

06.21.26

Luke

Chapter 12 - An Unforeseen Disclosure

The Fear of Man Exposed (vs. 4-12)

Luke 12:4-12: “I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do. 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! Are not five sparrows sold for two cents? Yet not one of them is forgotten before God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows. And I say to you, everyone who confesses Me before men, the Son of Man will confess him also before the angels of God; but he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God. And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him. When they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not

worry about how or what you are to speak in your defense, or what you are to say; for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.”

Well, all of these directives Jesus is giving in the midst of a lot of confusion and mayhem.

If you look at the beginning of Luke 12:1, it says this,

“Under these circumstances, after so many thousands of people had gathered together that they were stepping on one another...”

And it's in this context that He's giving these lessons to His disciples. The world's a crazy place, isn't it? There's a lot of noise out there. There's a lot of influences that come in. Sometimes, we're tripping over each other. I found out that I actually invented a new game for myself. It was kind of unwittingly, but I actually have found that I like to hide things from myself. I look around and I'm like, “Where did I put that?” And the terrible thing about the game is it's never anything that's not important. It's always the thing

that I really need for that moment. And for some reason, I just knew that I was going to need it and I just have a joyful time in doing that!

The point of the matter is that we live in a confusing world. And in that state of confusion, we find ourselves getting upset and focused on so many things that are clearly not important. It is in this realm in which Jesus begins to reveal things that perhaps had been unforeseen, unseen by the disciples and unseen by many of us, and that is this disease that infiltrates our lives that we so much don't see and don't have as a part of our lives, or we don't think is a part of our lives. And that's the disease of hypocrisy.

If you look in the passage, it reads this way,

(Luke 12:1) “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 something that you haven't seen,

“... the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.”

This dissembling pretense that seems to hide and conceal things from people. It doesn't speak the truth. Feelings and intentions are hidden, and people begin to in some way put on masks and faces, and they're not genuine, they're disingenuous.

When you read in the epistle of Ephesians in Chapter 4, Paul will say, "Speak the truth to one another." Now, before, he actually states in that passage, "You need to speak the truth in love," but he'll then emphasize, "But when you come together, you need to speak the truth to one another." The point is that it's easy for us to be disingenuous. It's easy for us to put on masks, to put on airs, somehow and sometimes for the purpose of flattering and manipulating and other times because we're just afraid of what anybody else will think. I mean, if we showed our real self, then nobody would like us, right? So, there's this great concern about putting on these kinds of airs.

As we come to this passage, He begins to uncover these things. And His statement is in verse 2 that there's nothing covered that will not be revealed. And of course,

within the context, what is He talking about? Those masks that we put on and the fact that we try to in some way display something that we're really not. And so, as we come to this, we begin to realize that Jesus is saying, "It's going to be uncovered, I'm going to reveal it, it's going to be made known. According to whatever was said in the dark, it shall be heard in the light, and whatever has been whispered in the inner rooms, this will be proclaimed upon the housetops." So, that's the disease. The disease is clearly the hypocrisy and the fact that we cover up who we really are. We're afraid to admit who we really are. You think of 1 John, and it says, you come before God and you lie about your sin. You say you have no sin. You're lying. So, let's get this out in the open. That's where you find the freedom.

The question is, what is it that causes this disease to grow within my life? What causes this disease to come into my life and take control of my life? And in this passage, we're going to be seeing what it is. It is none other than fear. And actually, throughout this chapter, He's going to be going through specific things that cause us to put on these

airs, to put on these masks, that will cause us to be somebody different and will cause us to live a life that is not true, that is not genuine, that is not real.

If you look with me in Luke 12:4, He'll start off this way, in this verse,

(Luke 12:4) "I say to you, My friends..."

Well, that's a wonderful, comforting way of addressing somebody, isn't it? That the God of the universe would say, "You're My friends." He actually uses the word "*philos*," which makes reference to the closeness of a brother in that sense. And we oftentimes use the phrase to describe brotherly love. Therefore, He makes mention of that particular word to let them know that He cares for them. It's hard to imagine that God actually cares for us. It literally is the greatest thought that could occupy the human mind that the God of all creation would love you, would love me. And so, what a marvelous hope and what a marvelous truth that is.

"I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do."

