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Luke 12:1 - 12:34



Gospel of Luke - Steve Gregg

In this segment, Steve Gregg reflects on Luke 12:1-34, where Jesus warns against hypocrisy and encourages his followers to have the right attitude towards their faith. Gregg notes that the Greek word for "hypocrite" is simply transliterated in English and means someone who pretends to be something they are not. Jesus warns that those who try to maintain a reputation of superiority will eventually be exposed, but those who fear God and remain conscientious will ultimately be rewarded. Gregg emphasizes that Jesus encourages his followers to have the right attitude and not be afraid to stand up for their beliefs, even in the face of persecution.

Transcript

Well, we're in chapter 12 of Luke, approaching the very middle of the book, and we are in the section of Luke that some scholars refer to as Luke's travel narrative. Some of the things in this section have things similar to what the other Gospels have, and we will sometimes compare them with other Gospels, but it is at least one theory is that these were different occasions than the occasions mentioned in the other Gospels that are similar, because this is largely material that takes place in Judea and Perea, which are areas that the synoptic Gospels, the other synoptic Gospels, don't say an awful lot about. So this is largely material that we depend on Luke for.

In the beginning of chapter 12 it says, 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, for there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and whatever you have spoken in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the housetops. Now we've already encountered this teaching in chapter 6 in a different connection, but he's warning particularly about hypocrisy here because hypocrisy is by definition acting like you're something you're not.

The word hypocrite in the Greek is just like our English word, hypocrite. The English word is simply a transliteration of the Greek word, but the Greek word referred to not a bad

person per se, not someone who is even what we'd call a phony, but somebody who is an actor in a play. That was a certain profession.

Some people in those days, as in our days, make their living as actors on the stage, and the word in Greek for an actor on the stage is a hypocrite. Now Jesus, I think, I don't know if others used this in a negative sense before he did or not, but his particular use of it is particularly bad because a religious person shouldn't be a play actor. There's nothing particularly wrong with playing a role on stage necessarily, but if your whole life is a role that's being played on stage rather than reality, then of course that's not a good thing, and especially if it's true of your religious life because that means you're playing a role where you're pretending to be a religious person or a godly person, and you're really something else, and you're trying to create an image of yourself and get a reputation for yourself that is not in accord with reality.

This particular habit seems to be the thing that Jesus objected to most in the Pharisees, although he listed lots of things that he objected to in their lives. There was this in Matthew 23, there's a whole chapter of, woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites, and then he'd tell what was hypocritical about them, what they were doing that wasn't consistent with the godly image that they were trying to portray themselves as, but it was the hypocrisy of it even more than just the wrong acts. It's bad to do the wrong acts, for example, to devour widows' houses, but then when you for a pretense make law and prayers, as he said they did, then that's even more galling.

It's bad to devour widows' houses, but if you're known to be a scoundrel and you don't hide it, you're just a bad person, but if you're a bad person trying to paint yourself as a good person and trying to get the confidence of people and get them to trust you as a righteous person, when in fact you're an underhanded scoundrel, this is even worse. And if it's if the scoundreliness and the hypocrisy is in the air of religion, it's particularly offensive to God. And Jesus referred to hypocrisy as the leaven of the Pharisees.

He said to his disciples, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. Now I'm not sure why it's particularly important that he said this in this connection where there is a great crowd amassing. He had earlier had a great crowd that he had fed, the 5,000.

Then they had pretty much dispersed when he gave them an offensive discourse about eating his flesh and drinking his blood. He lost that crowd in Galilee, but now he's elsewhere drawing new crowds. Everywhere he went tended to draw new crowds.

These crowds were so great that they were, it says, trampling on one another. Now that can be dangerous, but it doesn't seem that what Jesus said to his disciples on this occasion was particularly related to that danger or whatever. It may be simply that what he's saying to the disciples is, look, we obviously are very popular as a religious movement right now.

The temptation is going to be great to be like the Pharisees and pretend to be something and win the admiration as spiritual men from these crowds in order to hold their admiration and when you're not really as spiritual as all that. In other words, don't pretend to be something you're not. The bigger the crowd that thinks you're something, the more the pressure to keep them thinking that.

If people think you're something, a few people think you're something, just being disappointed with you by finding out what you really are is bad enough. When you've got multitudes who think you're something and then you come crashing down publicly and people know you're not what you thought were representing yourself to be, that can be very hard on the ego and so many people will not let that happen. The more reputation they get as spiritual leaders, the more they are tempted to artificially maintain that reputation even if it isn't quite in accord with reality.

I mean, even if you really are a spiritual person, even if you really are a godly person, to conceal the fact that you have feet of clay is a very strong temptation if people are looking to you as a spiritual person. You want to not let them down. You don't want them to be disappointed with you.

And so maybe because the movement was becoming so popular again, the disciples of course were the insiders with Jesus. Jesus was the great hero of the crowds and those closest to him would be of course, you're getting a lot of attention too as, wow, they get to be with him. They get to be his friends and they could easily see themselves as riding the crest of a popular wave of a religious movement that Jesus was, his reputation was feeding.

And therefore, Jesus thinks, well, his disciples might fall into that trap. But the Pharisees who also were viewed by the crowds as religious leaders, the Pharisees had played that up to the point where they didn't let people know what they're really like inside, which was something very much different. As Jesus said, they were like whitewashed tombs, which were all clean on the outside, but inside were full of filthiness and uncleanness and defilement.

So maybe it was because of the popularity of the movement and the likelihood that his disciples were being viewed by these multitudes, especially spiritual men, which they probably were. They probably were more spiritual than the average person. They'd been with Jesus for some time at this time.

They'd been following him. That's a spiritual thing to do. But sometimes you begin to exaggerate your spirituality because it's kind of meets people's expectations.

People expect you to be superior and you don't like to let them down. So you want them to think you are, even if you're not. And so Jesus warns them, beware of this leaven.

Of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. He calls it leaven and leaven, of course, is yeast. It's put into bread and Jesus gave, well, there's a number of ways in which yeast or leaven is used in scripture.

More often than not, it's used in a bad way. Like where Paul said to the Corinthian church about the sin in the church, he said, a little leaven leavens a whole lump. Or here, where the leaven of the Pharisees is hypocrisy.

