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Will You Be A Friend To Jesus?

LUKE 12:1-12

Introduction

1. There is a hymn which you and I sing from time to time which has the following words in the refrain:

I'll be a friend to Jesus, My life for Him I'll spend;

I'll be a friend to Jesus, Until my years shall end.

2. For many here in this country those words are becoming more difficult to live out on a daily basis.
3. In the last 10 years there has been increased effort to erode away at our religious liberties.
4. Various lawsuits working their way through the courts are attempting to push the Christian faith out of the public eye and confine it to the four walls of our church buildings.
5. In all of this, Jesus expects you and I to continue professing our faith in Him as our Savior and Lord.
6. Our text today comes on the heels of a meal to which Jesus was invited at the home of one of the Pharisees.
7. It didn't go so well.
 - a. Jesus told the Pharisees there were "full of robbery and wickedness" (11:39).
 - b. He called them "foolish ones" (11:40).
 - c. He accused them of loving the limelight (11:43).
 - d. When one of the lawyers told Jesus that His words offended them as well, Jesus turned on them.
8. Luke tells us that when Jesus left there, "the scribes and Pharisees began to be

very hostile” toward Him (Luke 11:53).

9. It is because His followers fear of the Pharisees and scribes that Jesus spoke the words in our text about the need to fearlessly confess Him.
10. We need this lesson in this day and time because of what is happening all around us in our country.

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I. A Confession That Is Not False

A. THE PROBLEM WITH HYPOCRISY (V. 1B)

“Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.” (Luke 12:1b)

1. In Jesus’ day, the word “hypocrisy” (Gk. *Hypokrisis*) was primarily a theatrical term.
2. It indicated the mask an actor wore to impersonate a given character in a play.
3. The problem with “leaven” (yeast) and “hypocrisy” (theatrical masks) is that both create false impressions.
4. Yeast results in gas within dough which may increase its volume, but not its weight.
5. Theatrical masks give the appearance of someone different from the person behind the mask.
6. The hypocrite is concerned with how others see him, not how God sees him.
7. His focus is on the outward person, not the heart.

2a

B. THERE ARE NO SECRETS WITH GOD (VV. 2-3)

“But there is nothing covered up that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known. Accordingly, whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in the inner rooms will be proclaimed

upon the housetops.” (Luke 12:2–3)

1. Any attempt we make to hide our true selves does not work with God.
2. He sees us as we truly are (Hebrews 4:13).

“And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.”

3. If you or I are going through the motions in our lives as disciples of Christ, it will be revealed at the last day.
4. Anything which we say to our non-Christian friends during the week or in the privacy of our homes which indicate a lack of commitment to Christ will one day be proclaimed for all to hear.
5. Is your profession of faith the same on Monday morning at work or in school as it is here on Sunday morning?
6. If not, our Lord will make that known on the day of judgment.

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II. A Confession That Is Not Afraid

A. WHAT FEAR IS LEGITIMATE? (Vv. 4-5)

“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!” (Luke 12:4–5)

1. What are the things about which we should have legitimate fear, and what are those things we should not fear?
2. Jesus said, “do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do.”
3. Once our physical life has ended, there is nothing else that anyone on this

earth can do to us.

4. There is One, and only One, who has the final say in what happens to us beyond this life — that One is God.
5. God is the One who has the authority and power to cast us into hell — He is the One we should fear.
6. The fear of God is desperately needed in today's church.
7. It was the wise man Solomon who wrote, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Proverbs 1:7).
8. We need the fear of Moses who after removing his sandals at the burning bush in the desert "hid his face," because "he was afraid to look at God" (Exodus 3:6).
9. We need the fear of Isaiah, who cried out, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." (Isaiah 6:5)

3a

B. WHY WE AS CHRISTIANS SHOULD BE FEARLESS (Vv. 6-7)

"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." (Luke 12:6-7)

1. Most, if not all of us, want someone by our side when we face a fear, so that we do not face it alone.
2. Jesus has just said that we should not fear those who may take our lives, but do nothing else to us.
3. Now He assures us that we are not alone, by showing us how much God cares for those who confess the name of His Son.
 - a. First He speaks of sparrows:
 - 1) Jesus said that five sparrows were sold for two cents.