One of the reasons why I just love Scripture as well as just love hearing Jesus proclaim things is that He just comes out with it, doesn't He? You know, there's an elephant in the room and He goes, "Well, let's just talk about what you're really afraid of. You're afraid of dying, aren't you?" "Oh, yeah, I'm really afraid." He says, "You don't have to worry about that. See? Because there's something more after." I think that's one of the greatest fears. And the world will probably tell you that fundamentally they think this is just it; this is all there is. But we know that's not true. As Paul will write in 1 Corinthians 15, if there is no resurrection, we're the most to be pitied. You know, if this whole thing is a lie, wow, we've been believing a lie this whole time and have wasted our lives. But NO, there is a resurrection. And we believe it is true. And we know it is true. And so, we serve the resurrected Christ.

The interesting thing within this particular verse is, He says, they have a limitation. In other words, evil has a limitation in this world. They can bring destruction to your flesh. That's true. They can do that, but they can't follow you into the grave. They can't follow your soul. They have

no control of your soul. They have no power over who you are. And God has you. This is one of the reasons why Paul says, “Death, where is your sting?” You know, there's no sting in this. And Paul will say, “You know, whether I live or whether I die, that I might glorify God.” Christians really have, I mean, a no-lose situation, right? I mean, whether we live or die, we're the Lord's. And to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. So, you all know that.

So, He goes on and says this,

(Luke 12:5) “But I will warn you whom to fear...”

So, one of the great problems with hypocrisy is that we're afraid of the wrong things. We're afraid of the wrong people. We're concerned about what everybody else is thinking. We're concerned about their intimidation. We're concerned about maybe the fact that as He'll go on to say in Luke 12, we might lose finances or security.

We've oftentimes read that wonderful passage in John 9 where you have this blind man that's healed and here he is and he's not even sure he knows who it was who healed him. He was blind and now he sees. But Jesus heals this

blind man, and the Pharisees are going around going, “Now, it wasn't Jesus, right?” People go, “Well, we don't know. We're not real sure.” And then, he asked the parents, and he goes, “So, what about your son, your adult son that was healed? Was he healed by this Jesus?” And they go, “We're not saying anything.” As Scripture goes on to say, because they were afraid of being thrown out of the synagogue. Yeah. I mean, why wouldn't you just rejoice over the fact that your son can see? We don't want to admit this because there's a fear of loss of security, and there's a loss of safety. And so, because of this, you begin to put up fronts, and you can't say the truth because of the intimidation that surrounds you.

“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!”

Oftentimes, I hear people say, “Well, Jesus never talked about hell.” Yeah, He did. Quite frequently, and probably one of the greatest texts is found there in Matthew 13:42, where He makes reference of not only what hell is like, but the fact that the description of the burning forever.

Paul will make mention of it in 2 Thessalonians 1. In which he says, "This is hell. It's away from the presence of God and continued pain and sorrow." What a horrible place! There is such a thing as hell. That's part of our message. Because when you reject God, you're rejecting joy, you're rejecting peace, you're rejecting the love of God. And so, what's left? See? And so, you have this sense of there is an end, and there is an eternity. In John 5, Jesus says, "Look, the day is coming when you're all going to be resurrected." I know that some people say, "Well, you know, I never received Jesus, so I'm just going to die. I'm going to go away." You're not going to go away. There's a resurrection of all. So, some to resurrection of continued death and others to resurrection of life. The question is, what are you afraid of? And it really kind of puts things in perspective. Because usually, when we're making our decisions about the things around us and the things that influence, we can only focus on the fact that maybe we might be concerned about a little embarrassment today. But Jesus goes, "Maybe you ought to be thinking about a little bit further ahead, something that is more eternal and will last forever."

“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!”

The word that He uses here for “hell” is “*geenna*,” which probably the best description is found in Jeremiah 7. As you read in Jeremiah 7, it gives this horrible picture of this place just within the city limits of Jerusalem, in which they would offer their babies and burn them on sacrificial altars. And it was called “Hinnom,” which is a place of torment or lamentations. And as they would offer their babies to the god of Moloch, as they had refused to follow God, and they would hear the screams of these children as they were burning within the fire. So, Jesus actually uses that graphic picture to describe what hell is like, and He uses the name “*geenna*” within the passage, which makes reference to this.

If you read in verse 6, He then brings in something that almost seems detached from what He's been saying up to this point but clearly is not. It is clearly a point and the point that He wants to get across.

The point is,

(Luke 12:6) “Are not five sparrows sold for two cents? ...”