In another passage, Jesus speaks about the leaven of the Pharisees and he calls it their doctrines. So leaven is used a lot of different ways in scripture, but not always bad. Because there's a parable in Matthew 13 where Jesus said the kingdom of God is like leaven, which is placed into a lump of dough and it permeates the whole lump.

The kingdom of God certainly isn't a bad thing and Jesus likens it to leaven too. Leaven is simply something that by nature spreads and permeates. It doesn't take very much leaven in a recipe to make a large lump of dough rise.

A little bit of leaven can spread and impact the entire realm that it's placed into, its entire host. And so this is true of evil and this is true of the kingdom too. I mean, good can spread and evil can spread in a society like that.

The kingdom of God is supposed to spread like that in the world, but evil tends to spread that way too when it's given a chance. And so apparently he's indicating that this hypocrisy in the Pharisees maybe wasn't always so rife. The Pharisees, after all, did arise from a positively godly movement back in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes when Antiochus made it illegal for the Jews to keep the Sabbath or to have copies of the scripture or to circumcise their children or to do any other thing that's distinctly Jewish.

The Hasidim, a movement of resistance against Antiochus Epiphanes, were willing to lay down their lives in order not to compromise in these areas. They'd keep the Sabbath and let the soldiers kill them. And these were heroes.

And the Pharisee movement arose from that group. The roots of the Pharisees was in the Hasidim in the days of the Maccabean period. And so they really were a good group of people and no doubt heroes in the eyes of the people.

Eventually, people began to esteem them. And this desire to maintain this image, no doubt, spread like leaven in their movement till by the time of Jesus, hardly any Pharisees weren't hypocrites. And so this hypocrisy spreads like a leaven in their movement.

And Jesus says, be careful, don't let that happen in your movement, you disciples. Now, unfortunately, the church has not heeded his warning very well, because there are many people in the church who have the same problem the Pharisees did in that respect. They are looked to by the world as representing God, representing Jesus.

And they don't want to be seen as something else. They don't want to see, even when Christians are flawed, it's not easy to want people to know about your flaws. You don't want unbelievers to know if you can help it.

But you see, the unbelievers disrespect you more if they perceive that you're hiding something or pretending to be something. When a television evangelist falls and gives the impression that Christian preachers are all hypocrites, this does huge damage to the movement. And I think even unbelievers respect Christians more if they're simply transparent and don't to be perfect.

They just, you know, what you see is what you get. And we need to be careful about putting up any kind of a front for other Christians or for the world. And Jesus said, because there's nothing covered that will not be revealed.

That is, if you try to cover up what you really are with some kind of veneer of spirituality, it's going to come out. There's nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. Therefore, whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light.

What have you spoken in the ear, in the inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops. In other words, secrets will be exposed. If people have, you know, this pretension of being spiritual, eventually their pretension will be exposed.

What they really are will eventually be shouted from the housetops. And a lot of those are shouted from the housetops of the TV discs, you know, those satellite discs and the, you know, poor Jimmy Swaggart and, you know, Jim Baker and some of those guys whose fall happened on television. Their problems were shouted from the rooftops in a very literal sense.

There have been men just as bad as them or worse who didn't live at a time where everybody could immediately know about their hypocrisy as soon as it happened. TV has, and the internet, have definitely made it possible for, you know, every person, you know, to have their flaws manifested to the world. Verse four, and I say to you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more they can do.

But I will show you whom you shall fear. Fear him who after he is killed has power to cast into hell. Yes, I say to you, fear him.

Now, Jesus teaches the fear of God. It's not an Old Testament concept merely. We read a lot about the fear of God in the Old Testament in the Psalms, the Proverbs, the Prophets, and frankly, every part of the Old Testament has advocacy of fearing God.

People who don't fear God are viewed as stupid because the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the beginning of knowledge. They're seen as evil. The wicked

are said there's no fear of God before their eyes.

Because they don't fear God, they do what's wrong. If you feared God, you would be more cautious, more circumspect, more conscientious about things. So, fear of God is a great thing in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament, some people think the things have changed.

They think, well, of course, there's reason to be afraid of God in the Old Testament because he was so peevish. He was so short-tempered. He was so quick to judge and to kill and so forth.

And so, there's a lot to be afraid of, but Jesus, he's our friend. He's a nice guy. He died for our sins and therefore, there's nothing to fear.

If you fear, perhaps it's a lack of faith. Perhaps you don't understand the grace of God if you fear God. And there are people who feel that the fear of God is not at all a New Testament concept because their view of grace is permission.

Grace gives them leave to do whatever they want and fear nothing from God. And if you fear God, many people will think you're legalistic or works-oriented or something like that. But the fear of God is the same in the Old Testament as in the New.

It's advocated. Jesus himself advocates it here. He says, don't worry about people who can kill your body.

They can't do anything more after that. And by the way, I would say this, that if you would even just take heed to that and don't fear people who can kill your body, you would be miles ahead spiritually than most people are. You know, it says in Hebrews chapter 2 in verse 15 that people were held in captivity by Satan through the fear of death.

It says in Hebrews 2, 14 and 15 that Jesus through death destroyed him that had the power of death that he might deliver those who all their lifetime were kept in bondage through the fear of death. The fear of death is a bondage. If you're afraid to die, then anyone who can put a gun to your head can get you to do what you want.

And the devil thinks everyone operates on that motive. Remember when Job had failed to cave in to pressure, when he lost his children and his goods, and God said to Satan in Job chapter 2, you know, Job has retained his integrity in spite of the fact that you moved me to afflict him without cause. And Satan said, skin for skin, all that a man has will he give in exchange for his life.

In other words, let me threaten his life and he'll cave in. No one will retain his integrity at the risk of his death. That's what the devil thinks.

The devil keeps men in bondage through the fear of death and can get them to do whatever he wants unless they don't fear death. When you don't fear death, you can't be made to do anything you don't want to do. You can't be made to compromise if you don't fear death.

If you fear death, then anyone can control you as long as they have a lethal weapon and have you at their mercy. And of course, the Christian martyrs throughout history have proven, and frankly, the prophets in the Old Testament proved that the fear of death can be overcome. You don't have to be afraid of death, and if you don't fear death, you won't compromise under threat.

