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Luke

Chapter 12 - An Unforeseen Disclosure
The Unexpected Requirement (vs. 41-48)

Luke 12:41-48: Peter said, “Lord, are You addressing this parable to us, or to everyone else as well?” And the Lord said, “Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes. Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But if that slave says in his heart, ‘My master will be a long time in coming,’ and begins to beat the slaves, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk; the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers. And that slave who knew his master’s will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes, but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone who has

been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.

This is a passage about accountability. We are accountable to God. Ephesians 5 tells us that we need to make the most of our time, for the days are evil. It is really easy to allow life just to pass us by. Before long, we wake up and we go, "What have I done with my life?" And God says, "You're here for a reason. I've called you for a purpose." And so easily we literally waste our life away.

We come to this Chapter 12, and really Chapter 12 is about how man focuses on the wrong things. It begins with multitudes stepping on one another, trampling on one another. And it really is an interesting picture of being self-consumed and involved in self-preservation. Perhaps in some ways the self-aggrandizement. It's about me first. And the focus oftentimes is the acceptance of man, the affirmation of man, the applause of man. We live our lives that way. Our lives are spent wondering what everybody else thinks.

In fact, the very thing that Christ begins to talk about in this chapter as He begins to reveal the hidden things as His statement is,

(Luke 12:2) "But there is nothing covered up that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known."

And of course, there are a lot of hidden things that man would not like to deal with, but the fact of the matter is, and the truth of the matter is, that you're afraid and you live in fear of what man thinks. Everything you do, you do in accordance with how man will in some way respond to the things you do. Will you be recognized by him? Will you be affirmed by him? Do you have his applause? And unfortunately, oftentimes parents work in this realm with their children. You know, "You need to be somebody." How do you be somebody? Well, you're somebody if somebody recognizes you, you're somebody if somebody applauds you, you're somebody if somebody affirms you, if they accept you. And unfortunately, oftentimes we send our children down a path of misery. So, as you come to this passage, one of the first things that Jesus does is He begins to reveal things. Now, of course, we know that He Himself

is truth. And as John will so aptly describe Him as Light. And so, when light comes into darkness, it exposes. And that's what He does. So, as truth comes in, He begins to expose. And one of the first things that He exposes, as He states, "There's nothing covered that's not going to be ultimately revealed," is that you're afraid of the wrong people. You're afraid of man, and you should be afraid of God.

The statement is very clear within the passage,

(Luke 12:5) "But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him!"

"But you're afraid of those who kill the body, and after that, they can do no more. You're afraid of the wrong people." And we live our lives being afraid of the wrong things, and because of that, we begin to make wrong choices.

The truth of the matter is, as you come to the passage in Chapter 12, that you've actually tied your significance to the possession of stuff. You know, "I'm going to be somebody," and how do you be somebody? Well, you just have more stuff. And so, one of the statements that Jesus

makes is, "Beware of all kinds of greed," because by virtue of the possessions that you have, it doesn't define who you are. But the world is telling you, this is what everybody else is saying, this is what man is saying. And quite frankly, if you want to be affirmed by man, you'll jump through his hoops. And because of that, we find ourselves pursuing significance through the possessions that we have.

In fact, the statement is in verse 15,

(Luke 12:15) "Then He said to them, 'Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.'"

We fear the wrong things. We pursue the wrong things. Our significance is based on the wrong things. And the truth of the matter is that as we pursue and as we perhaps feel a little insecure in all of this, we then turn and we begin to say, "Well, maybe the problem is I just don't have enough. Maybe I'll just pursue more of these things." And of course, He gives that wonderful parable of the of the man who tears down his barns and he builds bigger barns. "More is the answer." No, more is not the answer. How do we know

that more is not the answer? Well, we know that more is not the answer because you just are full of anxiety. So, the truth of the matter is that you're afraid of the wrong things. The truth of the matter is that you tie your significance to the wrong things. The truth of the matter is that you think more is going to bring you greater security. And the truth of the matter is that none of this is working.

If you look at the passage, He turns to His disciples in verse 22,

(Luke 12:22) "And He said to His disciples, "For this reason I say to you, do not worry..."

He continues to repeat the phrase "anxiety" in verse 25, verse 26, and all the way through, in fact, in verse 29, "do not keep worrying."

