

Our Fears And Our Faith  
Luke 12:32-34

As we have continued on with our study of these scriptures given to us here in the Book of Luke, I've been reminded over and over again of just how practical these precious words of truth are for the matters of our daily lives, deeply Spiritual truths yes, but also very practical.

And as I've studied these instructions given here in chapter 12, I've been reminded of some of the events of my younger years, the years while I was still working in a bank. I can recall how most all my hopes and my desires were for the things of that kind of life. I fully intended to work my way up in the hierarchy and become the president of a bank.

And I was succeeding really well as I chased after my dream. My next step in the climbing of that ladder was to be named President of some bank.

But then, God had other plans for me. First, there came that most pivotal moment in my life, the moment that I gave my heart to Christ in salvation. It was then that everything changed. All my hopes and dreams as a banker faded and I began to have different hopes and dreams. I began to want to be in some kind of Christian ministry, perhaps to become a missionary.

But as can often take place in most people's minds when decisions like those come to the forefront, I immediately became concerned about how I would support my family. I knew that any kind of work in Christian ministry usually did not pay well. And my family lifestyle had already gained momentum, with bigger monthly bills to pay. And I began to wonder and worry and have great fears about how all that would work out.

Thankfully, in the midst of all my fears about how I would provide for my family, God reached in and gave us the one thing that we would need to step on forward. He gave us "faith"! A very basic and elemental faith yes, but it was enough faith in Him and faith in His provision to enable us to step on forward. And then, almost overnight, my family and I were transported into a ministry to youth at French Camp Academy that would last for the next 33 years.

And it has been precious truths from God like these in today's passage and other promises like them that have helped and sustained my family and me to

bring us to where we are today. And I praise God for the blessed assurance that these words have given us now for all these many years.

Listen and follow along as I read these words given to us in Luke chapter 12, beginning in verse 32.

<sup>32</sup> "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. <sup>33</sup> Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. <sup>34</sup> For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Luke 12:32-34)

As we well know, there is so very much that takes place within the hidden realms of our private thoughts, things that only we know about. And it's there that our imagination can, and very often does, run to its furthest extremes.

In the privacy of our thoughts, we can imagine the possibility of the very best of circumstances, but it's there also that we can get caught up in imagining the very worst.

And Jesus, the one who made you and me, knows that our imaginations often do have those inclinations. Whether we are sitting quietly alone or we are in the midst of the clamor of a busy workday, our minds rush to and fro, planning, hoping, desiring, calculating, and making decisions based on only a few facts, but lots of emotion. And one of those emotions that influences us most is fear. Fear!

We might not think that that is so, because we don't always recognize fear for what it really is. That's because fear has so many different and sometimes unrecognizable faces.

Yes, we can recognize fear of losing our lives. But what about the fear of losing our jobs and our livelihood, fear of being rejected, fear of losing that which is most dear, fear for our health, fear of not having the things that we need, and on and on.

But again, and thankfully so, Jesus, the one who made us, knows that we have all those inclinations towards fear.

And here in this passage, Jesus brings to the surface several of those fears and anxieties. And most of them are the common and ordinary matters of daily life, what we will eat, what we will drink and what we will wear. In verse 29, He tells us,

<sup>29</sup>And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. <sup>30</sup>For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. (Luke 12:29-30)

Here, Jesus is saying simply that we should not think it strange, or wrong, or even sinful that we have need of the common things of life. All people need them, and our loving God knows that you and I have need of them.

And while in this passage, Jesus was specifically ministering to His disciples, as with all of His truths, His words and their meaning are timeless and they are appropriate to all people in all of time.

And I'm reminded also that Jesus was able to know the deepest and most private thoughts of all those who came near to Him. So these words were not just "free advice" thrown out into the air. His words were most likely specific to a need taking place with those men, as are they specific to needs taking place right now, with you and me.