And so, Jesus wants all his people to have that attitude. Paul said in Philippians chapter 1 that to live is Christ and to die is gain. If that's true, if you believe that's true, why would you ever fear to die when it's gain? He's saying it's an improvement over living to die and go be with the Lord.

He says I'm caught between two attractions. He says one is to continue here and be fruitful in my labors. The other is to depart and be with Christ, which is far better, he said.

To be with Christ is better. Now, Christians, I suppose, don't believe this whenever they fear death. And we're supposed to believe it, aren't we? If we do believe it, we'll always be unwilling to compromise to save our lives.

Now, saving your life when it doesn't involve compromise is a different issue. Jesus is talking about if somebody's threatening you with martyrdom, and they can kill you, and they can take your life, they can kill the body, don't be afraid of them. That is, don't succumb to that pressure.

Just don't compromise. He's saying it's better to go ahead and die rather than to compromise. And don't be afraid of those who can kill you.

They can, in fact, kill you, but they can do nothing more after that, he says. And really, once you've been killed, you've escaped not only their hands, but the devil's and everybody else's. I'm not sure why people strive so hard to stay alive when life is full of challenges, trials, dangers, sins.

I mean, since God has us here, we have to do our best and live out the duration. But the thought that God might say, okay, you're 10 years over, you get to come home now, I don't know why that would be unwelcome to anybody who's a Christian, unless maybe they don't know Jesus very well, I'm not sure they want to see him that much. I've always wanted to see Jesus.

Since I was a teenager, I've always been eager. In fact, when I was 10 years old, I heard of Billy Graham. I went to Billy Graham crusade in Los Angeles, and I remember the thing

that made me go forward there.

It wasn't the first time I'd gone forward at an altar call, but the reason I went forward at that altar call when I was 10 in Los Angeles was that Billy Graham said, and I remember distinctly, he says, since I'm a Christian, I don't have to be afraid to die. And although I was already a believer, I had never even, at 10 years old, you don't think about dying, and it had never really been something I'd process. I don't have to be afraid to die if I'm a Christian.

And I wanted to make sure I was, so I went forward. And that is truly the thing that is very distinctive about being a Christian. I mean, there are other things distinctive, but everyone else ought to be afraid to die.

Everyone else should be afraid of those who can kill the body because they're not prepared to meet God. But if you know God, and if you're in love with God and Jesus, then seeing him is what you long for every day anyway. And if the doctor said, well, you're going to die in two weeks, I'd say, could we move it up? I've been looking forward to this all my life.

If you aren't afraid to die, then no one can make you defect from Christ by threats of death. And that's what Jesus wants his disciples to get through to them. And it did, because all of them died as martyrs, except John.

And he was even subjected to martyrdom and did not cave in, but he didn't die. He ended up living a full life. But many, many martyrs died for Jesus, and they died singing and happy and worshiping God because they knew they were going to something, as Paul said, that's much better, far better.

But he says, but you should fear him who can kill the body and he has the power to cast you into hell. Now, hell here is Gehenna. And I don't have time to go into an extensive discussion of what Gehenna means.

Suffice it to say, it means the judgment of God. It is translated hell in almost every English Bible. And so traditionally, Gehenna has been thought of as hell.

Well, it may be. That is one possible meaning of it. There's another possible meaning, and that is that Gehenna refers to Gehenna.

Now, Gehenna is a word that means the valley of Hinnom, and that was an actual valley. Right outside Jerusalem to the southwest, I've walked in Gehenna. The only time I went to Israel, I walked on the green grass in the valley of Hinnom.

That's what Gehenna means, the valley of Hinnom. It's just a Greek word means that. Now, it's common for translators and commentators to assume that Jesus was using the valley of Hinnom as an image of hell.

And I could not be sure that he isn't, because the rabbis before the time of Christ had begun using Gehenna just that way. Actually, before Jesus came, within the century before Christ, rabbis began to speak of Gehenna as one compartment of Hades, the compartment where the fire was, that bad people were thrown into hell, the bad side of Hades. And the book of Enoch was one of the first Jewish books to present this idea.

It's echoed in the rabbis later on in other books, the book of Judith and so forth. And so by the time of Christ, many rabbis were using the word Gehenna to mean hell. And it's because of that, probably, that most translators think that when Jesus used the word Gehenna, he was using it the way the rabbis used it.

Why not? Why not? That's the way it is assumed that people would have understood it. Why not use it that way? Well, that's possible. And that's why in our Bible, it's always translated hell.

But many people have not realized that the word, the Valley of Hinnom, had a tremendous significance in the Old Testament. And it was because Jeremiah had predicted that when the Babylonians would destroy Jerusalem, that the corpses of the slain would fill up the Valley of Hinnom. For example, in Jeremiah 7, the Valley of Hinnom was also called Tophet.

And it says in verse 31 of Jeremiah 7, they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command them, nor did it come to my heart. Therefore, behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when it will be no more called Tophet, or the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter. For they will bury in Tophet, that is Valley of Hinnom, until there's no room.

The corpses of this people will be food for the birds of the heaven and for the beasts of the earth, and no one will frighten them away. Then I will cause to cease from the cities of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, and the voice of the bridegroom, the voice of the bride, for the land should be desolate. Now, this is also repeated in chapter 19.

Obviously, he's saying that Tophet, or the Valley Hinnom, is the place where corpses are going to be thrown and eaten by birds and beasts. When? When the Babylonians would destroy Jerusalem. The Babylonians were going to slaughter so many people, they'd throw all the corpses into the Valley of Hinnom outside, and they'd be left for the birds to eat, is what he's saying.

Now, in chapter 19 of Jeremiah, verses 6 through 8, says, Therefore, behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, that the place shall no more be Tophet, or the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter. And I will make void the council of Judah and Jerusalem in this place, and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies,

and by the hands of those who seek their lives, their corpses I will give as meat for the birds of the heaven and for the beasts of the earth. I will make this city desolate and a hissing.

Everyone who passes by it will be astonished and hiss because of all of its plagues. Then jump down to verses 12 through 13. Thus I will do in this place, says the Lord, and to its inhabitants I will make this city like Tophet, and the houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah shall be defiled like the places of Tophet, because of all the houses on whose roofs they have burned incense, etc., etc.

Now the point here is he's talking about the destruction coming on Jerusalem in 586 BC. The Babylonians were going to come and wipe everybody out and tear down and burn down the city. This happened.

