05.24.26

Luke
Chapter 11 - A Polarizing Wish
Obscuring the Way (vs. 42-44)

Luke 11:42-44: “But woe to you Pharisees! For you pay tithe of mint and rue and every kind of garden herb, and yet disregard justice and the love of God; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the chief seats in the synagogues and the respectful greetings in the market places. Woe to you! For you are like concealed tombs, and the people who walk over them are unaware of it.”

I'm reminded in 2 Corinthians 11, that we tend to complicate the message. And so, as that particular passage says, “I'm so amazed that you're actually distorting this gospel that's so simple, the simplistic love

of God." How easy it is to do that. And really, when we're talking about Pharisees and we're talking about religion, that's basically what we're talking about; the complication of that which is really just the love of God. My father used to say, "Sin complicates." And one of the reasons why there's so much Scripture is because sin has complicated so much that Scripture has to uncover and unwind all the convoluted things that we have involved ourselves with and the twisted mindset that we have. So, what you have is all this Scripture that begins to deal with these things. In fact, many of the epistles are written specifically to correct the churches of their wrong thinking. And so, as we come to this passage, we're reminded of the complications of that.

I like the way that Paul writes in Romans 6:21. He says, "How have you benefited by the sins?" And I don't think we stop to think about how sin not only complicates our life, but it has no benefit to it. I mean, we perceive maybe a sense of a high at a particular juncture, but in the long run, there is just nothing but destruction and heartache that follows. Why do you go to something that doesn't

benefit you? It's almost like an alcoholic that keeps going back to the drink and not even thinking how he's not being benefited by this. Yeah, he gets a buzz for a moment, but the destructive effect of it just continues to haunt him.

As we come to this passage, what we're beginning to deal with is the complication of sin and more specifically, the complication of religion. Because when you think about man's religion, as Colossians will make that interesting distinction, man begins to establish things that clearly are not even of God's heart. And we become fixated on things that become very destructive in our lives. In some respects, this particular chapter has been leading up to this.

In fact, if you go back to the very beginning of the chapter, we're reminded of, as the disciples just in simplicity ask, “What is it we're supposed to wish for?” And Jesus is pretty clear about wishing for a relationship with the God of the heavens. That's an unimaginable thought, isn't it? That we could actually have a relationship with God and that we could call Him,

“Father”. What an amazing thought that is. And He starts off, and He says, “You can call Him, “Father,” but you need to remember He's not like anybody else. He's not like any other father.” So, I think sometimes we have a tendency to think, “Well, my father was this way, so I'm not real sure about the ‘Father’ thing.” And as Hebrews 13 says, our fathers disciplined us as seemed right to them, but our Heavenly Father, the Father of spirits, He knows what you really need. And it's the goodness and the grace of God. And so, we see the love of God, who the Lord loves, He disciplines, and He cares for us enough to say, “Don't do that. And it is the grace of God that does that. But that we could call Him, “Father,” and that we're reminded that there's nobody like Him is really the format, or the foundation of our prayer, that there's nobody that loves us more than He does. What the prayer goes on to say is that we should wish for His way of thinking more than ours. The phrase, once again, “Thy kingdom come,” is making reference to His standards, His rules, the way that He sees things. And we all have ways of thinking, we all have ways of perceiving things, we have our own agenda, and we try to push it through

oftentimes. We think this is the best thing to do. Once again, Proverbs will say there is a way that seems right. But Scripture says, “Stop wishing for your way, start wishing for His. Ask Him for His rule to be in your life, as it clearly is in heavens.” And so, that should be your prayer. And your prayer should be and your wish should be that you would put your trust in Him for every single day. Life can be complicated, and it's very easy to try to get ahead of ourselves and to try to work through the future. However, He says, “Just give us this day our daily bread. I want to put all my dependence on You. I want to trust You for each day.” And one of the great benefits of that is that you actually talk with Him throughout the day. I mean, think about it. If He kind of gave you a plan for the year, then you probably wouldn't talk to Him for the rest of the year. But you come to Him for every single day and you realize that He's doing a wonderful thing in your day and it uncomplicates life. And that's why Jesus will say, “Today has enough cares of its own. Don't worry about the future. Don't try to figure it out.” There's a lot of anxiety that comes out of that.