Now, the reason why He's bringing up this particular example is because sparrows were really perceived as fundamentally worthless. And one of the ways that we demonstrate that something that's worthless is that we throw in another one at the end. So, really what He's talking about is you buy the four; they throw in another one, a fifth one, to get you to buy more. Because normally you would try to buy as little as you could, but if we could maybe throw in another sparrow, that's why the five. It's usually they're actually paying for four, but they throw in another one. And it shows the worthlessness of a sparrow as it comes to the passage.

“Are not five sparrows sold for two cents? Yet not one of them is forgotten before God.”

That's an amazing thought when you consider that. I oftentimes think of, there are two passages that just come to mind. One is found in Job and one is in Psalms, where it makes mention of what happens when life dies. And in these two passages, it makes reference to the breath goes back to God; so that all life is literally the

breath of God among us. And it's a very interesting picture within this because literally what He's saying is, that the word “forgotten” that is used here is, “Do you think God ceases to care for the sparrow?” He states within the text, “No, He never ceases to care for the sparrow. Never.” That's an interesting point that begins to reveal His intimate acquaintance with every part of creation. As Paul would state in Acts 17, “In Him we live and breathe and have our existence.” And what a great picture of God that He's involved in all these things. Do we worship a God that doesn't care? And it is a resounding, absolutely not! We worship a God that cares for you. Peter will say, “Casting all your cares upon Him because He cares for you.”

(Luke 12:7) “Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered...”

Now, some of us, it doesn't take as much mathematical genius to do this. But from what I understand, the average person has between 80,000 to 150,000 hairs. Every single day, you'll lose approximately 100. Now, that means that God is constantly counting, which, once again,

the emphasis of the point is not just merely hyperbolic, but it's emphasizing God's intimate care. As Psalms would say, “He's intimately acquainted with all of our ways.” And you might say, “How intimately?” And He would say, “I know how many hairs you have today.” So, what a great picture of God's love for us.

“Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear...”

Ah, there's where the fear is coming from. “Who will take care of me? Who cares for me?” The initial thought of most of us is, “I can't be that valuable to God.” That's the initial thought that we have. And one of the reasons why we find ourselves in a lot of anxiety. I mean, Scripture says, “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and I'll take care of all these other things.” We go, “I can understand You taking care of things for this person, but not for me. I can't understand that You would love me.” And He goes, “Come on, I don't forget any sparrows, not one. And I know everything about you. I'm intimately acquainted with you. What would make you

think that I don't know about you, that I don't care about you?" So, a great foundation for security.

Peter talks about this, and if you've ever read the Book of 1 Peter, as he writes to those that have been scattered abroad and have suffered a lot of trials and tribulations, and some have lost their homes, lost lives of loved ones. And the initial thought is that, you know, nobody cares, not even God.

In fact, let me just read the Psalms, the temptation of the world to come in and just basically say, and remind us that we're unlovable, which we know that's true. That's why it hurts so much, because we know that, why would anybody love us? You know? I mean, David says, "He knows we're but dust, so why would anybody love dirt anyway?" But if you turn with me to Psalms, you can hear the psalmist dealing with the voices of the world. And the voices of the world fundamentally are saying that you're worthless. If you don't believe this is true, just stand in line; they'll give you a number. And you'll see this in almost every aspect of your life. I mean, everything is telling you that you're not worth anything.

But if you look with me in Psalm 3, it reads this way as the psalmist cries out,

(Psalm 3:1) “O LORD, how my adversaries have increased! Many are rising up against me.

(Psalm 3:2) Many are saying of my soul, “There is no deliverance for him in God.””

Let's put it another way. “God's not going to deliver him.” Yeah.

Then it goes on in Chapter 4, if you look with me, and it says,

(Psalm 4:6) “Many are saying, “Who will show us any good?” ...”

Now, in these two psalms, what are we hearing? What many people are saying. I mean, can you hear the mobs? I mean, people are trampling over one another.

Everybody's worthless, right? That's why you're trampling over people. Yeah, it's better to get your cell phone. It doesn't matter how many people you trample over to get it, right? So, what He's emphasizing is that there are these

voices and there's this way of life that surrounds us that just says people are worthless. He says, "But not to God." Then if you drop on down to Psalm 5, And he says in verse 9, read it with me,

(Psalm 5:9) "There is nothing reliable in what they say..."