And in connection, Jeremiah repeatedly said, and Tophet is going to become the place where the corpses are thrown and given over to the birds. So that's Gehenna. That's the Valley of Hinnom.

Now when Jesus warned that people who were rejecting him in Israel were in danger of being cast into the Valley of Hinnom, which is what the word Gehenna literally means, there's a possibility he was using it the way the prophets used it. Oh, by the way, and Jeremiah wasn't the only prophet who used it that way. Isaiah also spoke of the Valley of Hinnom as a place of corpses.

In Isaiah chapter 30 and verse 33, it says, For Tophet was established of old, yes, for the king it is prepared. He has made it deep and large, its pyre of fire with much wood, the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone kindles it. Now here it's referring to the Assyrians being slaughtered outside Jerusalem when the angel of the Lord came and slew 185,000 of them in the days of Hezekiah.

But here Tophet or the Valley of Hinnom is also seen to be a place of funeral pyres. All these dead bodies, we don't read in Kings and Chronicles what happened to those bodies after they were killed, but they must've been all burned. And Isaiah says, yeah, Tophet's going to be a place where there's a funeral pyre and all these bodies are going to be burned there of the Assyrians.

So Tophet or the Valley of Hinnom was a place more than once in which corpses were collected after they'd been wiped out and they were burned or eaten by birds or worms or whatever. And so when Jesus talked about Gehenna to a generation that was facing a similar invasion, the Romans were going to come and do the same thing to Jerusalem that the Babylonians had done in Jeremiah's day. There is a possibility that Jesus was not using the Valley of Hinnom or Gehenna in the way the rabbis did, but the way the prophets did.

Now knowing Jesus and his attitude toward the traditions of the rabbis and his attitude to the prophets, which is more likely that Jesus would speak of Gehenna the way the prophets did or the way the rabbis did. If one says, well, he'd do it the way the rabbis did, then he's speaking about hell because the rabbis had come at this time to use Gehenna as a word for hell. However, it seems to me a very reasonable alternative to suggest that Jesus is warning against what is going to happen to those Jews who did not become Christians in that generation and remained in Jerusalem and were slaughtered by the Romans when they came and their bodies like those in Jeremiah's day were thrown into Gehenna, into the Valley of Hinnom.

So it can go either way. Once again, the judgment, you've got to make your own call about that. Does Jesus talk more like the rabbis or more like the prophets? To me, it's not a hard call to make, but some people apparently find it more difficult.

They think he's more likely to talk like the rabbis. In any case, like I said, however we understand Gehenna, it refers to the judgment of God. Now some people wouldn't mean the judgment of AD 70 and throwing their corpses into Gehenna because why would that be worse than being killed any other way? Jesus said, don't be afraid of those who can kill your body and do no more.

Be afraid of him who can, after he's killed your body, he can throw you into the Valley of Hinnom. Why would that be a concern? I mean, once you're dead, what do you care where your body's thrown? Why would that create any kind of incentive for what Jesus is talking about? Because dying under the judgment of God, when the Romans would wipe out Jerusalem and have your corpse thrown out to be eaten by the birds of the air, this is an emblem of dying on bad terms with God. You see, the person who remains faithful and uncompromising, even loses his life, is clearly dying on good terms with God.

The person who rejects Christ and comes under God's judgment on Jerusalem and their corpse ends up being thrown into Gehenna, their corpse, the very fact that they were there to be killed and thrown there, is an indication that they were on the wrong side of God's concerns here. They died on bad terms with God. Now someone says, well, what's to be feared of that except for hell? Well, maybe hell is all there to be concerned with.

That doesn't mean that Gehenna means hell. What I'm saying is that I believe that there's very possible that Jesus is saying, you're either going to die martyrs or you're going to die under the judgment of God. Don't fear the former, but do fear the latter.

Dying under the judgment of God is not going to go well for anybody, regardless of how we understand what takes place after that point. Anyway, the word hell, you should understand, every time Jesus used the word hell, or almost every time, not every single time, but almost every time, it's the word Gehenna. Now he says in verse six, are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Do not fear, therefore, you have more value than many sparrows. So you're not supposed to be afraid of those who can kill you, and they might kill you, in fact, but God is watching over you like he watches over the sparrows. In Matthew chapter 10, we have the instructions Jesus gave to the twelve when he sent them out, and as I recall, he talks about the sparrows there too.

I was just kind of glancing down because I don't have a cross-reference in my... here it is, here it is. It's Matthew 10, verse 29. Jesus said this, are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin, and not one of them falls to the ground apart from your father's will? But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Do not fear, therefore, for you are more valuable than many sparrows. Now the point here is that he's not saying sparrows don't die because God takes care of them, makes sure they don't die. No, he says they don't die without the will of your father.

Sparrows, of course, die. They don't die as much as any other animal dies. He's not arguing that if you are valuable to God, he won't let you die.

He's saying if you're valuable to God, at least as valuable as a sparrow, and you're actually more valuable than many sparrows, then you will never be allowed to die apart from his will. Now that should be the only concern a Christian has about the day of their death. Is this the God wants me to die or not? If not, then if I'm in his will, I can't die.

The angel of the Lord encamps around about them that fear him and delivers them. God won't let anything get to you if it's not your time to die, if you're trusting him. But when it is your time to die, you should say, that's cool, it's okay.

Until then, not one hair of my head is going to fall. God takes care of everything, and his will is involved in all the details of my well-being. And so if not one sparrow dies without his will, then I certainly won't die without his will.

And dying without his will is the only thing I'd have to worry about. Dying in his will is never a problem for me, not to a Christian. Now it's interesting that in Matthew, he says in Matthew 10, 29, are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin.

But look at the difference in Luke 12. He says, are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins. So here's the economy in the marketplace for sparrows at that time.

You could buy two for a copper coin, a penny, or you get five for two pennies. What does that tell you? It tells you that you buy four and you get one thrown in the bargain. For one penny, you can get two.

For two pennies, you'd expect to get four, but instead you get five. So it's like five for the price of four. And the one that's thrown in the deal is worth even much less than half a penny.

The two that you paid a penny for are worth a half a penny each. The other one's worth less than that to the seller. He gives it away.

