

CHAPTER TWELVE

Outline

- A. Luke told about Jesus' warnings and encouragements for His disciples (1-12).
1. The circumstances: Opposition of the Pharisees (1).
 2. The warning: Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees (1-3).
 - a) The leaven of the Pharisees is hypocrisy.
 - b) Their hypocrisy would be exposed; nothing was covered up that would not be uncovered.
 - c) The exposure would be complete: Things whispered in darkness would be heard in the light; things heard in the inner chamber would be shouted from the house-top.
 3. The encouragement (4-12).
 - a) As friends, He told them of God's protective care (4-7).
 - (1) Do not fear those who can kill the body—the Pharisees were plotting His death.
 - (2) Rather fear Him who has power to cast into hell.
 - (3) God cared for the sparrows, but they were of more value than many sparrows.
 4. Another warning: Confessing and denying Him (8-9).
 - a) Those who acknowledge Him before men, He will acknowledge before the angels of God.
 - b) Those who deny Him, He will deny before the angels.
 - c) One speaking against the Son of Man may be forgiven, but blaspheming the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.
 5. Added encouragement when brought before authorities (10-12).
 - a) Do not be anxious about what to say.
 - b) The Holy Spirit would teach them in that very hour what to say.
- B. Luke told about the man who came to Jesus about his inheritance (13-21).
1. The circumstances (13-15).
 - a) He asked Jesus to tell his brother to divide the inheritance with him.
 - b) Jesus said, "Man, who made me a judge or divider over you?"

CHAPTER TWELVE

- c) Then He warned: "See that you keep yourselves from all covetousness, for life doesn't depend on the abundance of your possessions."
- 2. The parable of the Rich Fool which Jesus used to illustrate His point (16-20).
 - a) A rich man's land produced well. He asked himself, "What am I to do, for I have no place to store the harvest?"
 - b) He answered his own question, "I'll build bigger barns and store the grain; then I'll say to myself, You have plenty for many years; take a good rest, eat, drink, and enjoy life."
 - c) God asked a question, "Fool, they are requiring your life from you tonight; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?"
 - d) Jesus said, "That's the way it is with the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."
- C. Luke told how Jesus continued teaching His disciples the meaning of being rich toward God (22-53).
 - 1. He told them not to be anxious about food and clothing (22-34).
 - a) God's care made it unnecessary (22-28).
 - (1) Life is more important than food and clothing.
 - (2) God cares for the birds and the flowers; how much more for you, "O you of little faith?"
 - b) God's kingdom must have first place (29-34).
 - (1) The pagans seek for these things, but the Father knows about your needs.
 - (2) God's way: "Seek His kingdom, and these things will be added unto you."
 - (3) His encouragement: "Fear not little flock, it is the the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."
 - (4) His directive: "Sell what you have, give alms; and you will have treasure in heaven."
 - (5) The secret: "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."
 - 2. He told them to be alert concerning the Lord's coming (35-48).
 - a) It will be at an unknown time (35-40).

STUDIES IN LUKE

- (1) Be prepared as servants who have the lamps burning as they watch for master's return.
- (2) As no one knows when a thief may come, so "in an hour that you think not, the Son of man is coming."
- b) It will be a time of giving rewards (41-48).
 - (1) In response to Peter's question, He told about the reward for the faithful.
 - (2) Then He told of punishment for the unfaithful according to their responsibility: many stripes, few stripes.
3. He urged them to be aware of the purpose of His mission (49-53).
 - a) It was like kindling a fire, but He had a baptism that He must undergo (49-50).
 - b) He warned that He had not come to give peace, but division even between members of a family (51-53).
- D. Luke told how Jesus chided the multitudes for being unable to read the signs of the coming storm (54-59).
 1. Why can't you interpret this time? (54-56).
 - a) They were able to read the weather signs.
 - b) Why couldn't they see the coming storm about which He had just given warning?
 2. Why can't you make the right decision about the thing you face?
 - a) He illustrated His meaning by showing that it is good sense to settle out of court before the case goes against you.
 - b) He pointed out the impossibility of escaping after the decision has been rendered by the Judge.