That's a good thing to remember. Unfortunately, the problem that we have and one of the reasons why we put on airs and we put on these masks and we find ourselves not being genuine with people is we're just afraid, "What will they think if they find the real person? Will they care for me?" So, you put on, and you try to maybe fit in by acting like a chameleon. "Maybe if I look like them or act like them or talk like them." And here again, that's the leaven of the Pharisees, because it's all about somehow looking and acting like you're more righteous than you really are. I mean, from time to time, people remind me that I'm a sinner. Has that ever happened to you? That's happened to me quite frequently. And I say, "Yeah, that's why I need a Savior." See, what are we afraid of? "There's therefore now no condemnation of those who are in Christ Jesus." And if you just simply confess your sins, now

I'm not saying, as Paul says, “‘What, should we sin that grace may abound?’ Absolutely not.” But you're going to stumble; you're going to fall. But how wonderful it is to know if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. It's like a new day. I think we're oftentimes afraid, “Well, what is somebody going to think if I admit that? That I'm less than perfect? How horrible that would be.” And of course, the fact of the matter is that we already see that. It's a lot more obvious than you think. But He begins to make reference to, “You're important. You're important to Me.” And as Peter will say to these that have been going through all these trials and tribulation, He goes, “Look, here's the deal. You weren't purchased with silver and gold. You were purchased with the precious blood of Jesus. Now, how much do you think you're worth?” And you begin to realize that, “Wow, I'm valuable to Him.” And I mean, what makes something valuable? What somebody will pay for it! And certainly, you've been paid for by something so wonderful and so great.

(Luke 12:6) “Are not five sparrows sold for two cents? Yet not one of them is forgotten before God.

(Luke 12:7) Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.

(Luke 12:8) And I say to you, everyone who confesses Me before men, the Son of Man will confess him also before the angels of God;

(Luke 12:9) but he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.”

Why does He bring this text in? Because the reason that we don't confess God is because we're afraid of men. That's the whole reason. And we live in this sense of bondage, as Paul will write both to the Galatians as well as to the Romans. He says, “Look, God has not given us the spirit of fear again to bondage. But God has given us a spirit of adoption whereby we cry out, ‘Abba, Father!’” There's Somebody that loves us. And if He loves me, I mean, if God is for me, who can be against me, right? What am I afraid of? I mean, if you really believed that God was for you, what would you be afraid of? Couldn't

you just tell the truth? Couldn't you just say what was right? Couldn't you just do the right thing? I mean, the one thing that you want to be sure that you do is please God. And so, Ephesians 5 will say, "I'm trying to learn what is pleasing to God." And you live that life, and you don't have to take a consensus about what everybody else is believing or thinking. You don't have to take a vote on it. You don't have to stick your finger up to the wind and try to figure out how the wind is blowing. You just do the right thing. And how simple is that? I found when you start lying, boy, it's hard to remember all those lies. I can't even remember where I put stuff.

So, as we come to this, you realize that God is saying, "The reason why you don't confess Me is because you're afraid of men. And the very thing that you're afraid of is keeping you out of heaven. It's keeping you out of a relationship with Me." The one thing that's most important is that you not be afraid of men. This is the hypocrisy that comes in. It feeds this hypocrisy. It feeds the mask. It feeds the disingenuousness. And of course, it's strange that we would actually see Peter fall for this,

because as you read in the Book of Galatians, of course, that wonderful text in Galatians 1, “Do I seek to please men or do I seek to please God? If I seek to please men, I wouldn't be a bondservant of Christ.” And then you go into Chapter 2, and what is he talking about? What he's talking about is there are men of reputation that are intimidating. They are Jews and they are intimidating others to go into Judaism. And Peter's in the audience. And Paul says, “I went to Peter's face and I told him, ‘You shouldn't be doing this. You're catering to Judaism and you should be welcoming everyone because that's what the gospel's about. Why are you afraid, Peter, of what others think?’” Think about it. Peter's actually concerned about what others are thinking. And Paul's having to rebuke him in Galatians. If you haven't read it, it's Galatians 2. And Paul says, “I told him to his face, ‘You shouldn't be doing this.’” Has Peter learned his lesson? Well, let me show you a passage.