He goes on to say that one of our greatest wishes should be that these sins that are in our life that they would no longer be in. In fact, He will ultimately say, “Deliver us from the evil, the malevolent forces that would be so hurtful to us.” As the psalmist will so wonderfully put it, he goes, “Search me and try me and see if there be any destructive way in me.” Because we're self-destructive, aren't we? I mean, just think about anger and anxiety alone and how we hold on to those things and wonder, “How did that ulcer get started? How did all these things happen?” So, as the psalmist says, our body starts wasting away and then we go, “Okay, maybe we're doing something wrong here.” And it is interesting how we suppress those feelings. But he says, “Come before the Lord.” The psalmist says, “I came before the Lord, I confessed my sins, and everything was okay.” And once again, that's too simple. But it's marvelously simple, I would say.

And what's interesting too is that within the prayer, He says, “And give me the same heart that You have towards others.” It is a forgiving heart. I want forgiveness. I would

want forgiveness for everybody else, and I'm not going to hold on to animosity and have a vindictive spirit. And so, this is the heart that God wants you to have. It's not a complicated thing.

Strangely enough, in the process of this particular chapter, we began to see people actually calling Jesus, “Satan,” the adversary. And we would say, “How did that come about?” And the answer is really clear. They wanted their will be done rather than God's will be done. And it's one of the reasons why this prayer is so controversial. It's the reason why Christ is so controversial. Because when you come to Christ, you call Him, “Lord,” and you begin to do things His way. You're no longer doing things your way. And so, you proclaim Him as Lord. Well, the world doesn't like people telling them what to do. They think that they have a really good way and a good handle on what they need to do. And quite frankly, it probably works out well for a season. Sin has pleasure for a season, as Hebrews says, but just for a short time. Because then, literally all hell breaks loose, and things begin to reveal themselves. But it's that which lures us in, and it's that

which causes us to have this false sense of security because we start going into it, and we go, “So far so good. I haven’t fallen off the Empire State Building.” And so, our thought is that things are going well, but there's going to be an end to this, and Scripture reminds us of this. Nevertheless, when those things begin to happen and man begins to unravel and he begins to feel anxious and upset, instead of turning to God, he begins to try to fix things himself.

It is in Luke 11 in particular that Jesus makes reference to this, and once again, without going into all the detail of it, He talks about the evil spirit or the unclean spirit that comes within a man.

If you pick up with me in Chapter 11, it'll read this way,

(Luke 11:24) “<u>When the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest</u>...”

Now, when we talk about unclean spirits, there's a lot of unclean spirits. But ones that we don't oftentimes think about are things like the spirit of anxiety or the spirit of anger. These are unclean spirits, too. So, let's just take anxiety for example. You have a sense of anxiety in your

life, then what do you try to find when your anxiety begins to crush you and you begin to feel imprisoned with it? What do you begin to do? Well, you look for rest. You look for some sort of repose. The only problem is that the places that we look for some kind of rest are places that are unclean, or more specifically, waterless places. In other words, we don't search and turn to God for the problems that we have. We feel anxiety, even though we don't have to feel it, and we go to other sources. They're not godly sources; they're just other sources. And there could be a plethora of sources, right? All kinds of places you go, whether it's medication or all kinds of things. But we're looking for rest. The problem is the sources that we go to bring in more demons and more heartache and more pain. In some way, He's been leading up to the whole thing with the Pharisees. And He actually gives this interesting description that by virtue of heading towards the wrong things to find some sort of rest and some sort of peace, you become blind to what is good and what is right. In other words, even if somebody told you the right thing to do, you'd go, "I just can't see it." Because you've been so fixated on doing things your way that now your

way has blinded you or obscured your vision to where you can't see.