The fact of the matter is that these things are not working, and you're full of anxiety, you're investing in wrong values, and you need to get ready. You're going the wrong path, and you need to get back on the right path, and you need to get ready for what God is going to judge you according to. If we were to put it in the English vernacular of Britain, we'd say,

"Get cracking," because the emphasis in the passages is "Get going," "Get moving."

And so, this is what He states in verse 34,

(Luke 12:34) "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

(Luke 12:35) Be dressed in readiness, and keep your lamps lit."

Get going. You're doing the wrong things. You're focusing on the wrong things. You're heading the wrong way. That's why you're so miserable. Get going. Get changed.

(Luke 12:37) "Blessed are those slaves whom the master will find on the alert when he comes..."

And he does the right thing without knowing when his master is coming. You're going to need to get back on track.

Peter then turns to Jesus and he says, "Are You talking to me?" I think one of the greatest problems as we face Scripture is that it's hard for us to perceive that He's actually talking to us. We believe, as we read and hear different messages, "Wow, we really know a lot of people that message would be really good for, but God is actually

talking to you. And He's saying, "Get ready. You need to get ready." Jesus doesn't answer directly to Peter. He doesn't say, "Yeah, I'm talking to you." He actually fundamentally says, "It depends on who your master is. You know, you're going to obey whoever master you have."

So, we pick up in verse 41,

(Luke 12:41) "Peter said, "Lord, are You addressing this parable to us, or to everyone else as well?"

(Luke 12:42) And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and sensible steward..."

Who's the one that is mindful of what his master wants? He gives an interesting word here of servant, or more specifically "steward," in which it's fundamentally a description of a manager of a household. And the manager of a household is a manager over the finances, over servants, and literally over the children of the master as well. He is over the possessions that the master has. And He says, "Who's the one that actually knows the wishes of what his master wants? He's the one that's going to be put in charge."

"... whom his master will put in charge of his servants..."

Or more specifically, I believe the word is "service". Now, the word "service" there is actually the word where we get the term "therapeutic". The point of the matter is that the master has given you charge over his house that you might take care of that which is most valuable to him, and ultimately that which is most valuable to him are not only his servants, but his children. And so, the question is, are you going to be a good steward of these things? God has put you in charge. And look, God has put us all in charge of somebody or something. He has put people in our path. He's put relatives in our lives. He has given us children in some cases. And so, we have responsibilities. And those responsibilities, we know that not only are children a gift of God, but everything that we have is on loan from God; that He is our Master and He has given us these to be stewards. And the question is, are you going to be good stewards of the things that He has? Now, what makes this unique and what makes this passage really poignant is the fact that it literally is kind of a dichotomy of the way that man has been thinking up to this point, as He's been talking about.

You just think about yourself. You're only thinking about what everybody else is thinking of you. So, you operate in that particular realm. And when you begin to operate in that realm, and you begin to see that your possessions are what makes you valuable, then you start hoarding. And in that, then you start seeing everybody else as an enemy. And the very people that you should be ministering to are the very people that you see as a threat to your world. And so, His point is that you should have been thinking like you were a servant all along because your wrong thinking has brought you to the point of not only bringing harm to the people around you but bringing anxiety to your own life.

One of the reasons why we feel unfulfilled and one of the reasons why we feel so full of anxiety is because we're investing in things that we perceive that we control according to ourselves. And if at any one time you begin to think that you're in control, you're going to be anxious about your life.

Scripture tells us in 1 John 4 that “perfect love casts out fear.” That is to say, as you begin to think about other people, and as you have the love of Christ, which is not

only moving you to love God with all of your heart, but moving you to love others more than yourself, it will literally push out all fear of your life. It's a bizarre thought, But it's very difficult, and I have found it's very difficult to get depressed when I'm serving other people. And God says, "You were never meant to think about yourself. I've called you for the purpose of serving. Get busy doing that, because this is what I'm going to be looking for when I come." It is this emphasis that He's going to focus on within the passage, and as He begins to focus on it, He's going to remind them that they are going to be required of that which God has placed him in charge of. And unfortunately, most of us are just going, "Are You talking to me?" And He's saying, "Yeah, I've been talking to you all along, because from day one, you were called for this purpose, and that is to minister to others. And I'm your Master, and you should be serving, and you should be constant and consistent in this." And unfortunately, we've been focused on so many other things.

(Luke 12:42) "And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge

of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time?"