Now, I think it's interesting to see that because Jesus says not one of them, sparrows, falls to the ground without your father. Or he says in Luke, he says not one of them is forgotten before God. Even the fifth one, even the one that the merchant doesn't value enough to charge anything for, it's just a freebie.

Even that one that man values not at all, God values enough to not forget about it. Not one, as Matthew says, falls to the ground without the will of your father. But the very hairs of your head are numbered.

Do not fear, therefore, for you're of more value than many sparrows. Verse 8, also I say to you, whoever confesses me before men, him the Son of Man will also confess before the angels of God. But he who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God.

And anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him. But to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven. Now, I better stop there to comment.

To have Jesus confess us before the angels of God, and actually I think in Matthew says he'll confess us before God and his angels, confess us before the Lord in heaven. To confess us before God means that Jesus owns us. He acknowledges we belong to him.

That's our only hope, by the way, on the day of judgment. The only hope we have is that he'll acknowledge us as his. And he says, I will.

You confess me before men. And by this, I think he means, you know, as a way of life, you publicly make yourself known to be a follower of Christ. I don't think he's talking about just an individual case where you confess Christ, but if you are on a, you know, routinely, regularly, your whole life is confessing Christ as your Lord, as opposed to your whole life denying Christ as your Lord.

And denying him before men needn't be entirely a verbal matter. Because in Titus chapter 1 and verse 16, Titus is talking about, I mean, Paul is talking to Titus about someone, a group of people. He says, the last verse of Titus 1, they profess to know God, but in works they deny him.

So, there's more than one way to deny Christ. You can deny him verbally or your behavior can deny him. So, obviously, to own him or disown him, to confess him or deny him before men is a matter of more than simply talking your loyalty to Christ or talking disloyalty to him.

It has to do with what you say and what you do and what your whole, what you

represent yourself at all times as through your actions and your words. You represent yourself as a follower of Christ. That's openly owning him, confessing him before the world, as opposed to trying to keep it secret that you're a Christian and or denying him even by your compromising behavior.

Now, in other words, we need him to confess us before the Father. If he denies us before the Father, there's nothing left for us except judgment. So, he says, you need to not be ashamed of me before men.

You need to stand up for me. You need to live for me. You need to, people need to know that you're one of mine.

And if they don't, if you don't let them know that by your actions and your words, then I'm not going to let God know that you're one of mine because I'm not sure you are after all. But this business about speaking a word against the Son of Man, that'll be forgiving him, but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. This is, of course, that famous saying of Jesus.

He apparently said it more than once. We know he said it in Matthew chapter 12, and the parallel to Matthew 12 has been encountered elsewhere in Luke. Now, this is yet another time.

So, apparently more than once, Jesus warned against blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. Since Jesus said whoever blasphemes the Holy Spirit, it will never be forgiven him or it will not be forgiven him. This is sometimes referred to as the unpardonable sin.

If this, if you do this, it will not be forgiven you is the unpardonable sin. Or is it an unpardonable sin? The term unpardonable sin is not used in Scripture. And we need to look at what he actually did say and what it means.

What does it mean that it's, if you speak a word against Christ, you can be forgiven, but if you blaspheme the Holy Spirit, you can't. This is perplexing because why would the Holy Spirit be more important than Christ himself? Why would it be a forgivable offense to blaspheme Christ, but not to blaspheme the Holy Spirit? What is there about the Holy Spirit that makes him so much more important or outrank Christ or make blasphemy against the Spirit more horrible, infinitely more horrible, unpardonable forever, when the same isn't true about blasphemy against Christ? I think that a lot of explanations have been given to this. And in one passage, Jesus made this statement when the Pharisees had said he was casting out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, and Jesus made this comment, which gives many people the impression that Jesus is saying the Pharisees had in fact done this very thing.

They had blasphemed the Holy Spirit when they said that the work of the Spirit done by Christ in casting out demons was in fact the work of the devil. So that to take, to see, to

observe what the Holy Spirit is doing and say that's the devil, they say that's blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. Well, maybe it is, but Jesus didn't say it is.

He did warn the Pharisees against blasphemy of the Holy Spirit on the occasion when they said that. It may be that he's saying you're getting dangerously close to something that would be, that you'll never be forgiven for. Or he might say you've already done it.

He didn't actually say they had done it. He just said if anyone does such and such a thing, this is how it'll turn out. So whether they had done so with their words or whether they were on the verge of doing so or whether the statements they made actually are tantamount to or equate to blasphemy of the Spirit, all this is within the realm of conjecture somewhat.

But those who connect it with that usually say blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is attributing to the devil the work of the Holy Spirit. Like Jesus was casting out demons by the Spirit of God and they said it was the devil. So they see the work of the Holy Spirit and they call that the devil.

They're calling the Holy Spirit the devil. That's blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. This is a very common way of understanding this statement of Jesus about blasphemy of the Spirit.

Although in this particular instance he's not, no one is blaspheming the Spirit in Luke chapter 12 and so there's no context for it here except the context of the need to own him or confess him before men rather than to disown him before men. I'm going to bring that up in a moment but let me just say that if it is indeed blasphemy of the Holy Spirit for someone to see the work of the Holy Spirit and say that's the work of the devil, then there may be a great number of Christians who inadvertently have done that because there are many things that that some Christians think are the work of the Holy Spirit and others think are the work of the devil. Speaking in tongues among them.

Some people believe tongues is not a gift for today. Others believe it is. I believe it's a legitimate gift to the Holy Spirit today and every day.

I mean I don't know of anything in the Bible that says that it would ever cease to be a legitimate gift but there are people whose official position is if you speak in tongues that's of the devil. Well what if they're wrong? What if it really is a gift of the Holy Spirit and they say it's the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit? Are they unforgivable? Are they unpardonable? Or there are some churches where when people get prayed for they fall over or other strange things happen. They start shaking and do things like that.

I mean if you get around in Pentecostal circles you'll see a lot of strange phenomena which they believe is the work of the Holy Spirit. A critic looking at them might say that looks more like the work of the devil to me but you see if it really is the Holy Spirit in any case and you say it's the work of the devil have you blasphemed the Spirit? Some people

would say so. To me I seriously doubt that making an honest mistake like that as some people do would be unpardonable.