His point being,

(Luke 11:34) “The eye is the lamp of your body; when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is bad, your body also is full of darkness.”

You can't even control where you go, what you do, because you can't see.

(Luke 11:35) “Then watch out that the light in you is not darkness.”

What is He talking about? That sense of light, “I have an idea. I have an epiphany. I have a moment of insight.” “What is it?” “Well, it's not turning to God.” Okay, that's darkness. And the problem is that you create more demons by going into that particular realm.

It is into that context that we then come into the house of the Pharisee. So, the Pharisee doesn't just crop up out of nowhere. Luke is tying it all together. And what do the Pharisees do? Well, Pharisees have this sense of righteousness. They have this sense of getting the house

in order, right? They're very meticulous about what they do. We would call it punctilious. Because in their drive to set everything in order, they go every single little detail, but the problem is they're focusing on the wrong stuff. So, they get fixated on this and that literally becomes a blinding agent or an obscuring agent all by itself. You think you have the right answer, so you go down this trail and you go down the trail so far that you can't even see your way back. It gets darker. So, it's in this context that Jesus is invited to a Pharisee's house. Now, the Pharisee, when he invites Him to the house, begins to see that Jesus isn't washing his hands according to their tradition. So, he begins to criticize the fact that He's not doing it. At least the text refers to the fact that maybe the expression on his face was such that he shows some sort of disdain that Jesus was not washing His hands according to tradition. As we talked about last week, the fact that the rabbis weren't seeing the hand washing as a means to actually clean your hands. In fact, they state that. This is not a means to clean your hands. This is a means to demonstrate cleanliness of the soul by virtue of the tradition or the ritual of the hand washing. You had to do

it a certain way, as we talked about, a certain vessel and had to be enough for two hands and you had to pass one hand off to the other. We talked about the details of that. The fact of the matter is that they were very focused on the very detail of the hand washing. Jesus now makes reference to that detail. In fact, He turns to them, and He says, “Woe to you for doing this. Because what you've done is you've focused on things that draw people away from the simplicity of God's love.” It's not unlike the Catholic Church, or you can talk about, I mean, there are so many different kinds of churches that focus on the wrong things. I was actually born in West Virginia. I know that there are some churches in West Virginia that have snake handlers. Now, there's a passage in Mark that makes reference to the fact that you go and handle serpents and you not die. We know that actually happened to Paul when he was on an island as he picked up a stick and a servant bit him and the Lord preserved his life. However, it's not given it as a criteria. There's nowhere in the text that it's given it as a criteria for worship. And so it's not saying, “Hey, get a whole bunch of snakes, bring them about the pulpit and let them do

their number or whatever." So, the point is that it's so easy to get fixated on things. We can get trinkets; we can hold trinkets; we can get a piece of bread, put it on our tongue a certain way, and we begin to focus on things that are insignificant. They are compulsive details and oftentimes obsessive details that we begin to get involved in. And so, Jesus begins to turn to them, and of course, I'll just remind you, He's an invited guest. But He turns to the person who has invited Him, and He says, "You're foolish."

The text reads this way in verse 40,

(Luke 11:40) "<u>You foolish ones, did not He who made the outside make the inside also?</u>

(Luke 11:41) <u>But give that which is within as charity, and then all things are clean for you.</u>"

Now, His point in this is that whatever you do, whatever you give, however you help people, and in this particular case, he was having somebody over for dinner. The word that's actually used is where we get our word "breakfast". It was after a break of a fast, and so they were having a meal. And the Pharisees invited Christ for this particular