You know, I was thinking... Oftentimes I go through much of the Scripture to see certain things, and it's almost depressing, I have to admit, that as I go through passages and realize that God calls us, in particular as ministers, and when I prepare for a particular message, I know that whatever message I'm preparing for, God's going to put me through whatever He wants me to learn. Because the goal of a prophet is to experience the heart of God in the message. In other words, if you don't experience the heart of God in the message, then how can you convey the message? Other than that, it's just exegete, and it's just academics, right? So, you have Ezekiel who is actually forced to lie on his side for 430 days. I don't know how you do that. That's over a year. You know, 390 days on his left side, and he can't move. You say, "Why can't he move?" Because they have to tie him down so he can't move. So, he has to be tied down. So, the 430 days represented Israel and Judah rebelling against God. And God is saying, "I want you to convey to them just how rough this is going to be."

So, he has to literally and physically go through the pain of some kind of trial and tribulation in the sense of being bound and going into captivity. And so, there he is for 430 days. Imagine that. Interesting preparation for ministry, isn't it? But you have to feel this message as Jeremiah did and it's interesting when I think about Isaiah in particular. Isaiah was one that actually had to go naked and barefoot for 3 years. And why would he do that? Well, he's got to convey to the Egyptians that they're going into captivity. And when they go into captivity, they're going to strip them of all their clothes and all their sandals. And so, they're going to be walking for 3 years in captivity that way. So, how do you convey that to somebody? Well, you've got to go through it. Jeremiah had to be nailed to a door and had to be despised by his family and friends. He would have to be thrown into a cistern so he could experience it. Hosea had to marry a woman that would be unfaithful, and he would then have to buy her off the auction block so that he could convey to Israel just how horrific it was for somebody to be unfaithful. All of these messages had to be felt. And so, when I read a particular passage and I go through it, though I am encouraged by the wonderful truth

in the message, oftentimes I go, "Uh-oh, here we go again." And I have to say that God has been working in my heart about this whole servant thing. I've oftentimes said that I actually don't think that's my spiritual gift. Nevertheless, I think God had different plans on that one. And so, He's been teaching me.

The interesting thing that He's been teaching me in particular in this verse 42, His question is, "Who is the one who will be in charge; who will be therapeutic in the way that he ministers?"

And then it goes on and says,

"... to give them their rations at the proper time?"

The reason why he uses the phrase, "proper time" is He's really emphasizing that it's not up to you to decide when it is. It's up to the one in need. In other words, you give to the one that has the need. You're the servant. So, you're standing off to the side going, "Is there a need here?" And you're recognizing the needs around you, rather than going, "You know what? I just don't feel like serving today." Do you ever have those moments? Well, you and I don't have that option. That's not the option that we have. What God

has called us to do is to be faithful and minister and serve at the time of need of those that we're serving. So, we're basically and fundamentally on call all the time. All the time.

(Luke 12:43) "Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes."

This is going to be the emphasis of the text. In other words, that which really reveals the genuineness of the heart is going to be consistency. It's one thing to say that you do something on a particular point in time or at a particular moment of convenience, or maybe you just at one juncture of your life say to yourself, "You know, I'm feeling pretty good today. I'd like to give to somebody." But God says, "No, that's not what I'm looking for. I'm looking for somebody that's not only consistent, but continual in their ministry." And the fact that He wants you to be ready is basically saying, "Anytime. I could come anytime. I'm looking for those that are serving anytime." And I'll tell you, even over this past week, I've been looking over my shoulder more. You know, "Is the Lord coming today?" I want to be ready if He's coming today. What do I want Him

finding me doing when He comes today? That's the question. What am I busy doing? Am I pursuing my things? Am I pursuing my ways?

“Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes.

(Luke 12:44) Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

(Luke 12:45) But if that slave says in his heart..."

That's where it begins, isn't it? It begins in your heart.

And once again, at the very beginning of this chapter, you know, there's nothing covered that will not be revealed, even your heart. And God's going to judge the motives and intent of the heart. But the question is, what reveals the heart? And this particular passage is saying, what reveals the heart is consistency. In other words, if you're inconsistent, that reveals an unfaithful heart. Even if you're inconsistent for a moment, that's an unfaithful heart. What God is looking for is that consistency and that continuance of your ministry.

"But if that slave says in his heart, 'My master will be a long time in coming,' and begins to beat the slaves, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk."