There are certainly worse sins than making a mistake. After all the cessationist who doesn't believe the gifts are for today and who thinks mistakenly that the gifts of the Spirit are of the devil that person is making an honest mistake probably. He probably thinks he's being loyal to Christ and loyal to what the Scripture teaches even if he's wrong.

That's not the same thing the Pharisees were doing and that can't hardly be what Jesus is referring to it seems to me. There seem to be better ways to understand it. Now some people think blasphemy of the Holy Spirit simply refers to living your life without receiving Christ because the Holy Spirit is trying to convict you and bring you to Christ.

If you never become a Christian you've resisted the Spirit or blasphemed him they would say and therefore it's unpardonable because you die at last. Well that's another way that this has been understood. I think there's a third way that might be more satisfying to me and it even fits the context of this a little better to my mind.

When Jesus said if you confess me before men or if you deny me before men again he's talking about a lifestyle, a pattern. It's a pattern of owning Christ in all the areas of your life, being unashamed to be his disciple, having no problem confessing him before men when that comes up to do or just living your life in such a way that is a testimony to him. That's I believe confessing him before men.

Now denying him before men would be the opposite or being ashamed for men to see you and know you're a Christian. In other words he's talking about a pattern of living. Now when he says anyone who speaks against the Son of Man can be forgiven but whoever blasphemes the Spirit cannot be forgiven.

This is worded a little differently but mostly the same in the other passages that say it. Is it possible? It seems to me it is possible but what Jesus is saying is there are people currently making a habit of saying bad things about me the Son of Man. They can be forgiven.

It's not all over yet. They can change their mind. It is possible to be forgiven when you're making that kind of a miscalculation, that kind of a mistake.

They're speaking against me the Son of Man but I'm going to be gone someday and in place of me comes the Holy Spirit and he's going to be convicting people's hearts of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He's going to be testifying to them inwardly. They're seeing me from the outside.

I'm not what they think I'm supposed to be. They're not what they think the Messiah is supposed to be so they're opposing me. They're wrong but they can be forgiven.

They can change but once I'm gone and the Holy Spirit has come to replace me in the age of the Holy Spirit rather than me being here, if they continue to the same policy of opposition against the Holy Spirit, well that's the end. There's not gonna be any more chances after that. I mean I'm here but the Holy Spirit's coming after me.

No one's coming after him. If you reject me, there's another age to come after Pentecost when many who actually crucified Jesus did repent. After Pentecost, many Pharisees even came to Christ in the book of Acts after Pentecost but I think what he's saying is this brief time that I'm among you and people don't quite know what to think about me, some people are making a habit of opposing me, some of them can be forgiven later on when the Spirit comes.

If they resist the Spirit too, well that's the last chance. If they don't turn to me under the influence of the Holy Spirit and continue this habit of rejection, this habit of opposition, of blasphemy in the age of the Holy Spirit, well then they'll never get saved. They'll never get forgiven.

Not because they've done something that God is so offended by that he would never forgive it even if they repented. I don't think there's any sin that God would be unwilling to forgive if there's genuine repentance but rather those who have kept up a persistent opposition to him have simply hardened themselves against submission. They've hardened themselves against faith.

They're going to go to their grave without turning around. If they don't go to their grave without turning around, then they don't fit what he's talking about here. I think he's talking about people who persist throughout the rest of their life even after Pentecost.

In the age of the Spirit, they continue to reject and oppose as they are during Jesus' lifetime. Well, then their opportunities are going to run out. Repentance isn't going to be happening and they won't be forgiven.

I think the only people who won't be forgiven are the people who don't repent. But I think he's describing people who won't repent even under the conviction of the Holy Spirit which will be the next opportunity they'll have after Jesus is gone. When he goes, he'll send his Spirit.

Then they can maybe under conviction repent and some of them did. But those who won't repent even then, well, you don't repent. You don't get forgiven.

You don't have forgiveness at all because you don't repent at all. I think he's talking about that. He says, now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer or what you should say.

For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say. This is when they're on trial before the synagogues and so forth. He guarantees that if they don't

have a good lawyer, that's okay.

They have another advocate, the Holy Spirit, who will stand up for them, who will give them the words to say. In the story of Stephen in Acts chapter 7, we see an example of this. He's a young man apparently, but he was filled with the Holy Spirit and wisdom.

And when they gave him a chance to speak in his own defense, he poured out this extensive, profound sermon that condemned his accusers. And you cannot read it without getting the impression that Luke is telling you, this is the Holy Spirit talking through this guy. I mean, it doesn't specifically say that every word he spoke was inspired, but it does seem like the Holy Spirit was giving him the words to say and he said them.

So also the other apostles on occasion had to stand before the Sanhedrin and so forth, Peter and John did. And they spoke presumably in the power of the Holy Spirit too. Jesus is saying, don't feel that you have to be the most eloquent person or the best at setting up a legal defense.

When you're on trial, the Holy Spirit will give you the words to say, and you don't even have to worry about it before the time comes. When I first got filled with the Spirit, I thought of this verse as if it was governing preaching as well, that you shouldn't premeditate what you say before you get into the pulpit. You should just get in the pulpit and just say whatever the Holy Spirit gives you at that moment.

And the first time I preached in a church, that's what I did. I refused to contemplate in advance what I was going to say. Even in the weeks beforehand when I knew I was going to be preaching and I really wanted to get a good sermon, I just thought, nope, you're not supposed to think in advance about that.

So I just got in the pulpit and opened the Bible at random and read a verse and preached from it. It worked, 40 something people came forward when I gave the altar call. And frankly, I've prepared a lot of sermons since then and never had that many people come forward since.

But I still think, despite the fact that God honored that, that I was misunderstanding the passage. I believe there's a place for preparation of sermons or teaching, but the point here is he's not talking about teaching or sermons. He's talking about being on trial for your life in a situation where you might not naturally have any defense you can give except what God gives you to give at that hour.

Don't worry about it. He'll stay with you even then and he'll give you what you need. Then one from the crowd said to him, teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.

But he said to him, man, who made me a judge or an arbitrator over you? And he said to

them, take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses. Then he spoke a parable to them saying the ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself saying, what shall I do since I have no room to store my crops? So he said, I will do this.

I will pull down my barns and build greater. And there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, soul, you have many goods laid up for many years.

Take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said to him, you fool, this night your soul will be required of you. Then whose will those things be which you have provided? So is he who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God, says Jesus.