meal. You would think that if you invite somebody to a meal, that you're just doing it because you like them. Or maybe you want them to enjoy your company. When you invite somebody to a meal, it's for fellowship, right? No, not the Pharisees. They're looking to see what they can manipulate in it. And as we talked about last week, all you have to do is pull in Proverbs 23, and it says, you go to a rich man, put a knife to your throat before you take his food because he's trying to get something out of you. So, I'm not saying that's true of all rich men. I'm just saying that you need to be careful. And be careful with the knife too. But the point of the matter is that they were always looking for an angle. The bottom line is they had ulterior motives. And Jesus says, “Can you not give and have no ulterior motives? Whenever you give, give in this way of thinking,” and He uses the word “charity” in the text; it's actually probably like you give alms. But the point is, give without expecting anything, if you're going to give something; if you're going to do something for somebody. And unfortunately, I don't think most of us even think that way. Most of us think in terms of, “Well, why didn't they say, ‘thank you’?” or, “Why didn't they do this?” I've

seen people get upset when they invited somebody. I'm going, “What are you getting upset for? You invited them over. You wanted to do something for them.” “Yeah, but they didn't notice this.” I'm going, “Well, you have an ulterior motive.” And His point is that when you invite somebody over, you shouldn’t have ulterior motives. Give. Give whatever you give.

There are times that people give gifts. And I had this individual that had given me a gift a number of years ago, and they came and visited over at the house, and I watched them, and they were looking around. I said, “What are you looking for?” “Where's that gift I gave you?” And I said, “It's over here.” Luckily, I had it out. But people are looking for those kinds of things. So, as the passage reads, that when you give, give this way.

Now, you look at verse 42, and it really comes off of this.

(Luke 11:42) “<u>But woe to you Pharisees! For you pay tithe of mint and rue and every kind of garden herb</u>...”

The passage is making reference to this mint that's very small. Actually, the mint that was used was used largely to throw on the floor. And they would throw it on the floor

of their houses and on their synagogues. We kind of had that thing in school where they throw this sawdust on the floor, they sweep it up, but it had kind of a minty smell. Well, that's what they would do to put the smell in the house and make the house odiferous in the sense that it was going to make it smell better. So, they would throw this mint on the floor. Well, It's so small, it's almost minuscule. It's actually saying that the Pharisees would tithe and make sure they didn't tithe over or under. It's getting pretty detailed. When He's talking about the rue, He's talking about something that was actually cultivated; leaves were cultivated for medicinal purposes. And that particular herb in the garden was used for that. Both of these that He mentions, and Jesus is very careful to mention these two specifics, both are mentioned because they make reference to worship. Even Paul will make reference to this in Ephesians 5, that Christ actually offers up this aroma that is pleasing to God. So, when they would put it on the floors of the synagogue, it was for the sake of establishing this sense of odor that was pleasing to God in the synagogue. The same thing was true with the other in which it was representative of something

that would be healing. Both these make reference to what they should be doing: one is offering something that is pleasing to God in an aroma the other is they should be looking to heal. This is the mindset of God. He says, “Your problem is you tithe these. You look for ways not to give any more than you have to. And you begin to get so focused on the details of the ritual itself that you lose sight of why you're doing what you're doing.” Now, what this is talking about fundamentally is literally just being compulsive and obsessive in the things that you do. And let me just say this. Once anxiety comes into your life and you begin to try to deal with it on your own terms, you'll find yourself running to sources that actually put you in a kind of prison of compulsive things. For instance, a person who is anxious about maybe the sins of their youth in childhood or some of the things that they feel filthy might tend to wash their hands by virtue of transferring that anxiety into that. There's a reason for obsessive compulsive behavior. It's people dealing with their things. I mean, you might have fears and so you go around your house checking the locks all the time. There's reason for the fears that come into your life because you've tried to

handle them yourself. You can't get rid of the anxiety, so then you begin to try to find someplace that will do this. Instead, what you have found is something that has now imprisoned you. And it's that obsessive compulsive behavior. The Pharisees have involved themselves in a ritual. And by virtue of the ritual, have tried to find some release from what they can't find release from. And so, the problem with that is that as they've begun to do this and made it a visual thing, a practice above everybody else, that they begin to lead, as Jesus would say, “You're blind, and then you lead the blind.” So, the point is that “You're bringing others into this sin, they can't even see it. They're so involved in your way of worship, in the details of it, you've got them focused on the obsessive-compulsive thing, that they can't see why they're doing what they're doing. They're so involved in that.” Now, at this juncture, before you say, “Those Pharisees, they're just such a mess, aren't they?” We do the same thing. For instance, you may invite somebody over for a meal, and before long you forget the fellowship and just concentrate on the food. I've seen people do that at Thanksgiving, “Where's the turkey?” And it's all about