Self-gratification; he begins to self-indulge. All these things. He begins to say, "Well, what about me? I have a life, you know. I'm here. I need to be focusing on myself." And God says, "That's not what I'm looking for." And if you think about it, when you begin thinking about yourself and when you begin to pursue your own desires, you're not only going to be stepping on other people, but you're also going to be abusing other people. And when He's talking about beating your slaves and things like this, the people that we're given charge over, oftentimes we speak roughly to, we are unforgiving towards, and in that spirit, we begin to tear down individuals. And God says, "That's not why I called you. I called you to be a help. I called you to bandage. I called you to minister to people. And that's what you're called to do. That's what I'm going to check on."

Verse 46 reads this way,

(Luke 12:46) "The master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him..."

And really, once again, the emphasis is he's not going to be looking for this. And in a way, when He uses the word here, "expect," He's really making reference to the fact that he's not looking for the master because he doesn't want him to come. I mean, he has that kind of heart.

"... on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know..."

That is to say, once again, he doesn't perceive. Why doesn't he perceive? Once again, because he's just immersed himself in the things of his own desire.

"... and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers."

The first initial thought is that the cutting of pieces is that he cuts them in half because the Hebrews would do that. Isaiah was actually sawn in half, i.e. cut in pieces. But that's not the point of this particular passage because of the fact that he's still alive, and how do you know he's still alive? Because he's assigned with an unbeliever. So, what it's talking about is that he's cut into pieces, or we would probably put it in more of a modern vernacular; he tore into them. And what it's talking about, of course, is the way that

they would beat and tear into their skin. And what it's talking about is a great severity of pain and torture because of what he had done.

"... and assign him a place with the unbelievers."

Or the unfaithful. These are the ones that you can't trust; these are the ones you can't depend on; these are the ones that are hurting others, and these are the ones that are only doing what they do when they do the right thing for external service.

Colossians 3:22 will talk about that. You shouldn't do your service as external service, as eye service; as Ephesians 6 would say, performing under the master's eyes and only doing what you do because of those eyes looking upon you. But it goes on to say in Ephesians, "But with sincerity of the heart, fearing the Lord; doing the will of God from the heart as servants of Christ. The evidence that you actually believe that what you're doing is for God and your concern more is for God than for men is that you do it all the time. How do I know that I'm doing what I'm doing for God? You do it all the time. How do you know you're doing it for men? You only do it sometime. Because God's omnipresent,

right? There's no place that He's not. He knows all things. If in fact you really believe that, if in fact you're really walking by faith, when will you do the right thing? All the time.

"The master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers."

(Luk 12:47) And that slave who knew..."

And this is a key point as well,

"... who knew his master's will..."

"*Ginōskō*" makes reference to the fact that he comes to a knowledge of, and that means that he knew his master so well that he knew how he thought. He had come to know his master so well. So, we're really in the realm here of those who are believers. Now, here again, I know the initial thought is, "Wow, if that's going to happen when I first go to heaven, I don't know if I want to go right away because He's going to discipline me." But of course, we know, according to Peter, that now is the time that God judges us.

If you turn with me to 1 Peter, you'll see that within the text. When does judgment happen with believers? Well, there's no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, right? However, we are His children, and God's not going to let us act like brats, nor is He going to allow us to hurt people or abuse people, or to be hostile towards people.

So, 1 Peter 4 reads this way as he's talking to believers within the text,

(1 Peter 4:15) "Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler;

(1 Peter 4:16) but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.

(1 Peter 4:17) For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?"

So, when are we going to be dealt with? Now. What the passage is fundamentally saying is that you need to get your act straight. "If you're hearing My voice and I'm your Master, you need to make sure that you're doing the right

thing." And you say, "Well, what if I don't?" And He goes, "I'm going to require it of you."

There's a passage in 1 Corinthians, if you look with me, in 1 Corinthians 5, where Paul has to deal with, here again, the sin of a church. And here in this particular setting, there's immorality that's affecting the body of Christ.

His statement is,

(1 Corinthians 5:1) "It is actually reported that there is immorality among you, and immorality of such a kind as does not exist even among the Gentiles, that someone has his father's wife."

(1 Corinthians 5:2) You have become arrogant and have not mourned instead, so that the one who had done this deed would be removed from your midst.

(1 Corinthians 5:3) For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged him who has so committed this, as though I were present.

