good job in hiding their sins from the world. All who looked on their outward appearance would have been very impressed by their outward righteousness. But Jesus sees the heart. And he sees that their heart is stained and filthy with sin. Jesus said in Matt 5:20, “For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.” Outward righteousness is not enough. Jesus looks at the heart. Because Jesus knows their heart, he can rightly judge their sin.

How does hypocrisy in some people cause other people to fear?

As part of fallen human nature, we compare ourselves to others, and others make a point of their self-righteous goodness as evidenced by fame, fortune, and success. When one compares his “resume” to the “resume” of the rich and famous, he can be intimidated by his lack. We believe that the power that comes from money protects us from the troubles of life which we fear. Read Psalm 73 and note the psalmist’s struggles with envy of the rich and the “good” life they live.

What is the “good” part of being killed? What time-period does this involve?

When a person kills you, though it is an evil act, there is nothing more they can do to you. Their power to touch you has ended. You are free from their influence. They only have power over you for this lifetime on earth. They have no power to touch you after this life on earth is over.

According to Jesus whom should you truly fear? What time-period does this involve?

According to Jesus you should fear the one who after he kills the body has the power to throw you into hell. The time-period here is eternity. God has the power to judge us for our sins and, if found guilty, has the power to throw us into hell as the just punishment for our sins.

We do not come to Jesus simply to avoid hell. We come to him because of his love, his person, his goodness, and we remember it is the kindness of God that leads us to repentance (Rom 2:4).

The fear in this passage is a true and terrible fear. This fear is so terrible that one cannot escape it even by death. This is an eternal fear. The only way to escape this fear is to bow one’s knee to the God of the Bible as manifested in the God-man, Jesus Christ.

Consider this parable: A soldier is walking alone, lost in a forest and suddenly fifteen “enemy” soldiers surround him, his heart is full of fear. He has two choices. In the first moment, he considers escape by running away, but he sees that he is hopelessly surrounded so death is certain if he runs. In the second moment, the enemy shouts, “Drop your gun and put your hands up.” Since he has chosen not to die, he obeys. He surrenders. The “enemy” captures him. The “enemy” takes him to their camp, but to his amazement this “enemy” is good to him. His fear of the enemy who captures him turns to a deep love for the General and his new-found friends. He realizes his former friends had lied to him. His life in their army was destroying him. His new army leads him in paths of righteousness. While he still remembers the fear that first lead him to obey, that fear no longer dominates his thinking. He is compelled by love for his new general and his new fellow soldiers.

This passage from *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* by C. S. Lewis captures this concept as well:

## Eight WHAT HAPPENED AFTER DINNER

"AND NOW," SAID LUCY, "DO PLEASE TELL us, what's happened to Mr. Tumnus."

"Ah, that's bad," said Mr. Beaver, shaking his head. "That's a very, very bad business. There's no doubt he was taken off by the police. I got that from a bird who saw it done."

"But where's he been taken to?" asked Lucy.

"Well, they were heading northward when they were last seen and we all know what that means."

"No, we don't," said Susan.

Mr. Beaver shook his head in a very gloomy fashion. "I'm afraid it means they were taking him to her House," he said.

"But what'll they do to him, Mr. Beaver?" gasped Lucy.

"Well," said Mr. Beaver, "you can't exactly say for sure. But there's not many taken in there that ever comes out again. Statues. All full of statues they say it is-in the courtyard and up the stairs and in the hall. People she's turned"- (he paused and shuddered) "turned into stone."

"But, Mr. Beaver," said Lucy, "can't we I mean we must do something to save him. It's too dreadful and it's all on my account."

"I don't doubt you'd save him if you could, dearie," said Mrs. Beaver, "but you've no chance of getting into that House against her will and ever coming out alive."

"Couldn't we have some stratagem?" said Peter. "I mean couldn't we dress up as something, or pretend to be---oh, peddlers or anything-or watch till she was gone out-or-oh, hang it all, there must be some way. This Faun saved my sister at his own risk, Mr. Beaver. We can't just leave him to be-to be-to have that done to him."

"It's no good, Son of Adam," said Mr. Beaver, "no good your trying, of all people. But now that Aslan is on the move--"

"Oh, yes! Tell us about Aslan!" said several voices at once; for once again that strange feeling-like the first signs of spring, like good news, had come over them. ----

"Who is Aslan?" asked Susan.

"Aslan?" said Mr. Beaver. "Why, don't you know? He's the King. He's the Lord of the whole wood, but not often here, you understand. Never in my time or my father's time. But the word has reached us that he has come back. He is in Narnia at this moment. He'll settle the White Queen all right. It is he, not you, that will save Mr. Tumnus."