that. But when it comes to fellowship, they walk away, everybody's mad at each other. Why is it you came together? Or parents go, “We want to have family time together.” So, what do they do? They get involved in sports. But watch out. Before long, it becomes all about winning. Now, your goal initially was fellowship. Now, it's just winning. And what you've done is you've found yourself involved in something, and you can't get out of it. The mindset literally has taken over in the things that you're doing. And whether it's work and money being the focus; I thought you were doing this to the glory of God. I thought you were doing this to help your family. But no, you get so wrapped up in those things that it becomes a god itself.

There's an interesting point, and Luke has already shared it with us, that reminds us that this is not just a problem of the Pharisees. It's a problem that you and I have. And if you look with me, it goes back to Luke 10, and there's this lady named Martha. You remember that? So, we come to the story of Martha in Luke 10.

(Luke 10:38) “Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named Martha...”

Now, the sister, Mary, was devoted to Christ and at His feet listening to Him. God's in the room! Just stop and think this. God's in the room! Now, what do you want to do? “I think I'll go wax the car.” It's not a good time to do that.

So, it says,

(Luke 10:40) “But Martha was distracted with all her preparations...”

What is that talking about? It’s talking about her mind was somewhere else because she had gotten so involved in these things.

It ultimately says, if you look in verse 41, the Lord actually ties it to worry. Watch what He says.

(Luke 10:41) “But the Lord answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things.”

This is not just about her not sitting at the feet of Jesus. This is her being so involved in these other things; the

anxiety has taken over. And her anxiety is being played out by her punctilious behavior towards making sure that the table's done just right and everything like this. Stop.

Minirth and Meier Clinic was actually the head clinic in Texas and Illinois a number of years ago, but they had observed the individuals with compulsive disorder. Let me just read some things to you: “Those with compulsive disorders often appear to be self-sacrificing people. They're overly conscientious, perfectionistic, and workaholics, frequently very religious. Their selfishness is very subtle. A man in society saving humanity at a work pace of about 80 or more hours a week, selflessly ignoring, or selfishly ignoring his wife and children. He will bury his emotions. He works like a robot. His activity is mostly unconscious compensation for his own insecurity and a means of fulfilling both a strong need for society's approval and a driving urge to be perfect.”

Actually, in Matthew 6, He goes, “Look, you don't want to be like the Pharisees because they do all their deeds to be noticed by men.” He'll repeat the same thing in Matthew 23.

The article goes on to say, “The compulsive personality has an improper preoccupation with rules, order, and details, often coming out of a home that had domineering parents. Because of this, he's full of anxiety, and because of this, the child may suppress the things that he feels because he's afraid, and that's one of the reasons why his response comes into the realm of just being compulsive.” He can't talk about it. He was in a home that was oppressive, so he couldn't share it. He couldn't talk about it. “Children that come out of these families are usually families where the standards are strict, emphasize where children are expected to meet these standards from etiquette to cleanliness to performance in general. And usually, in the conversation, the parents talk of responsibility. They season it with criticism of others, but it replaces loving contact and emotional rich moments. They develop legalistic, ritualistic tendencies which stem from the parents' focus on the letter of the law rather than the spirit of the law.”

You can see how it infiltrates and whether it's the washing of hands or the counting or repeating words or prayers.

People think, “If I just repeat this prayer over and over and over again...” That's just compulsive. That's thinking that's going to deal with it because you're not dealing with the heart. And if you talk to somebody like that, and you say, “You're not dealing with the heart,” they're going to go, “I can't see it.” Because it's been covered by this mentality.