(1 Corinthians 5:4) In the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled, and I with you in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus,

(1 Corinthians 5:5) I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

Who's he talking about? He's talking about a believer. He's talking about a believer that has gone awry and has infected the church to such an extent, as he goes on to say, that this leaven is leavening the whole lump. In other words, it's infiltrating everything. And because of this, people are fighting, arguing against authority. And because of this, God says, "I'm going to deal with you." You say, "How does God deal with you?" Well, He puts you out with unbelievers. What's the realm of the unbelievers? Well, the realm of the unbelievers is the torture of the evil one that comes after you. Because really in the church, you have the protection of the church. But outside the church, you don't have the protection of the church. And God says, "We're going to destroy the flesh so that your soul will be saved." God's not going to let you continue to destroy the church. He's not going to let you abuse people in the church. You should be building up the church. He's not going to let you tear it down. That's not what God's called

you to do. I mean, if you made Him your Master, He's going to be very upset if you're hurting His body.

This is why 1 Corinthians 3, if you look in the passage and drop on down to verse 16, his statement is,

(1 Corinthians 3:16) "Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

(1 Corinthians 3:17) If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him..."

I mean, it's very clear that you have an obligation, and your obligation is not only not to be negligent, but you can't be harmful or hurtful to the body of Christ. If in fact you are, then God's going to require it of you.

Another example is given, of course, in Matthew 18. If you'll turn there with me, you'll see that here you have a believer. And of course, in the context, it actually starts off in Matthew 18, "Don't be a stumbling block."

(Matthew 18:6) "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea."

God's not going to allow His body or His believers to stumble. Now, quite frankly, an unbeliever would probably get away with stuff like this until he meets the Maker, and then that will be eternal. But with believers, we have a Master, and the Master will require it of us at a time which we do not expect. So, his warning is, of course, "You can't allow one of these little ones to stumble. Your life can't be that way." He goes on to the whole realm of forgiveness. And of course, Peter goes, "So, how often do I have to forgive my brother?" And Jesus goes, "You always have to forgive your brother." We're just summarizing it. You always have to forgive your brother. You can't not forgive your brother. Some people think that they have the option to not love their brother. You don't have the option to not love. See, it doesn't matter what I do, you still have to love me. And that's the wonderful thing about my job. I can just command people to love me, and they have to. But in Matthew 18, the emphasis is that you have to forgive. Why? Because an act of unforgiveness is an act of control. And it's an act of beating somebody down. You're trying to use your non-forgiveness to hurt them. So, you're beating them.

Jesus tells an interesting story about a slave and the fact that there was a debt owed and ultimately the fact that though he was forgiven, he wouldn't forgive. The way that the passage ends is this way, and we're just going to sum it up and we'll do that by verse 32, which says,

(Matthew 18:32) “Then summoning him, his lord said to him, ‘You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me.

(Matthew 18:33) Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy on you?’

(Matthew 18:34) And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him.

(Matthew 18:35) My heavenly Father will also do the same to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart.”

So, it still wouldn't do any good if you just said, "Oh, I forgive you," if you held it in your heart. God says, "We're not going to let that go." You can't continue to hold that

animosity in your heart. God's going to hold you accountable to that. Our perception is that we've been called to follow Christ, and we've called Him "Lord". And in calling Him "Lord," our thought is that we can do whatever we want to now. And God says, "No, you just call Me 'Lord'. So, you've made Me the Master, and so I'm going to hold you accountable. And believe Me, there are going to be moments in your life when you least expect it that I'm going to visit you with some discipline. And you don't have the option to hurt people. I'm not going to let you get away with that."

So, as the passage goes on in Luke 12:46,

"The master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers.

(Luke 12:47) And that slave who knew..."

And this is the fundamental point within the passage; and let me just say this, it's one of the great emphasis of Romans 1 and Romans 2, because the Jews at that particular time, when Paul writes the book, were really

trying to convey that they're special because they were Jews and they knew the Law. And because they knew the Law, that meant that they were far more spiritual than everybody else. And God says, "No, that just makes you more guilty." Because the more that you know, the more you're going to be held accountable to. And man's knowledge is actually the measure of your responsibility. This is why fundamentally I have good news and bad news. The good news is you come to church which teaches the word of God. The bad news is you're going to be held more accountable. That's the bad news. But that's really good news because of the fact that you're actually, hopefully, being spurred on to do the right thing and God is rescuing you from wasting your life. And that's fundamentally what the beginning of the passage is about, and He's going to take you out of anxiety. Everything that God does in our life of the believer, even the severe discipline in our lives, is to keep us from hurting ourselves and others. So, it's really the graciousness of God.