The Leaven of the Pharisees

Scripture

12:1-12 In the meantime, when the many thousands of the multitude were gathered together, insomuch that they trod one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. 2 But there is nothing covered up, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. 3 Wherefore whatsoever ye have said in the dark-

ness shall be heard in the light; and what ye have spoken in the ear in the inner chambers shall be proclaimed upon the housetops. 4 And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. 5 But I will warn you whom ye shall fear; Fear him, who after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him. 6 Are not five sparrows sold for two pence? and not one of them is forgotten in the sight of God. 7 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not: ye are of more value than many sparrows. 8 And I say unto you, Every one who shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: 9 but he that denieth me in the presence of men shall be denied in the presence of the angels of God. 10 And every one who shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Spirit it shall not be forgiven. 11 And when they bring you before the synagogues, and the rulers, and the authorities, be not anxious how or what ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: 12 for the Holy Spirit shall teach you in that very hour what ye ought to say.

Comments

In the meantime.—This warning followed the incident of the Pharisees and lawyers confronting Jesus as He came out of the house where He had been a guest of a Pharisee. His disciples could expect the same kind of treatment, for He had not called them to an easy task.

the many thousands.—Many things had attracted the crowds to Jesus, but the thing that caused them to gather at this time seems to have been the open discussion that was going on between Jesus and the Pharisees. One wonders if they really saw through the hypocrisy of the Pharisees? Perhaps not. See 12:57.

he began to say unto his disciples first of all.—The lessons recorded in this chapter were primarily directed to the disciples, but the multitudes overheard what He was saying. At the close of the lesson, Jesus directed a warning to the crowds about interpreting the times.

the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.—Leaven is nearly always used in the Scriptures as a symbol of evil. At the time of the Passover, all leaven was excluded from the homes of the faithful people of Israel. Paul used this fact to teach that the whole Christian

life was to be observed "not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (I Cor. 5:7-8).

But leaven is also used in the parable of the Leaven to indicate the effective working of the gospel message. The reason it can be used in both ways is seen in the manner in which it works. It has the power to transform whatever it touches. To expose oneself to the hypocritical teaching of the Pharisee was to run the risk of becoming like the Pharisees. On the other hand, to come in contact with the message of Christ is to come under the transforming power of the Gospel with the hope of becoming like Him (II Cor. 3:18).

nothing covered up.—The leaven of the Pharisees, said Jesus, is hypocrisy. When they spoke, it was as if they were speaking from under a mask of pretense at speaking the truth. They spoke falsehood under the guise of truth. But there was nothing that they covered up that would not be uncovered. Jesus had unmasked the Pharisees and the lawyers at the luncheon when He pointed out what they really were. See 11:37-52. Just so, hypocrisy was to be unmasked whenever it was confronted with the truth of Christ.

Jesus' own teaching was not intended to be made a secret thing, for it was to be shouted from the house tops that everyone might know what He taught (Matt. 10:26-27).

Be not afraid of them that kill the body.—The conversation had arisen out of the attack of the enemies of Jesus who were trying desperately to find an excuse for killing Him. His disciple also would face persecution. But they were not to fear those who might kill the body, but rather fear God for He alone could punish the wicked by casting them into eternal punishment. That this is a reference to God and not the devil seems evident from the remarks that follow encouraging the disciples to remember God's tender care for them. The devil, of course, can afflict the saints of God. He can bring trials upon them to prove their faith, but the genuine thing in their faith enables them to endure the trial (James 1:2-3, 12). Jesus did two things to encourage at this point: (1) He called them friends and (2) He reminded them that God was watching over them.

five sparrows sold for two pence?—On another occasion Jesus used the same thought and spoke of two sparrows that were sold for a penny (Matt. 10:29). Jesus repeated His lessons with variations from time to time. If we carefully note the context when such

variations occur, it will avoid the supposition that mistakes were made in reporting the incidents of the teaching ministry of Jesus.

The point of the lesson is this: the disciples of Jesus are of much more value than many sparrows. Not a single sparrow is forgotten in God's sight; He won't forget the friends of His Son.

But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.—This indicates the meticulous care exercised by the Father over the friends of Jesus. Why, then, should they fear those who would destroy the body?

Every one who shall confess me before men.—If they were to be known as friends of Jesus, they would have to acknowledge their allegiance to Him in the face of threats from those who might even kill the body. In his second letter to Theophilus, Luke reports instances in which that very thing was done (Acts 4:19-21; 5:33-42).