This is why Jesus will say what He says if you look with me in Luke 11, and you drop on down,

(Luke 11:42) “<u>But woe to you Pharisees! For you pay tithe of mint and rue and every kind of garden herb, and yet disregard justice and the love of God</u>...”

“Justice,” the best way to put in there is the sense of right and wrong. In other words, you're no longer concerned about what's right and wrong. You're only concerned about the ritual, “Have I washed my hands today,” or “Have I held the cross” or “counted the beads,” or whatever it is. You're not thinking in terms of the right and wrong of what you've done. You can't see that.

Jesus goes on to say, “and the love of God,” which obviously is saying, “You're not doing the things that

you're doing because of the heart. You're not thinking, ‘Do I love God?’ You're not thinking about who you're doing it for or why you're doing it. You're only concerned about doing it. And you're getting this compulsive behavior. But these things you should have done without neglecting the others.”

(Luke 11:43) “Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the chief seats in the synagogues...”

Well, if you look at that, that's a superficial desire. By the way, the front seats is dealing with the *protokathedria*. “Cathedra” is where probably we get the word “cathedral”. You know, when it's talking about elevated seats. Where do we get the idea of big cathedrals? Elevated seats. Yeah. If you can make something look grand, it is. I mean, there are some beautiful cathedrals. New York City has some beautiful ones. Washington has some beautiful ones. You go into these and you're looking at them, you're going, “Wow.” Before long, you forget about what's important. Like the disciples, they're looking at the temple, and they'll go, “Wow, look at these stones.” And Jesus goes, “Do you see that woman over

there giving all her money?" We can't see it because we're so involved in the details. So, obviously, their love is for the seats in the synagogue, the front seats in the synagogue, and respectful greetings in the marketplaces. And they've made this the issue. It's about how you look. It's about how you present yourself. It's about what people say about you. These are all the important things that you have to concentrate on. And Jesus goes, "You know what you've done? You've hidden things from man. And now, they don't even know that they're being defiled."

The way he puts it is in verse 44,

(Luke 11:44) "<u>Woe to you! For you are like concealed tombs, and the people who walk over them are unaware of it.</u>"

It's kind of taken from Numbers 19, which talks about how you don't want to be in the place where the dead are because it defiles you. Well, Jesus isn't necessarily talking about the defilement of death. What He's talking about is how the Jews see it. And they were very much into the realm of, "You don't get near the dead people because

that defiles you." He goes, "Well, you know what you do. You're like an unkept grave where people can't tell if there's grave's there or not. So, now they don't even know if they're getting defiled." It's an interesting description, isn't it? In other words, we have wrapped our whole life around the trivial and the insignificant. We'll argue and debate about things that really don't even matter. And because of that, the important things have been hidden from people and they're becoming defiled by those things. The very fact that God wants you to love Him with all your heart, soul, and mind; the very fact that the power is in receiving Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior; all these things are hidden. And these are things that defile you forever. You should be warning people. You should be telling them these things. And let me just say this too, that the very things that we involve ourself in, those trivial things that we involve ourself in, that we make to be so important, which they're really not, it's bringing anxiety in our life because we're focusing on the wrong things and by virtue of being compulsive in those wrong things... Have you ever seen a compulsive person going in their compulsions, getting better through that?

See, that's the point. It doesn't get better. It gets worse. You keep going back to the same sources, receiving the same rejection and having the same failure, and it just gets worse. It gets worse. Now, it shouldn't surprise you that the very next chapter, Jesus will deal with anxiety. See?

If you look with me in Luke 12, we'll just kind of take a preview.

And by the way, it's written in the context, if you look in Luke 12:1,

"Under these circumstances..."

And he's tying it to Chapter 11. So, it's not just Pastor Gary tying it.

"Under these circumstances, after so many thousands of people had gathered together that they were stepping on one another, He began saying to His disciples first of all, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."

