

Luke 12:1-34

Trust and Dependence

Study Summary and Learning Objective(s)

People pleasing, hypocrisy, and fear often come down to not depending on and trusting in God. The consequence for living in submission to these things is separation from God. But by having faith in and dependence on God and His love for us we can be sure He will care for us. This should change the way we live our lives and how we feel secure.

Objective(s)

- Our lives should reflect that our treasure and security (v. 34) are in Christ, rather than wealth, success, reputation, or other “worldly” values.

Steps To Prepare (For Leaders)

- Read Luke 12:1-34
- Take a look at the materials and be prepared to discuss.
- Be ready to share a time you saw God provide for you.

Leaders Note: For this study we will be focusing on verses 1-12 and 22-34 of Luke 12.

Read Out Loud: Luke 12:1-12, 22-34 (NIV)

¹ Meanwhile, when a crowd of many thousands had gathered, so that they were trampling on one another, Jesus began to speak first to his disciples, saying: “Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.” ² There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. ³ What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs.

⁴ “I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. ⁵ But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after your body has been killed, has authority to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him. ⁶ Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. ⁷ Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

⁸ “I tell you, whoever publicly acknowledges me before others, the Son of Man will also acknowledge before the angels of God. ⁹ But whoever disowns me before others will be disowned before the angels of God. ¹⁰ And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

¹¹ “When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, ¹² for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.”

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²² Then Jesus said to his disciples: “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. ²³ For life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. ²⁴ Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! ²⁵ Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life? ²⁶ Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?

²⁷ “Consider how the wild flowers grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ²⁸ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! ²⁹ And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. ³⁰ For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. ³¹ But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

³² “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. ³³ Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. ³⁴ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Read Out Loud: Jesus warns the disciples to avoid the Pharisees’ hypocrisy. Hypocrisy is addressed throughout the Bible. It is defined well by Isaiah 29:13 where it says “The Lord says: ‘These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is based on merely human rules they have been taught.’”



How do we struggle in the modern church with hypocrisy?

Possible Answer: In the media we see public church leaders ridiculed for sexual and financial sin or fanatics who try to justify hate and violence with their faith. It's also easy to go to church or small group every week and do all the right things with your Christian friends/family and then act like a different person with non-Christians. Hypocrisy can happen in our hearts if we are doing all the things just because we're supposed to, but we aren't in relationship with God.



How is being hypocritical tied to people pleasing? How does that show a lack of fear of God?

Possible Answer: In people pleasing we place the opinions of others above how God views us in light of our trust in Christ. We should live our lives as God has commanded us to regardless of if

that changes peoples' opinion, praise, or respect for us, while still showing them the love of Christ in our actions.

? Jesus ties hypocrisy to a fear of man rather than a fear of God. How was the Pharisees' hypocrisy also a demonstration of what they valued most and where their security came from?
Possible Answer: The Pharisees were acting differently based on their audience and worrying about what others thought of them. They valued the perceptions others had of them more than being obedient to God. Their security was found in the favor of others and having the appearance of being holy. They were not letting their identity in Christ be the driving force in their lives; they were more worried about religious rules and appearing righteous.

? (Optional) The people Jesus was speaking to were afraid that they might face persecution from the religious leaders of the day by following Jesus. What sort of persecution do we fear for following Jesus today?
Possible Answer: Wanting to fit in with non-Christians we may not want to appear too religious. We might worry that we can't be both accepted and stand by our Christian morals.

? When was a time in your life when you saw God provide for you? How did worry play into your situation (if at all)?

? Jesus commands the disciples to fear God, but also tells them not to be afraid. Why doesn't fearing God equate to being afraid of him? How does fearing God change our perception of where security comes from?
Possible Answer: Fear God is having a reverence and awe of Him. The fact that God is all-powerful both commands respect and means that he can provide for us in all aspects of our lives. God cares and provides for us in our need. Verses 6-7, 11-12, and 32.

? Why is the command to "sell your possessions and give to the poor" so challenging?
Possible Answer: It's challenging because when you think about actually selling your stuff to give away you worry about how you will be able to provide for yourself - which is exactly what Jesus tells the people not to worry about. In some ways it's easier to trust God for the big unknowns of our life (what will my next job be, will I get married, will I have kids, etc.) than for our basic needs (like what will I eat today) because it's so natural for us to depend on ourselves to provide those things.

? What does it look like to practically live out the commands of verses 32-34?

Possible Answer: Actually selling your possessions, or having a loose grip on your “worldly” security so you would be willing to give everything up for God. We “provide purses for [ourselves] that will not wear out” by living with the mindset of “Thy will be done”, making pleasing God the highest priority, serving others faithfully and to the glory of God rather than the glory of ourselves.

Questions for Discussion & Accountability

? What do you worry about and how can you trust God with these fears?