



ST JOSEPH THE WORKER
 ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH



Luke Chapter 12:

Luke 12 is a chapter that teaches about the dangers of hypocrisy, the importance of seeking God's Kingdom above earthly concerns, and the need for readiness for Christ's return. Jesus warns against the love of material wealth and offers reassurance to His disciples that God will care for them. The chapter includes the famous parable of the rich fool, who hoards wealth but fails to be "rich toward God." It also emphasizes the importance of vigilance, with lessons on the faithful and unfaithful servant, the cost of following Jesus, and the necessity of discerning the times.

Outline of Luke Chapter 12:

1. Warnings Against Hypocrisy and Fear of Man (12:1-12)

- Jesus warns His disciples to beware of the "leaven" of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.
- He assures them that what is hidden will be revealed.
- Jesus tells them not to fear those who can kill the body, but to fear God who has authority over life and death.
- He speaks of the value of human life and assures them that God cares for them.
- The Holy Spirit will give them wisdom when they face persecution.

2. The Parable of the Rich Fool (12:13-21)

- A man asks Jesus to settle an inheritance dispute.

- Jesus tells the parable of a rich man who stores up treasures for himself but is not rich toward God.
 - He warns against greed, as life is not measured by the abundance of possessions.
- 3. Do Not Worry (12:22-34)**
- Jesus tells His followers not to worry about their material needs, using examples of how God provides for the ravens and lilies.
 - He encourages them to seek God's kingdom first, and all their needs will be provided.
 - Jesus reassures His disciples that their Father is pleased to give them the Kingdom.
- 4. Be Ready for the Master's Return (12:35-40)**
- Jesus teaches the need for vigilance, likening His return to a master coming home and finding servants ready.
 - He promises blessings for those who are ready and waiting, and warns of judgment for those who are not prepared.
- 5. The Faithful and Unfaithful Servants (12:41-48)**
- Peter asks Jesus if the parable applies to everyone or just the disciples.
 - Jesus explains that the faithful servant will be rewarded, while the unfaithful will face punishment.
 - Those who know God's will but do not act on it will be judged more severely.
- 6. The Cost of Following Jesus (12:49-53)**
- Jesus says He came to bring fire and division, not peace, referring to the division that His message will cause even among families.
 - He stresses the urgency of repentance and the need for people to discern the times.
- 7. Interpreting the Present Time (12:54-59)**
- Jesus rebukes the crowds for being able to interpret the weather but failing to understand the signs of the times.
 - He urges them to settle matters quickly with their accusers before it is too late.
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LUKE 12:10

**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.**

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Luke 12

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 your body has been killed, has authority 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 publicly acknowledges me before others, the Son of Man will also acknowledge before the angels of God.**

9 But whoever **disowns me before others will be**



12:1 “Thousands”, The word strictly means “ten thousand” but was used generally of any large number. Jesus’ teaching was addressed primarily to His disciples, though the crowds would also have heard and profited.

12:2, 3 On Judgment Day everything will be brought into the open; all hypocrisy will be unmasked.

12:3 inner rooms. Mud brick walls could be dug through, so storerooms where valuables could be kept were well away from outside the walls (and therefore secret)

12:5 authority to cast into hell. Only God has this power. The word translated “hell” here is Gehenna, the place of final punishment (not Hades, a general word for the place of all the dead). Gehenna derives from Hebrew words meaning “valley of Hinnom,” located outside Jerusalem

12:6 five sparrows sold for two

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; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”

¹⁶ And he told them this parable:

“The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest.

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 my surplus grain.

¹⁹ And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of grain 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 whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”

Do Not Worry

²² Then Jesus said to his disciples:

“Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear.

²³ For life is more than food, and the body more than clothes.

²⁴ Consider the ravens:

pennies. The “pennies” are the assarion, equal to one-sixteenth of a denarius (a typical day’s wage). Five sparrows sold for roughly an hour’s pay, but God remembers them all.

12:10 Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit attributes to Satan the work of the Holy Spirit through Christ in the face of overwhelming moral evidence to the contrary. Such deliberate rejection of the truth is a decisive rejection of the One (the Holy Spirit) who can bring a person to repentance and faith; such sin makes forgiveness impossible.