"She won't turn him into stone too?" said Edmund.

"Lord love you, Son of Adam, what a simple thing to say!" answered Mr. Beaver with a great laugh. "Turn him into stone? If she can stand on her two feet and look him in the face it'll be the most she can do and more than I expect of her. No, no. He'll put all to rights as it says in an old rhyme in these parts:

Wrong will be right, when Aslan comes in sight,  
At the sound of his roar, sorrows will be no more,  
When he bares his teeth, winter meets its death,  
And when he shakes his mane, we shall have spring again.

You'll understand when you see him."

"But shall we see him?" asked Susan.

"Why, Daughter of Eve, that's what I brought you here for. I'm to lead you where you shall meet him," said Mr. Beaver.

"Is-is he a man?" asked Lucy.

"Aslan a man!" said Mr. Beaver sternly. "Certainly not. I tell you he is the King of the wood and the son of the great Emperor-beyond-the-Sea. Don't you know who is the King of Beasts? Aslan is a lion-the Lion, the great Lion."

"Ooh!" said Susan, "I'd thought he was a man. Is he quite safe? I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion."

"That you will, dearie, and no mistake," said Mrs. Beaver; "if there's anyone who can appear before Aslan without their knees knocking, they're either braver than most or else just silly."

"Then he isn't safe?" said Lucy.

"Safe?" said Mr. Beaver; "don't you hear what Mrs. Beaver tells you? Who said anything about safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you."

"I'm longing to see him," said Peter, "even if I do feel frightened when it comes to the point."

Here are other key Biblical passages on fear:

<sup>12</sup> And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." (Gen. 22:12 NKJ)

God says that Abraham's obedience is evidence that Abraham fears God. Abraham was willing to sacrifice his precious son to obey God.

<sup>7</sup> The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge,  
*But* fools despise wisdom and instruction. (Prov. 1:7 NKJ)

Proverbs is a book written by the wise Father to His Son. The Father says that true knowledge begins with "the fear of the LORD." Notice the contrast to the fool who despises wisdom and instruction. Like Abraham, the person who truly fears the LORD listens to wisdom and allows wisdom to instruct him.

<sup>31</sup> It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Heb. 10:31 NKJ)

<sup>29</sup> For our God *is* a consuming fire. (Heb. 12:29 NKJ)

What "hidden things" are in your past that you hope no one knows about? You do not need to write them out, but you should think about them. What would Jesus say if you told Him about them?

This is an important question for application of this lesson to the lives of the folks with whom we work. As a teacher, I would not want anyone to feel any obligation to reveal the answer to the class. However, as a teacher I should be willing to talk privately with any student about these matters.

We designed this question to help students address shameful things that have happened to them and address matters for which they feel guilt. We tend to suppress these types of events in our lives. Suppression allows the devil a foothold to torment us with shame and guilt and ultimately the fear that surrounds these events and the memories of these events. These kinds of thoughts

make good prayers as we lay out these matters before God. The Biblical book of Psalms has many prayers as the psalmist struggles with shame and guilt. These prayers are also songs that help imprint the care of God for our souls deeply into our hearts and lives. Christ bore all our shame and guilt (Isaiah 53). Christ understands our plight as we pray and sing about His own suffering for our shame and guilt. These Biblical songs have movement in them. As the psalmist lays out his troubles before God, God changes him and fills his heart with praise. As one brings his deepest darkest shame and guilt to God, God heals him. Just as God delivered Christ from His enemies so too God delivers the believer who is in Christ.

If one told Jesus about his deepest, darkest secrets, Jesus would listen and have compassion. He is full of mercy and compassion for those who have sinned and have been sinned against.

Who has hidden things in their past?

Everyone has hidden things in their past.

Who is in greater danger the hypocrite or the honest sinner? Why?

The hypocrite has the greater danger because he is blind to his true condition. And because he does not see his true condition, he is in danger of burning in the presence of the all-consuming fire that is God's holiness.

The honest sinner is in a much better place because he knows he needs Jesus. He knows he is a sinner and so will come to Jesus in repentance for his sins, and faith in His work and His work alone as he knows he has no works he can present to God for his justification.

All people deserve eternal hell for their sins. The hypocrite does not realize or acknowledge that fact and so attempts to bribe the judge with his supposed good works, or worse, add his judgmental attitude towards others he thinks he is better than, or take the praise of men as his reward knowing he is living a double-minded and lying life and add that to his measure of judgment from the good judge who must punish sins. Where the hypocrite runs away from God, the honest sinner runs to God and looks to Him for his mercy. And there, knowing that God is kind, and has provided Jesus to pay for his sins and live the life he could not, finds hope, healing, forgiveness, and peace that he knows he needs.

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