The disciples were to acknowledge Him as the Christ of God (Luke 9:20). The Son of Man acknowledges them as His friends. But to disown Christ before men would mean that He will disown them before the angels of God. Did Peter remember this when he disowned Jesus at the trial? Did the remorseful Judas think of it as he was about to take his own life after he had betrayed his Friend into the hands of the enemy?

And every one who shall speak a word against the Son of man.—Even the heinous sin of speaking against the Son of Man can be forgiven. But forgiveness involves repentance which is produced by responding to the Spirit-breathed Word of God. But there is one sin that cannot be forgiven.

blasphemeth against the Holy Spirit it shall not be forgiven.—Were the Pharisees and lawyers whom Jesus had just reproved guilty of this sin? Jesus spoke by the Spirit, a fact that cannot be overlooked without failing to see why He mentions blasphemy of the Spirit in connection with forgiving those who speak against the Son of Man. Forgiveness depends on hearing and obeying the words He spoke by the Spirit (Acts 1:3; Luke 10:21-22). Rejecting this message constitutes an eternal sin when the rejection is final and complete. It is a sin that can be committed in this life, for Jesus said that it has no forgiveness in this life or in the life to come (Mark 3:28-30; Matt. 12:31-32). The reason is plain: Forgiveness depends on faith and repentance that must issue in obedience to the Word. The mind can be closed to the truth about Christ; the will can reach the place

where it can no longer respond to the appeal of God's love. Such a person is "past feeling." "It is impossible to renew such a one to repentance." See Eph. 4:17-19; Heb. 6:4-6.

Since it was blasphemy against the Holy Spirit to attribute the miracles of Jesus to the power of the devil, some say that the sin cannot be committed today. But this overlooks the fact that the miracles He performed by "the finger of God," that is, the Holy Spirit, were done to prove that He was speaking the truth of God. Rejecting this evidence was the fatal step. Jesus, of course, knew that these hardhearted men had completely and finally closed their minds to the truth.

when they bring you before the synagogues.—Just as Jesus had been put on trial by His oppressors so His disciples were to be brought before the authorities in the synagogues. But they did not need to fear such experiences, for the Holy Spirit was to enable them to speak the necessary words of truth in that hour (Acts 4:8, 13, 19-20). This promise was made to the apostles and not to the people in general. The Holy Spirit did guide the apostles into all the truth and enable them to leave the written record of it in the Bible (John 16:13-14; 20:30-31). When we face difficulties and trials, we can speak the truth by correctly using the message God gave us in the Bible.

To take this specific promise which Jesus made to the apostles and attempt to make it apply to believers in general is to disregard the fact that Jesus exercised special control over the apostles through the Holy Spirit. Jesus explained the function of the Holy Spirit to the apostles when He said, "He shall not speak for himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak; and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall take of mine and shall declare it unto you" (John 16:13-14).

The Bible is the guidebook which we are expected to follow today (Rom. 2:16; II Tim 3:14-17).

The Man God Called a Fool

Scripture

12:13-21 And one out of the multitude said unto him, Teacher, bid my brother divide the inheritance with me. 14 But he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? 15 And

he said unto them, Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. 16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: 17 and he reasoned within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have not where to bestow my fruits? 18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my grain and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry. 20 But God said unto him, Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee; and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be? 21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

Comments

And one out of the multitude.—The lessons of this section were primarily for the disciples, but the crowds were listening also. This incident became the occasion for further instruction to the disciples on being rich toward God.

A man from the crowd asked Jesus to tell his brother to divide the inheritance with him. Jesus did not become involved in the family problem, for there was another issue before them that was of vastly greater importance. The eternal inheritance was being neglected. What He said about that became the basis upon which the man could settle his own problem with his brother. Jesus was the Savior, not just a social reformer; but in saving man from his sins, He pointed to the only effective way to overcome all kinds of injustice, social or otherwise. When we let the Word of Christ rule in our hearts we will be ready and willing to treat all men as God intended that they should be treated (Matt. 7:12; Col. 3:16).

for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth.—Jesus had just reminded the one who volunteered to follow Him that the Son of Man had no place to lay His head. He had also taught the disciples that God was mindful of their physical needs and that they were to ask Him for their daily bread. The point of Jesus' lesson was this: There is more to life than a material inheritance; life is not made up of possessing things. This life is temporary; the eternal inheritance is infinitely more important. To illustrate His point, Jesus told about the man God called a fool.