“And that slave who knew his master’s will and did not get ready...”

I mean, he knew. He's familiar with what his master wants. He knows what he likes. He knows his wishes. He knows his care for people. And of course, Jesus has been letting everybody know that He came to save. Even though James and John will want lightning to come down or fire to come down from heaven to destroy the Samaritans, He'll go, "You don't understand My will." But they will come to know His will. And look, it's very clear to us what God has called us to do. And we should be ready and we should be acting and we should be ready to help and minister to people according to when they need help. Ephesians 4 says, only such a word is as good for the moment. Colossians 4 talks about the fact that we know these are open doors and we look to God to open those doors, but we know that when He opens them, we've got to be ready to go. It's that ever consistent, ever devoted life that God is looking for. God has called us to minister to people and not to think of ourselves, but to think of those that have needs.

“And that slave who knew his master’s will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes,

(Luke 12:48) but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few..."

The point of the matter is that there are certain things that we may do that is worthy of God's discipline, and yet maybe we didn't know everything about it. However, it would be wrong for God to let it go. It would be wrong for God to say, "You know what? You didn't know, so no big deal." You wouldn't remember that. But if God put you through a mild "wringer," you go, "Okay, I get it. I won't do that again." And He's corrected you. Once again, who the Lord loves, He disciplines, and He scourges every child. And He's not going to let us get away with hurting people, or He's not going to let us do something that is destructive, whether it's wittingly or unwittingly. There are times that clearly, "Well, I didn't know that hurts them." "Yeah, but don't do it again." You know?

"But the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to

whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more."

The passage is once again talking about that which really reveals not only the heart in the sense of the consistency, but also the fact that if you know these things, you're blessed if you do them. And God has given us a certain knowledge, certain understanding, and these are not truths that you and I can passively sit on. God has a way of getting our attention. Look, when you came to God and you gave your life to Him and you surrendered to Him and you called Him "Lord," what you literally were declaring is, "Don't let me waste my life anymore." And God says, "I won't." And so, He's not going to let you. And "Oh, Father, I want to follow You. I want to be a servant of Christ. I want to walk in the love of Christ." And He says, "I'll make sure you do that. And when you do something destructive or hurtful that it's not in the love of Christ, I'm going to let you know." And it's His grace that does that. It's now time for judgment to begin in the household of God, household of faith. If it's this severe with us... See? And I can actually say with David, I'm thankful for every blow He's hit me with.

Because had He not, I would have gone astray. And I know that there have been wonderful lessons that He's taught me, and I know in the process of my life, and He's revealed things to me of how selfish I am, how self-consumed I am. Why can't I just have me time, right? And God says, "Because that's not an option to a servant." It's not an option.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You today and we give You thanks for Your word; how it reminds us of what this whole thing is about. You've placed us on earth and we're so worried about saving face or looking good or being accepted or people seeing us a certain way that we cover up everything and we try to hide and then we try to self-aggrandize by our possessions or by positions. And we just totally missed it, Father. We just totally missed it. We hear truth come out of Your lips, and You begin to tell us, "Let's get going. Let's get moving. Let's make something out of your life. Let's use your life to be a servant." And we realize that in serving, we're not thinking of ourselves anymore. We're thinking of

others and we're building up others and we're not destroying, but we're mending. And how wonderful it is when we wake up one day and we find out, "I'm not even anxious anymore." How the love in us actually began to cast out fear and anxiety. Strange enough, Father, you've been working good in our lives as we've been serving others, and we never even noticed it. We truly do give You thanks for not allowing us to waste our lives.

Your heads bowed and your eyes closed. You made a decision. You came to Christ. You saw His salvation. You saw His love. It allured you to the cross, and you realize that there's no greater love than this. You embraced His love. You called Him "Lord". Your Master looks down on you, and He says, "Follow Me. Take up your cross. Follow Me." You knew what you were getting into. You knew what He desires. You do the opposite; don't expect things will go well. Some of the most miserable people on the face of the earth are Christians, out of the will of God. Get right with Him. Remember why you were called.