12:13 The rule for inheritance was given in Deut. 21:17, and cases in dispute were often settled by rabbis. This man clearly wanted only a decision in his favor; he was not seeking a just arbitration.

RAVEN



They do not sow or reap; they have no storeroom or barn;
yet God feeds them.

And how much more valuable you are than birds!

25 Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life?

26 Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?

27 “Consider how the wild flowers grow.

They do not labor or spin.

Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.

28 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire,

how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith!

29 And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink;

do not worry about it.

30 For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your FATHER knows that you need them.

31 But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

32 “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.

33 Sell your possessions and give to the poor.

Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.

34 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Watchfulness

35 “Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning,

36 like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks, they can immediately open the door for him.

37 It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes.

Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them.

38 It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the middle of the night or toward daybreak.

12:22–34 Jesus provides four weighty arguments against anxiety. First, concern for worldly goods is foolish because life itself is more important (v. 23). Second, God will take care of His own, just as He cares for the birds of the air (v. 24).

Third, anxiety accomplishes nothing (vv. 25, 26). Finally, as heirs of the inexhaustible riches of the kingdom of God, believers should not worry about earthly details (vv. 32, 33). Jesus calls His followers to order their priorities correctly by focusing their hearts on the kingdom (v. 34).

12:25 a single hour to his span of life. Or, “make his life any longer.”

12:27 lilies. It is not certain what precise flower is meant. Solomon was proverbial for his wealth and splendor.

12:31 seek his kingdom. The disciples were already in the kingdom. Therefore, they should concentrate their energies on the interests of that kingdom.

12:33 Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Central to this verse is the contrast between earthly goods that are perishable and a source of anxiety, and the treasures of the kingdom of God that are a lasting source of peace. Some of Jesus’ followers had at least moderate wealth (10:38; John 19:27), and He is not demanding that all His disciples be poor. But they must be generous and not set their hearts on earthly possessions (v. 34).

12:35 dressed for action. That is, to be ready

12:37 dress himself. This is a reversal of roles, the master taking the place of the servant (cf. 22:27).

12:38 second watch, or . . . third. The Jews divided the night into three watches (Judg. 7:19), and the Romans into four. Jesus uses the Jewish division here. These servants watch for their master

39 But understand this: If the owner of the house had known

at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into.

40 You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”

41 Peter asked, “Lord, are you telling this parable to us, or to everyone?”

42 The Lord answered, “Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time?

43 It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns.

44 Truly I tell you; he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

45 But suppose the servant says to himself, ‘My master is taking a long time in coming,’ and he then begins to beat the other servants, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk.

46 The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour, he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers.

47 “The servant who knows the master’s will and does not get ready or does not do what the master wants will be beaten with many blows.

48 But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

Not Peace but Division

49 “I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!

50 But I have a baptism to undergo, and what constraint I am under until it is completed!

51 Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division.

52 From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three.

53 They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

throughout the night.

12:42 faithful and wise manager. The manager was a slave put in charge of the whole estate by the owner. The owner was free from the burden of administration and the manager had considerable authority.

12:44 all his possessions. The reward of faithful service is the opportunity to perform higher service.

12:45, 46 The punishment for failure to make proper use of opportunities for service is severe.

12:47, 48 People are punished for failing to do right as well as for doing wrong. Ignorance can be blameworthy when there is the opportunity to know what is required. God makes His people’s duty plain (Rom. 1:20; 2:14, 15)

12:49 fire. The fire of judgment.

12:50 baptism. Jesus’ death is also a “baptism,” another image that points to death (to “baptize” a city was to subject it to near total destruction). Liturgically, baptism came to symbolize death to an old way of life and rising to a new way. Jesus accepted His own death as the divine plan for bringing salvation to sinners.

Interpreting the Times

54 He said to the crowd: “When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, ‘It’s going to rain,’ and it does.

55 And when the south wind blows, you say, ‘It’s going to be hot,’ and it is.

56 Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky. How is it that you don’t know how to interpret this present time?

57 “Why don’t you judge for yourselves what is right?

58 As you are going with your adversary to the magistrate, try hard to be reconciled on the way, or your adversary may drag you off to the judge, and the judge turn you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. **59** I tell you; you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.”