1 Peter. The Book of Peter would be written by... Peter. Okay, so we're in the same neighborhood here. 1 Peter 3. I love this particular book because once again, the whole

emphasis of the book is just make sure that you're pleasing God. Keep your behavior excellent. You know, we go through difficulty. We go through trial. People maybe treat us wrong. The initial thought is, "I've got to be nice to this person. I've got to give them everything they want. I've got to act like I'm one of them. This will kind of keep me in the right place." And Scripture says, "No, all you have to do is keep your behavior excellent. Do the right thing. Just please God in everything that you do. If you do that, God will take care of you." Peter learned that lesson, of course. He gives the example of going to work. You know, you have this unreasonable boss (which none of us have). But you have this unreasonable boss. And so, the point is, what are you supposed to do in that case? And he says, "Submit to the authority. All authorities are ordained by God, right? So, submit to the authority. Don't complain, don't grumble, just submit. And by doing the right thing, if you suffer for doing what's right, the glory of God rests on you. Everything will be okay." Well, the wife goes, "Well, what if I have an unbelieving husband? What do I do?" Scripture doesn't say, "Well, you write John 3:16 on his

beer cans.” It doesn't say that. What it says is, “What you need to do is have a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. And without a word, this will win him to Christ.” See?

So, as it goes on, it says this,

(1 Peter 3:8) “To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit;

(1 Peter 3:9) not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead...”

You know, if you feel like you have to protect yourself, somebody says something against you and you feel like, “I’ve got to get him back.” You're actually thinking that you have to rescue you, right? And what you're saying is you don't believe that you're valuable to God, that He'll take care of you. We believe that God will vindicate us. We believe vengeance is His, He will repay. The Scripture is very clear there in Romans 12, never, and I emphasize the word “never,” never take your own revenge. Never. That's not our tendency, I know.

“Not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead...”

Well, that's so unlike me, isn't it? And so unlike you.

“...for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.

(1 Peter 3:10) For, “THE ONE WHO DESIRES LIFE, TO LOVE AND SEE GOOD DAYS, MUST KEEP HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL...”

When we're talking about evil, what we're talking about is anything acrimonious, hurtful, cutting, and things like that.

“... MUST KEEP HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL AND HIS LIPS FROM SPEAKING DECEIT.

(1 Peter 3:11) HE MUST TURN AWAY FROM EVIL AND DO GOOD; HE MUST SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT.

(1 Peter 3:12) FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD...”

And this is where our faith comes in.

“... ARE TOWARD THE RIGHTEOUS AND HIS EARS ATTEND TO THEIR PRAYER,

BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO EVIL."

(1 Peter 3:13) Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good?"

Watch verse 14. I like the way Peter puts this.

(1 Peter 3:14) "But even if you should suffer..."

He's not saying you might not suffer, but even if you do, big deal, right?

"But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED."

That's what makes you compromise. It'll make you compromise every time. Fear. You're worried about what they're going to say. If I mention Jesus, you see people frowning or they look like they're going to hit you, which they may. Peter says, "If they hit you, great. It's great. The glory of God rests on you."

(1 Peter 3:15) "But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who

asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.”

Well, in some ways, that’s exactly what He's saying here in Luke 12, if you'll look there with me.

(Luke 12:8) “And I say to you, everyone who confesses Me before men...”

Once again, the confession is not just the declaration, perhaps even in your closet, but it has the emphasis of doing it out in the open, that you're unashamed. So, and let me just say this, it's not just you saying, “I believe in God,” it's agreeing with everything that God says. So, the confession, the word itself, makes reference to believing what God speaks about. So, everything that the word of God says. And there are certain things that the word of God says about homosexuality. I believe it. What, are you afraid to say something about it? Romans 1 is very clear about it. See? There are things that the word of God says about adultery. What, are you afraid to say something about it? It's what it says. It's not that God hates you when He talks against these things. It's God loving you and He’s saying that these things will destroy your life.

Want to know why the suicide rate is so high with those folks? It clearly is God wanting to free us from these very sins. Of course, you and I are called to speak the truth in love. We're never called to compromise the truth. We are called to say what it says but do it in a way that our hope is that it will save them. "This is hurtful to you. Don't keep stabbing yourself in the arm. You're bleeding. Stop." And that demonstrates a kind of love that is far beyond somebody going, "Well, it's kind of embarrassing. They're bleeding. I don't want to make them feel bad that, you know, it's on the chairs." What is that about? What kind of love is that?

So, it goes on to say in verse 9,

(Luke 12:9) "But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God."