- 2) In Matthew 10:29, Jesus said that two sparrows were sold for a cent.
 - 3) If you bought four sparrows for two cents, the fifth one was thrown in for free.
 - 4) Even though sparrows were of little value, Jesus wants us to know that not one of them is forgotten before God.
- b. Second, He tells us that God has numbered all the hairs of our head.
- 1) Even the smallest details of our lives are under God's constant watchcare.
 - 2) Our assurance is like that of the psalmist in Psalm 118:6, "The Lord is for me; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"

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III. A Confession That Is Not Ashamed

A. CONFESSION INVITES CONFESSION (v. 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 12:8).

1. In Romans 10:9-10, the apostle Paul wrote, "if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation."
2. True faith starts in the heart and moves to the lips.
3. Our willingness to confess Christ as our Savior and Lord, as the only means of salvation, will be rewarded with His confession of us "before the angels of God."

4a

B. DENIAL RESULTS IN DENIAL (v. 9)

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

1. However, if you or I are unwilling to confess Him, Jesus has a strong warning for us.
2. After Peter's great confession, Luke records Jesus as saying, “For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels” (Luke 9:26).

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IV. The One Behind Our Confession (vv. 10-12)

A. WE MUST NOT BLASPHEME AGAINST HIM (v. 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, it will not be forgiven him.” (Luke 12:10)

1. What is blasphemy of the Holy Spirit?
2. As we saw earlier in Luke 11:14-26 (cf. Matthew 12:31,32; Mark 3:28,29), there was an occasion when the scribes and Pharisees attributed Jesus' healings to Beelzebub, the prince of the demons.
3. In other words, they attributed the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan.
4. Even though the Holy Spirit was giving these men sufficient evidence that Jesus was the Messiah, they were hardening their hearts against Him.
5. Their turning away from the light which God was providing resulted in a seared conscience and a hardened heart for which there was no remedy.
6. Such a person has no capacity to repent.
7. Paul said that “no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:3).

5a**B. HE STANDS BESIDE US IN TIME OF NEED (Vv. 11-12)**

“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.” (Luke 12:11–12)

1. At the last supper, Jesus told His disciples that after He was going to ask His Father to send them the Holy Spirit (John 14:16).
2. Four times Jesus called the Holy Spirit the “Helper” (“Advocate,” NIV84, HCSB) (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7).
3. The word He used (Gr. *Parakletos*) means ‘one called alongside to help.’
4. Jesus now tells His disciples that when they are brought “before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities” the Holy Spirit would teach them “in that very hour what they ought to say.”
 - a. He did it for Peter and John when they stood before the Sanhedrin in Acts 4.
 - b. He did it for Paul when he stood before Felix and Festus and Agrippa (cf. Acts 24-26).
5. This is not an invitation for those of us who preach and teach to neglect our study and preparation.
6. Peter said that you and I must be “prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have” (1 Peter 3:15, NIV84).
7. There will be times when we face situations for which we can never prepare.
8. It is in those times that He will come alongside and help us.

Conclusion

1. In the passage which we have just studied, Jesus cuts us no slack.
2. If we will faithfully acknowledge Him to be our Savior and Lord, the only way to salvation and eternal life with His Father, then He will confess us before the angels of God.
3. However, if we are unwilling to confess Him before others, if the things we say and do when our brothers and sisters in Christ aren't present indicate that we are ashamed of Him, then He will deny ever knowing us.

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4. There is a question which must be answered by each of us this morning. It comes from another hymn we often sing:

**Who is on the Lord's side, standing for the right
Lifting up His banner in the thickest fight,
Listening for His orders, ready to obey,
Who is on the Lord's side, serving Him today?**

5. Are you a friend of Jesus? Are you on the Lord's side?
 - a. If so good.
 - b. If not, why not make the decision to stand up today and follow Him, never turning back.