Interestingly, this parable was given on the occasion where a man in the crowd said to Jesus, Lord, tell my brother to share the inheritance with me. Apparently, their father had died. The older brother, I assume the older brother, probably the executor of the will, had not divided the estate, honestly, had not given this other brother his fair share for whatever reason.

We don't know the case. But Jesus refused to hear the case. It's interesting that the man was asking Jesus to arbitrate to be sort of what a magistrate in the courts would do.

And he said, who made me one of those? I'm not an arbitrator over these kinds of matters. Who made me hold that role? It's interesting because he was the king of kings and the Lord of lords, but he wasn't here to do the work of a magistrate. He wasn't here to do the work that God had ordained the government to do.

He was setting up an alternative kingdom. And in his kingdom, people aren't as concerned about whether they're getting just distribution of their estate. He says, don't worry about that.

Beware of covetousness. That's your problem. Let your brother have it.

The idea seems to be, you seem to value the money more than you value peace with your brother. This is a matter of strife between you and your brother. Remember, Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, agree with your brother while you're in the prison, unless he turns you over to the judge, and the judge turns you over to the officer, and the officer throws you into prison, and so forth.

He says, agree with your brother out of court. A little later in the same sermon, Jesus said, if someone wants to sue you and take away your coat, give him your cloak also. Instead of going to court and letting him sue you for it, just give him what he wants and give him more.

What do you care? It's just material things. Isn't your brother more important than that? Isn't peace more important than that? Can't you make some sacrifices in the area of your

financial well-being in order to put your brother ahead of you? That's really what he's saying. And so the man, of course, like most people would, was a little offended that his brother was cheating him out of perhaps, who knows, maybe a sizable estate.

But you said, I don't really want to make a judgment about this. You just beware of covetousness. Don't beware of people trying to rob you of your estate.

Beware of your own heart's greed. Beware of your own heart's wrong attitude toward money and toward your brother, for that matter. Now, this is interesting because it means that Jesus didn't come to really get too much involved in the nitty-gritty of legal matters among people who weren't his disciples, at least.

Now, Paul said in Romans chapter 1, Corinthians chapter 6, that Christians should settle such disputes among themselves. He said you shouldn't go to the courts outside, the unbelievers, to settle these matters. If you've got a problem with your brother, he said, is there not a wise man among you who can settle these matters between brothers? That's the opening, what, six or so verses of 1 Corinthians 6. The church should be able to settle such matters in its own, you know, family.

We're one family, and there should be an older brother who can sit and arbitrate and point out, you're the one who's in the wrong, you need to settle this. And if they don't, then there's church discipline to be had. But Jesus had not set up the church at this time.

This man had a civil case against his brother, and he could go to the magistrates about that, if he wanted. But Jesus almost made it sound like, you know, you just need to change your attitude about money, frankly. Just beware of covetousness.

And then he gave this story about a man who had abundant crops, and he had a bumper crop one year, so he didn't even have enough barns to put the stuff in. It says in verse 17, the man said, what shall I do since I have no room to store my crops? Remember in Malachi, it said, if you bring all your tithes into the storehouse, see if God doesn't open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing that you cannot receive, that is more than you have room to store. Well, what in the world are you supposed to do if God blesses you so much you don't have room to store it? Well, maybe he doesn't want you to store it.

Maybe he wants you to disperse it. If God gives you extra, why not just give it to the poor? Why not spread it out? Why not promote the kingdom of God with the extra? This man asked himself a question, but he didn't come up with the right answer. His question is, what shall I do? I've got more stuff than I have room to store, so what shall I do? Well, the right answer would probably be, well, maybe you should share it with people who don't have so much.

Certainly sounds like the answer Christ would recommend, but instead the man came up

with his own idea. I'll do this. I'll pull down my barns and build bigger barns, big enough to store all this stuff, and there I will store all my crops and my goods.

Then I'll say to my soul, soul, you have many goods laid up for many years. Take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry. Essentially he's saying, I'm going to retire.

I've got enough to live on for a long time. I'll just build my barns bigger to contain all this stuff, then I'll sit back and rest for a while, do nothing, just retire from my farming. I've got enough to last many years.

So, this kind of brings out something that Jesus took for granted, that sometimes God blesses you more than you need right now. And you can go two different directions with this. One, of course, is to do what he always recommended, that's give to the poor.

The other is to sit on it and just say, hey, I don't have to work anymore. I can just live on this. Now, does this mean that retirement is wrong? No, it does mean laziness is wrong.

It does mean that keeping stuff for yourself that God would have you disperse is wrong. It does mean that you should be productive, just taking your ease and laying back and saying, I'll do nothing. That's wrong.

Now, I do believe that many people in our day have an opportunity that didn't exist in biblical times, and that is to actually retire from their career and still have some kind of income and start a second career, maybe in ministry. Lots of people don't have the leisure to be in full-time ministry during their working years, but once they get to a place where they actually are in a position, they can retire, and there is money to live on that's not generated by current labor. Well, then they've got time on their hands not to sit back and take their ease and do nothing, but to apply themselves to working for the kingdom of God.

Why not? And if their biggest ministry is in giving, then they can start another career besides to make more money if they want to, because making money is not a bad thing. The problem here was not that the man had a lot of crops. That wasn't his fault.

That was a blessing from God. God can bless people with a lot. The next question is, what does God want you to do with it? And he doesn't want you to just say, well, I can just relax and consume.

I'll just be a consumer the rest of my life and produce nothing, do nothing of value. Lots of people do that. You ever see these motorhomes with the bumper stickers that says, we're spending our children's inheritance, you know? I hope you don't have one on yours, Frank, because I didn't notice.

I didn't think so, but no, there are people who just feel like, hey, I've made enough money. I'm going to retire. Frankly, it's kind of neat to see a situation like Frank's

situation where he was able to retire, and he applies all his waking hours to biblical study and doing things to post on the internet for people to help study the Bible, the fruit of his efforts.

He's probably been busier in that area since he retired than when he was working, but that's the way to use retirement. But to sit back and say, I'm not going to do anything anymore. I'm just going to consume and relax.

That's not what God gave you that extra for. And it says, God said to him, you fool. This night, your soul will be required of you.