In other words, "Who refuse Me, who reject Me." There's a denial that men have, and why would somebody do that? Well, Peter did that in the midst of being afraid of what might happen to him. That's why the next passage goes into this.

“But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.

(Luke 12:10) And everyone...”

One of the reasons why Luke specifically makes mention of the angels of God, not to get too deep into this, But Galatians 3:19, Hebrews 2:1-3 makes reference to the angels ordaining the law. And so, if, in fact, before the angels you're declared guilty, what do you think angels do? I mean, in the Gospel of Luke, Zacharias just didn't believe and the angel just says, “Okay, you're not talking,” and closes his mouth. So, what is the job of the angels? To protect righteousness. The wonderful thing is, in Hebrews 1, as children of God, they now become agents for us because we are children of righteousness. But their fundamental job was to proclaim the righteousness of God. One of the reasons why Satan has every right to accuse you. Once again, because what is he? Well, he's basically an attorney that will accuse you, and has every right to do that, because you're a sinner.

Interesting picture in Zechariah 3, where you have Joshua the high priest, and you have this interesting picture of

Satan accusing the high priest before God. But Scripture goes on and says, “and his robes were filthy.” So, the point is that he had every right to accuse him. But then we have that wonderful picture in that Chapter 3 of Zechariah, where Christ comes alongside and He says, “The Lord rebuke you. I've washed this man's sins,” and He clothed him with robes of righteousness. And so, He rebukes Satan. That's the wonderful truth that we have, right? No condemnation in Christ Jesus.

But as He goes on, He says,

“But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.”

Which is a very serious indictment.

(Luke 12:10) And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him...”

Now, watch the way that this verse unfolds.

“... but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him.”

Well, there's the unpardonable sin, not suicide, but here's the unpardonable sin. So, what is this sin? What is He

talking about? Well, we know that Peter in the weakness of the flesh, and more specifically, as Jesus was in the flesh, was not strong enough to hold his loyalty with Jesus to be devoted to Him in the midst of it. And so, he even curses and says, "I'm not a disciple. I'm not a follower of Christ," in the midst of that. The passage is telling us that it's understandable as Christ was in the flesh that He might be denied. And you would say, "Why is that true?" Well, all you have to do is look at Isaiah 53. It says, "He had no stately form or majesty, that we should look on Him." In other words, everything about Son of Man, and the emphasis is on "Man," everything about the Son of Man said that, how could this be the Messiah? Even John the Baptist goes, "Are you the guy?" And he's related to Him. John the Baptist couldn't even tell by virtue of His appearance. But then it takes it to a higher level. But I tell you, when the Spirit of God moves upon the heart, Holy Spirit. And let me just emphasize, the Galatians will identify the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of God's Son. So, as Paul will write in Corinthians, "We recognize no man according to the flesh anymore." It's one thing to look at Him according to the flesh and go, "Okay, maybe I don't

even believe in the miracles that He does.” But when the Spirit of God touches your heart, Hebrews says... Well, let me back up in that verse. It starts off this way, “The Spirit says, ‘Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your heart.’” Whose voice? The Spirit's voice. Look, I've seen people go to church for years and years, and then the day comes when the Spirit of God touches their heart and they come. I go, “Why didn't you come sooner?” Because it was just the flesh that was moving them. Maybe they came for their mother, or for other reasons. But God says, “I'll forgive that, but I'll tell you what's unpardonable, is when you know it's true. When the Spirit of God comes within your heart and He reveals this truth.” This is the gift of God, the gift of truth. John tells us that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. You see that in Chapter 14 and Chapter 15 of the Gospel of John. And so, He emphasized that particular point. When the Spirit of God just tugs in your heart, I don't know when that is in your heart, but I know this, that you refuse that, there is no hope. There's no hope. Because you know this is true.

Paul will write in 1 Corinthians 12:3,

“...no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.”

It's not natural for you to go, “I believe. I'm going to make Him Lord of my life.” You wouldn't do that. You couldn't do that. You couldn't make Him Lord of your life because you're so selfish. I'm so selfish. We're so introspective that it's impossible for us to think beyond ourselves. But when the Spirit of God grabs our heart, He changes us. I remember just myself, I was melting before God, coming before Him, and “You're Lord.” I didn't even know why I was so touched by this, but by His sacrifice for me, by His power and His love for me, the Spirit of God revealed that to me. And without the Spirit of God revealing it to me, I wouldn't have known it. But how that touches your heart and it moves your heart. The Spirit is the gift.