Now, His point is that they're living in a superficial world. Everything that they do, whether it's worship or dealing

with their problems, is on a superficial level. You're feeling anxiety, “Good, I happen to have a rabbit's foot. You'll feel better now. And because I give you the rabbit's foot, you're supposed to feel better.” But the problem is we didn't deal with the right issue. And now the problems that you still have still happen because that rabbit foot doesn't control anything. So, the hypocrisy is just that surface thing, that mask, “We're not holy, we don't feel forgiven, our anxieties aren't gone, but we'll look like they are. We're not devoted, but we'll act like we are. So, when we fast, we'll put on these sad faces before everybody else and they'll look at us, and they'll go, “What a holy person because they fast in a way that, I mean, look how sad they look.” And Jesus goes, “No, put a smile on your face. You're going to fast and look refreshed because you don't want to draw attention to that.” But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men because there is no sense of…. And you'll do that for yourself. You'll lie to yourself. You'll go to all kinds of resources, and you'll go, “I think I feel better.” You don't. You're lying to yourself. You don't feel better. But you'll believe the lie after a while. And it'll get so dark that after

a while somebody will tell you the truth, you'll go, “I don't want to hear it.”

This is why Jesus will say in the context of this in Luke 12,

(Luke 12:22) “And He said to His disciples, “For this reason...”

So, it's kind of a summary, right?

“... “For this reason I say to you, do not worry about your life...”

Because you're going to go the way of hypocrisy if you do. If you start worrying about things and start taking upon yourself things that were meant for you to trust in God, in reality, you're going to go the same way of the Pharisees. And they're not happy. They're not finding victory!

He goes on and says this in the same verse,

“... as to what you will eat; nor for your body, as to what you will put on.

(Luke 12:23) For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing.

(Luke 12:24) Consider the ravens...”

“I'm going to take care of them.”

(Luke 12:25) “And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life’s span?”

(Luke 12:29) “And do not seek what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not keep worrying.”

(Luke 12:32) “Do not be afraid...”

What is He talking about? Yeah, all those things that so easily consume us. And what's the problem? Why are you still afraid? Why are you living in anxiety? Because you never got genuine with God. You never got real with God, and you never put your trust in God. You never embraced real, which is the faith in Christ. As Hebrews will so wonderfully put it, “Now, faith is substance.” It's the one substance, it's the one real thing that will change your heart, will take care of those anxieties and those fears. All those other things are superficial and surface. It'll never fix anything. Hebrews will actually call them shadows that come into your life.

So, as we come to this passage, just remember, this isn't just about the Pharisees. It's about us, Marthas. about us

that get fixated on the wrong stuff. I oftentimes told Connie, I'm convinced that God gave me kids so I wouldn't be obsessed and compulsive. Because I'd clean the cars and then the kids would... And God goes, "See? Just let it go."

I've got to tell this on myself. When we first got married, I just bought a new car. And I just bought a house at the beach. And so, I was washing my car, which was pretty usual. And we had this white German Shepherd. And it was raining outside. But I had the car in the garage. And I was just getting the last detail, the speck of dust on the... Anyway. I was getting it all clean. So, I had my doors open. Well, it was white inside. All of my seats were white. And the dog somehow found its way in the garage, he was all muddy and just jumped in the front seat. I tried to grab that dog and then he jumped in the back. I was going back and forth. Anyway, the Lord has been working on me through the years. You don't want to make things that aren't important, important. It's just a dark place to go.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You today and we just ask You to do a work in our hearts. Lord, we tend to focus on the wrong things and to go to the wrong sources for our healing. Life is full of anxieties and anxious thoughts and hard things to deal with, but You tell us, “Come unto Me all who are weary and heavy laden and I'll give you rest.” We come to the real and we come to that which is really important and that which really works. You want us to stop living in the realm of make-believe and manipulation and trying to work out things ourselves. You want us to just come with a humble heart of faith, “We trust You. We give You our lives. We believe You. We're going to walk in simplicity of this.”

Your heads bowed and your eyes closed. I don't know how complicated your life is, but I know this: Sin complicates life. And sin, the greatest sin, is not believing. Scripture will say that which is not of faith is sin. Trust in Him. Cast all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you.