Then whose will those things be which you've provided? So is he who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God. Now, notice, so is he who lays up treasure for himself. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, do not lay up for yourself treasures on earth, but lay up treasures in heaven.

On earth, it's not so much that laying up treasure is the problem, but laying up for yourself treasures. God may have people generate a lot of money and have a big bank account from which they regularly help missions or the church or the poor or whatever. There could be money laid up.

Joseph laid up a lot of grain for seven years of famine that was coming, and from that laying up, he dispersed. He didn't lay it up for himself. He laid it up because God warned him there was famine coming, and he helped everybody with it.

The ant is that way. The Bible commends the wisdom of the ant in Proverbs chapter 6 because in the summertime, the ant stores up for the winter. It knows it won't be able to store so much in the winter, so it stores up enough in the summer, but not for itself, for its whole anthill, for the whole community.

It's for everybody in the anthill. In other words, there's nothing wrong with storing up, especially if lean times are visible on the horizon. There's nothing wrong with having something laid up, but you have to make sure it's not for yourself.

It may benefit you along with others, but it's God's. It's not yours. Nothing is yours.

Everything is God's, and the man here laid it up for himself, but he wasn't rich toward God. He hadn't done the kinds of things that lay up treasures in heaven, and if you read all the passages in the New Testament about laying up treasures in heaven, they all seem to point toward giving to the poor is the way you do that. Verse 22, real quickly here.

We're not going to finish this chapter, by the way, but let's get a little more done. And he said to his disciples, Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you'll put on. Life is more than food and the body more

than clothing.

Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn, and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? Jesus keeps making this statement that people are valuable more than birds. Maybe that's what Peter needs to learn about.

They think that people aren't more important than animals, but people are more important than animals. People are made in the image of God. Birds, nice critters, but they're not worth as much as people are, and need to keep that in mind in our day where people are really confused about that kind of thing.

He says, And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? And if you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin, and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith? And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have anxious mind.

For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your father knows that you need these things. But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things will be added to you. Do not fear, little flock, for it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Sell what you have and give alms. Provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

So here is one of those places that says, sell what you have and give alms and you'll provide treasures in the heaven for yourself, giving to the poor. Now this whole section we read obviously is except for the last couple verses, well even the last couple verses except for a few in the middle like verse 32 and 33, those two verses are not in the Sermon on the Mount. But the rest of this can be found in Matthew's Sermon on the Mount in the sixth chapter of Matthew.

And of course I've talked about that at that place, I won't go into detail here. The main thing is that Jesus addresses the issue of concerns about food and clothing, the two things which are most necessary for survival. In 1st Timothy chapter 6 Paul said, having food and clothing we will with these things be content.

Paul's saying if we have nothing else but food and clothing we'll be content with that if that's all God provides. But Jesus says don't even worry about those. Even food and clothing you shouldn't be worried about because food is something that God provides even for the birds.

How much more would he provide for you? And once again we know that birds aren't provided for all the time. Birds die, there are severe winters where they can't find food and they die of starvation. So how does that fit with what Jesus said? It fits exactly with what Jesus said.

Not one bird falls to the ground without his will, but they do eventually fall to the ground. Every bird does. Some from starvation, some from predators, some from exposure.

There's all kinds of ways birds die and there's all kinds of ways Christians die too. But they never die in one way. They never die apart from the will of the Father.

If all that you're concerned about is the will of God for your life then you have nothing to worry about because if he wants you to live you will not die. You cannot die apart from the will of your Father. Even an animal can't.

Even a bird can't. And therefore you never have to worry as long as you just want the will of God. If I live well, praise the Lord.

If I die, we'll praise the Lord. Jesus said, Father if it's your will let this cup pass from me, that is don't let me die here. However not my will but yours be done.

It's the will of God that we're concerned about, not whether we live or die. And so birds do die. They do sometimes starve.

Even Christians probably starve somewhere. I've never known one that did but I'm not saying that it's never happened. There are countries where people starve in great numbers and some of them might be Christians but not apart from the will of your Father.

The point here is as long as God wants you to live he'll provide what you need to live. As long as he wants you to live you'll have enough food to survive till the next day or at least through that day or at least until he doesn't want you to live anymore. That we can guarantee that as long as God wants you to live he'll provide everything you need to live.

Food, clothing, whatever it needs. And if you are alive today he has done so up until now. I mean we can think of things at times when we wanted something and God didn't provide it but we can't deny that he gave us all we need because here we are still breathing.

Apparently all we needed to survive we've had up till this moment and we will up till the moment that it's time to stop breathing and God's the one who'll decide that. So you don't have to worry about food or clothing. He said you know he gave a lot of reasons for not worrying because God feeds the birds were more valuable than them.

He clothes the flowers were more valuable than them. He said it's unnecessary to worry because if we just seek the kingdom of God all these other things will be added to us. And by the way we'll get the kingdom too because he says it's your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom in verse 32.

So basically he says don't seek food, don't seek clothing, just seek the kingdom. But don't even worry about that. Don't fear little flock your father's good will is to give you the pleasure the good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

So he said you can sell what you have and give them to the poor. You can distribute madly. You will be laying up treasures.

You'll be providing you for yourself bags which do not wax old. A treasure in the heavens which cannot fail you. Any place you put your money on earth it can fail.

Even if you find a perfect hiding place that no one will ever find it can lose its value or inflation on everything else can go up so much that you can't use it anyway. It's not of any value to you. But the money that you lay up in heaven, the treasure you should lay up in heaven that can't fail you.

That can't you can't lose it. Its value will never diminish and where your treasure is more importantly your heart will be also. If your treasure is on earth your concerns are going to be on earth.

Your heart is going to be worried about things of earth because that's where all your treasures are. You redistribute your treasures. You send them on up ahead to heaven and then your concerns are going to be with heaven.

And this is simply a matter of frankly the way the human mind works. When you have something on earth you pay attention to it. You have to.

You're kind of responsible for it and so you have to be concerned about it. But if your treasures are in heaven your heart's going to be on heavenly things and that's of course what Jesus is telling his disciples to have. Now we're going to have to stop there just because we've run out of time.

Gotten about about halfway through almost. Yeah about halfway through the chapter. Would have liked to have gotten through the whole thing but that's just not the way it happens sometimes.

So we'll just stop there and take up the rest next time.