And if you don't know this, all you have to do is back up to Luke 11. Remember how Chapter 11 starts off? The disciples ask, “Okay, so what do we wish for? What do we pray for?” The word “wish” really is there. “So, what are we supposed to wish for?” And He goes, “You need to wish for God's kingdom, for His rule in your life. This is the

wish that you need to have.” Well, do you naturally wish for that? That's not natural for you to wish that. So, what is it you really need to wish for? You need to wish for God to give you the Holy Spirit, right?

So, drop on down, Luke 11. And He actually gives an example of fathers and the fact that you should be seeking good things.

He'll state this,

(Luke 11:9) “So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

(Luke 11:10) For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened.

(Luke 11:11) Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he?

(Luke 11:12) Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he?

(Luke 11:13) If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your

heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”

What is He talking about? Well, that's the greatest gift you could ever have, because the gift of the Holy Spirit actually opens your eyes to what truth is, and it opens your eyes to God's love, and it opens your eyes to a relationship. It helps you see everything clearly. You wouldn't be able to do that. And it's the very reason why you're not afraid of somebody hating you for pointing to God. It's like somebody hating you because you believe in gravity. Who cares? You know?

So, it goes on and says, if you go back to Luke 12, (Luke 12:10) “And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit...”

That is to say, defames, reviles, talks against; more specifically, denies what the Spirit of God is saying. When the Spirit of God comes upon you, do you know what He's saying? “Jesus is Lord.” That's what He's saying. Now, if you say, “Forget that,” then you've just blasphemed the Holy Spirit.

“... it will be forgiven him; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him.

(Luke 12:11) When they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not worry...”

Don't become anxious, troubled, with cares; emphasizing being focused on your own personal interest, “How do I protect myself in this?” He goes, “Don't think that way.”

“... about how or what you are to speak in your defense, or what you are to say;

(Luke 12:12) for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.”

It's almost the mirror of what Peter says in 1 Peter 3, sanctify Christ as Lord of your heart, and you'll be ready to give an answer of every man. “What do I say?” I don't know. Is Christ in charge of your life? “Yes.” Then He'll tell you what to say. You'll know what to say. And I'll tell you right off the bat, what you'll be bold about is proclaiming the goodness of God. And you won't be afraid.

All the way through this passage, if you look, it ends here in verse 12,

“For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour...”

And here again, it's not a matter of planning. Why? Why does He say, “in that very hour”? Why don't I take notes? Why don't I memorize things? Because that's hypocrisy. If I have to try to figure it out, if I have to try to write, if I have to try to plan out everything I'm going to say, that's not me. He wants you to be led by His Spirit. Look, if you love something, you know about it, right? And that's here again, fundamentally the principle of the Gospel of John. I mean, you don't believe what you see; you believe what you love. And if you really love God, you know how He thinks, because you've been reading Scripture; you know what He's about. And He's in your heart. The Spirit of God reveals the truth. That's why John will say in 1 John, “You have no need for anybody to teach you these things. The Spirit of God is in you. And you just begin to say what's on your heart.” I know individuals that know a lot about mechanics, they know a lot about surfing, and they know a lot about those kinds of things. And if you were to ask them, “Did you study before you started telling me about that?” They would say, “What do you mean study?” It's

stuff they love. And so, there is this disease that comes and infiltrates our life. It is this disease of hypocrisy. What is it that is causing that disease to infiltrate you? It's your fears. If you'll let go of them, God will begin to free you from that bondage.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we give You thanks for Your love and Your kindness to us that was not in any way hidden or in any way deceptive, but You said You loved us and then You died for us. Everything about that declares Light to me. And Father, I just can't thank You enough for Your transparency in Your love for me.

With your heads bowed and your eyes closed, what we're asking you to do is get real with God. It doesn't matter what everybody else is thinking. It doesn't matter what everybody else might say. You have to stop thinking that way. There's only One that you and I need to please, and that's the Lord. Let's open up the word and see what He wants. Let's see what He calls us to do. Let's not do it because Pastor Gary says it or because anybody else says

it, but let's do it because the love of God constrains you. The Spirit of God moves within you. Perhaps you've never received the Spirit of God; perhaps He's tugging at your heart even now. The Spirit says, "Today, if you hear My voice, do not harden your heart."