Footnotes

- a. Luke 12:1 Or *speak to his disciples, saying: “First of all, be*
- b. Luke 12:25 Or *single cubit to your height*

12:54–56 The people could discern that a west wind (from the Mediterranean) meant rain and a south wind (from the desert) meant heat. But they did not discern what God was doing in their midst.

12:57–59 In legal matters, anyone with a bad case does well to secure an out-of-court settlement before the case comes to trial. Sinners should be reconciled to God now; they will perish if they wait until Judgment Day.



Analysis of Luke - Chapter 12:

- **Hypocrisy and Fear:** Jesus begins the chapter by addressing the danger of hypocrisy in religious leaders, especially the Pharisees, warning that their secret motives will be revealed. He encourages His followers to fear God, who has ultimate power over life, rather than fearing those who can only harm the body.
- **Rich Fool:** The parable of the rich fool reveals the folly of accumulating wealth without regard for one's relationship with God. Jesus teaches that earthly riches are temporary, but a life rich toward God has eternal value.
- **Trusting God's Provision:** The teaching on worry highlights God's provision for His people, urging them to prioritize His Kingdom and trust that their needs will be met. This echoes the Sermon on the Mount's message about not worrying, showing that God cares deeply for His creation.
- **Readiness for Christ's Return:** Jesus uses parables to illustrate the necessity of being ready for His return, underscoring that those who are prepared will be blessed, while those who are not will face consequences. This section emphasizes the unexpected nature of His second coming.
- **Discipleship and Division:** Jesus acknowledges that His message will bring division, even within families, because His teachings challenge people's loyalties. Discipleship demands allegiance to Jesus above all other relationships.
- **The Urgency of Repentance:** Jesus calls people to discern the times and take action before it's too late. He encourages them to make peace with God and settle disputes with others before they face judgment.

Study Questions for Deeper Understanding:

1. **Why does Jesus warn His disciples about hypocrisy?**
 - *Answer:* Hypocrisy, especially in religious leaders, is dangerous because it leads to self-deception and a false

sense of security. Jesus warns that there is no hiding from God, and He will reveal all secrets.

2. What does Jesus mean when He says, “Fear Him who after killing the body has power to throw you into hell” (v. 5)?

- *Answer:* Jesus teaches that while humans can harm the body, only God has power over eternal life and death. Therefore, we should reverently fear God, acknowledging His authority over both our earthly lives and eternal destiny.

3. What is the main lesson in the parable of the rich fool?

- *Answer:* The rich fool accumulates wealth for himself without considering his relationship with God. The main lesson is that life does not consist of material wealth and that true richness is found in being generous toward God and others.

4. How does Jesus encourage His followers to deal with worry about material needs?

- *Answer:* Jesus tells His disciples not to worry about food or clothing, reassuring them that God knows their needs and will provide. He urges them to seek His Kingdom first, promising that all their needs will be met.

5. What is the significance of Jesus' teaching on readiness for His return (vv. 35-40)?

- *Answer:* Jesus stresses the importance of being spiritually prepared for His return. The faithful servant who is vigilant and ready for the master's return will be rewarded. This reflects the urgency of living in a state of constant readiness for Christ's second coming.

6. Why does Jesus say He came to bring division, even among families (vv. 51-53)?

- *Answer:* Jesus acknowledges that His message will challenge existing loyalties and beliefs, leading to division. Those who accept Him will be at odds with those who reject Him, even within families, because His truth calls for a radical commitment.

7. What does it mean to “discern the times” (vv. 54-56)?

- *Answer:* Jesus rebukes the crowd for their inability to recognize the signs of the times, implying that they should

recognize the urgency of repentance and respond to the message of the Kingdom of God while they still have the opportunity.

Conclusion:

Luke chapter 12 teaches essential lessons about the priorities of the Kingdom of God: avoiding hypocrisy, trusting in God's provision, being ready for Christ's return, and living with an eternal perspective. These teachings challenge us to examine our hearts, priorities, and readiness to follow Jesus wholeheartedly. The chapter encourages believers to trust in God's faithfulness while also emphasizing the importance of personal responsibility, vigilance, and the cost of discipleship.



Luke 12:25-26