Here in this passage, we aren't told about the private thoughts and imaginations of Jesus' disciples, but His words to them suggest that some of them might have become worried and anxious, perhaps about such things as how they would support their families, how they would feed and clothe them, especially since they had given up their family businesses to follow Jesus.

These particular words are for the most part concerned primarily with fears about the most basic of needs for food and clothing. But I'm also reminded from other places in these gospels that these disciples might have, on occasion, also been concerned with far bigger and grander possibilities, hoping to sit at the right and the left hand of the King of all the earth. And no doubt, their covetous spirits were at times running wild.

So, in addition to worrying about how little money they might have, they might have also been exhilarated about the possibilities of enormous wealth as co-leaders over all the earth. Again, imaginations can run to the furthest boundaries of possibility.

But again, we can't really know about their thoughts. We can only guess. But Jesus knew, and He was concerned for these men. And for Jesus, every moment was a teaching moment. He wanted His disciples then, and also you and me now, to know about the dangers that reside within worry, within anxiety and within covetousness, and also about all the potential pitfalls that come with the abundance of possessions. And so, here Jesus tells His disciples, in verse 15,

<sup>15</sup> . . . "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses." (Luke 12:15)

And in verse 29, He tells us further,

<sup>29</sup> . . . do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. <sup>30</sup>For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. <sup>31</sup>But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. <sup>32</sup>"Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. <sup>33</sup>Sell what you have and give to the needy, provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. <sup>34</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Luke 12:29-34)

Within these few words runs the full length and breadth of our emotions, our fears, our desires, our needs, our covetousness, our seeking after things, and all our many worries about the things of daily life.

And then here also we are given God's wise counsel about how we are to deal with all those emotions. And I would like for us to consider His counsel very carefully, because as I keep saying over and over again, these words do not have only to do with these few disciples. This wisdom from God has to do with you and me and all of the exact same fears, worries and anxieties that can consume our own thoughts and activities.

So then, may I repeat the words that I said a moment ago? Fears, worries and anxieties are very powerful and driving emotions. And if not properly dealt with, they can take possession of and even completely dominate our behavior, especially "fear", with all its many forms and faces.

But here, Jesus, urges us to bring all our concerns about these matters back into a proper and Godly perspective. He is the one who made us, and He knows

that we have need of all of the common things that we seek after, what we will eat and what we will wear, and on and on. And in these matters of need, very importantly, He Himself wants always to be our Provider. And He tells us here in verse 32, that we must not fear.

And also with these words, I'm reminded that Jesus is able to use any circumstance and any attitude of heart to bless His beloved children. He truly can work all things together for good.

And that is especially true with this matter of "fear". In the hands of the evil one, fear is a destructive emotion. But in the hands of our loving Lord, this same fear can be good and helpful.

Notice carefully, that on the destructive side, it is "fear" that most often drives us to turn to and to depend upon our own skills and abilities to provide for our needs. I'm reminded that just after Jesus was crucified, Peter and some of the other disciples immediately returned to their secular work as fishermen. Uncertainty, anxiety, and fear were probably very strong within those men during the confusing aftermath of all that took place in the crucifixion.

But remember also, that within just a few days, Jesus came to them on the beach of the Sea of Galilee, telling them where to cast their nets to catch a great number of fish. And as they obeyed His commands, He proved to them that they had no need to be fearful, that He truly was God and that He was able to provide for their every need.

So then, both for those men then, and for you and me now, within His words, "Do not fear", resides His open invitation for us to turn to Him in our times of need.