What shall I do?—He was completely selfish; he had not thought for the needs of others. The only thing he could think of was to build larger barns and store up more grain.

take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry.—Jesus did not say that the possession of wealth was wrong; it was the wrong use of it that He condemned. Neither is there anything wrong about rest, food, and proper enjoyment of life unless this be the only end in view. The rich fool prepared for the earthly life as if it were to continue forever.

Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee.—God called him "fool" because he had taken no thought for this eventuality. He had neglected the basic truth for all men, "It is appointed unto man once to die and then cometh the judgment" (Heb. 9: 27). In the very night in which he was prepared to live forever on this earth they were requiring him to give account of his life.

whose shall these be?—This question seems to be directed to the man who had asked Jesus to settle his problem about his inheritance. What if he did get the brother to divide their inheritance? A more important question: Was he rich toward God?

How to be Rich Toward God

Scripture

12:22-34 And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for *your* life, what ye shall eat; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. 23 For the life is more than the food, and the body than the raiment. 24 Consider the ravens, that they sow not, neither reap; which have no store-chamber nor barn; and God feedeth them: of how much more value are ye than the birds! 25 And which of you by being anxious can add a cubit unto the measure of his life? 26 If then ye are not able to do even that which is least, why are ye anxious concerning the rest? 27 Consider the lilies, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin; yet I say unto you, Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 28 But if God doth so clothe the grass in the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more *shall he clothe* you, O ye of little faith? 29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. 30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: but your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. 31 Yet

seek ye his kingdom, and these things shall be added unto you. 32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell that which ye have, and give alms; make for yourselves purses which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief draweth near, neither moth destroyeth. 34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Comments

Be not anxious for your life.—The man of the parable was overly anxious about eating and drinking and the enjoyment of this life. The disciples could be concerned about the kingdom of God, for they were to enjoy the providential care of God in this life. That did not mean that they didn't have to work, but it did mean that they could trust God who provides abundantly for all His creatures. The soul is more important than the food, and the body than the clothing it must have. To illustrate His point, Jesus called attention to God's care for the birds. They do not plant or reap or have barns in which to store food, but God cares for them. He added, "You are of much more value than the birds."

add a cubit unto the measure of his life.—Anxiety may shorten life, but lengthening it is another thing. Why then be anxious over things? Jesus illustrated this thought by pointing to the lilies of the field and to the fact that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them.

cast into the oven.—Dried grass and flowers were used as fuel for the oven where wood may not have been plentiful. God clothes the grass with such glory even though it is to last for a few short months; but how much more will He care for the saints who are destined to live forever with Him in the heavenly kingdom?

but your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.—Jesus did not advocate the extremes of asceticism. He reminded the disciples that the Father knew of their needs and told them what to do that they might be met.

Yet seek ye his kingdom.—The kingdom of God is eternal and must have first place in the lives of the disciples of Our Lord. It was the good pleasure of the Father to give this kingdom to those who trusted in Him. Jesus challenged them to sell their possessions and give alms, for they were to be concerned about the treasure in heaven that does not fail. When life is over—for that is the point

of the lesson based on the parable of the Rich Fool—it will be clear why Jesus urged this course upon His disciples in contrast to giving attention to things that perish and do not make one rich toward God.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.—Is your heart set on the things of God or on the things of this life? To be rich toward God is to have the heart set on the glories of His kingdom and the life eternal which the faithful will inherit.

The Coming of the Son of Man

Scripture

12:35-48 Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning; 36 and be ye yourselves like unto men looking for their lord, when he shall return from the marriage feast; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may straightway open unto him. 37 Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and shall come and serve them. 38 And if he shall come in the second watch, and if in the third, and find *them* so, blessed are those *servants*. 39 But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what hour the thief was coming, he would have watched, and not have left his house to be broken through. 40 Be ye also ready: for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh.

41 And Peter said, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even unto all? 42 And the Lord said, Who then is the faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall set over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? 43 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. 44 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will set him over all that he hath. 45 But if that servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and the maidservants, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; 46 the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he expecteth not, and in an hour when he knoweth not, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the unfaithful. 47 And that servant, who knew his lord's will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*; 48 but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*. And to whomsoever

much is given, of him shall much be required: and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask the more.