And so, these precious truths are for you and for me. First, in verse 29,  
<sup>29</sup> . . . do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. <sup>30</sup>For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. (Luke 12:29-30)

And verse 32,  
<sup>32</sup>"Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. (Luke 12:32)

And then, in verse 33, the Lord's counsel is especially needful for you and me in our day as we live and have our being in a culture of wanting more and more of the things of this world. Here, Jesus tells us to instead of acquiring more,

<sup>33</sup>Sell what you have and give to the needy; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. <sup>34</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Luke 12:33-34)

These words have a strong tie to the words of 1 John 2, where we are told that we are to,

<sup>15</sup>Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup>For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. (1 John 2:15-16)

When Jesus counsels us in verse 33 to "sell what we have", it is probably because we have accumulated things that are not good for us to own. In our "lust of the eye, and our lust of the flesh" we often acquire things that are harmful to us, to our family, to our financial condition, to our lifestyle.

Perhaps, some of those things that we own keep us in that venue of "the pride of life" spoken about here. Because when we do own something nice, we like to show it off, an expensive new car, our new clothes, flashy jewelry, even just to be seen in and to tell others about an expensive restaurant.

The "pride of life" can be a destructive part of the "abundance" that we possess. And here, Jesus counsels us to sell it, sell that house that is too big, too showy and too expensive. Sell that new, big and powerful pickup truck. Yes, you might technically be able to afford it all, but in reality, it may be dragging you down, causing you to do things and to act in ways you should not.

And here also, right after He counsels us to sell those extravagant things, Jesus instructs us to "give to the needy".

These words remind me of the counsel that He gave to the rich young ruler. In Luke 18, Jesus said to him,

<sup>22</sup> . . . "Sell all that you have and give it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." <sup>23</sup>But when he (the rich young

ruler) heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. (Luke 18:22-23)

Here, to His disciples, Jesus said, "Sell what you have and give to the poor". Why is that important, both for the rich young ruler and for all of us disciples? It is important because too often that which we own "owns a little bit, or a lot of us". Though we may not recognize its weight, the ownership of our possessions is a burden that drags us down.

Do we not check the balance in our retirement account whenever the stock market drops? Do we not lock our doors to keep thieves from breaking in and stealing our possessions? Do we not lock our cars, and do we not clutch our purses closely to our side as we walk.

Why? It is because, as with the rich young ruler, we fear losing the abundance of our possessions.

Folks, there is great wisdom hidden within these words! And that wisdom cries out to you and me saying, "Be very careful little ones about the things and the opportunities you desire. They can bring joy, but they can also bring troubles upon you."

Here, the wisdom from Jesus calls out for us to sell anything that we do not need, but even further, not only to sell it, but to also separate ourselves even from the money that we receive from having sold it.

Why separation? It is because such separation is necessary for true holiness. God continually admonishes us to "come out and be separate from the world and from all of its ways."

It is only as the things of this world and our dependence upon the things of this world are removed, separated from us, that there becomes room for faith and trust in the One who can give us the things and the provisions that we really need.

But folks, as we well know, this is not an easy path to walk. We really are so very attached to all those things and ideas and provisions.

That is why faith really is such a radical choice for us to make. It really does not make rational sense for us to “sell all that we have, give up all that we hold dear, and then come, take up the cross of Christ and follow Him”. It really does not make logical sense.

But the real truth is, it is the only path that will lead us to righteousness, the only path that will lead us to real unburdened joy and happiness, and the only path that will lead us into the eternal kingdom of God.

Here Jesus is inviting us into a step of radical faith, a recognition that He is God and that He is an able provider, and that He truly will meet all of our needs.

Verse 30,

<sup>30</sup>For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. <sup>31</sup>But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. (Luke 12:30-31)

And verse 32,

<sup>32</sup>“Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. (Luke 12:32)

The question for you and me today is, “Do we believe this?” “Do we really believe this?” “If we say yes we do believe it, the next question is, do we believe this strongly enough to really do something about it, strongly enough to begin to have and to exercise a radical faith in this God who loves us?”

Let me close our time today with these words from the Lord about this radical faith that he wants you and me to have. First from Hebrews 11:1,

<sup>1</sup>Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (Hebrews 11:1)

And then from Hebrews 11:6,

<sup>6</sup> . . . without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6)

Let's Pray!