Comments

Let your loins be girded.—This is the familiar figure of one gathering up the long flowing robes worn in that day and binding them about the body so as to be able to move without hindrance. It came to be a symbol of alertness and readiness for action. Jesus warned of the need to be alert, since His coming is at an unknown time.

The rich fool of the parable is still under consideration, for he illustrates the one who is not prepared for the future life. The account of the marriage feast and the coming of the bridegroom as given in Matt. 25:1-13 illustrates the point.

in what hour the thief was coming.—Paul used this figure in relation to the Second Coming: "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (I Thes. 5:2). Since His coming is at an unknown hour, it is necessary to watch and be ready at all times. The rich fool of the parable did not know when his life would end or when he would be called upon to give account of himself to God. The Lord has delayed His coming through this time of God's longsuffering, but no one knows when it will end or when his time to prepare will be over. Of one thing we are sure: the Lord is coming! "Be ye also ready."

unto us, or even unto all?—Peter's question had to do with the story of the thief at night that showed the necessity of faithfulness in view of the unknown time of Christ's coming. Did it refer to the apostles or to all the people?

Jesus did not answer directly with "no" or "yes." He did answer in a manner that let Peter know that He was talking primarily to the apostles. They were to be wise stewards taking care of the Master's household while He was away. See I Cor. 4:1-2 for Paul's lesson on the necessity of faithfulness on the part of the apostles and others who share the responsibility of caring for the church of the Lord.

But if that servant shall say in his heart.—Jesus often presented both sides of an issue. His disciples were to be faithful and wise stewards, but if they should be unfaithful there was punishment awaiting them. Did Peter remember this lesson when he denied that he had never known such a person as Jesus?

many stripes . . . few stripes.—The degrees of punishment have to do with the servants: willful unfaithfulness merits many stripes; ignorance, few. But all unfaithfulness is punishable.

Does this passage teach degrees of punishment in hell? No wise servant should have to learn the lesson by experience. That punishment is too awful for the mind to fully appreciate just how terrible it is. The wise person will do all that is necessary to avoid it completely. Hell is prepared for the devil and his angels. No one who commits himself to the Lord and remains faithful will experience its pain and anguish, for there is the crown of life for those who are faithful to the Lord until death (Rev. 2:10).

The Parable of the Pounds (Luke 19:11-27) suggests that there will be a difference in the rewards to the faithful, perhaps that they are to be in proportion to the ability to enjoy them. But to be in the kingdom of heaven will be reward enough (II Pet 1:10-11).

The Mission of the Son of Man

Scripture

12:49-53 I came to cast fire upon the earth; and what do I desire, if it is already kindled? 50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! 51 Think ye that I am come to give peace in the earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: 52 for there shall be from henceforth five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. 53 They shall be divided, father against son, and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against her mother; mother in law against her daughter in law, and daughter in law against her mother in law.

Comments

I came to cast fire.—The lesson about the purpose of His mission came directly out of what He had just said about faithfulness. It was no easy task to which His servants had been called. Some, no doubt, thought that the reign of the Messiah would be one of peace and easy living. Some were looking for a temporal kingdom that would provide an abundance of food—they had a sample when He fed them on the loaves and fish. But actually for many His kingdom was to be marked by persecution, bitterness, hardship, want and death. See Paul's description of what it meant for him to serve Christ (II Cor. 4:7-11; 11:23-28).

Fire is used as a symbol of purification in some instances, but in this context Jesus meant the destructive power of fire. There was to be strife in families because of Him; some would be for Him and others would oppose Him bitterly.

if it is already kindled?—Jesus came to cast fire upon the earth. That fire was already kindled, for people were taking sides for or against Him. Some of the Pharisees were plotting to kill Him. But He continued to challenge His disciples to a life of complete dedication to Him. Many were responding by taking up their cross daily and following Him.

But I have a baptism.—Jesus' mission was to start men thinking about Him. The sacrifice on the cross was one thing He still had to accomplish. There were many things pressing upon Him which He had to care for before He could do this last thing the Father had given to accomplish (John 10:18; 17:4; 19:30). For one thing, He had to prepare His disciples for their mission of taking the Word of the Cross into all the world.

Jesus reminded the disciples that they must share His experience (Mark 10:38). There was a cross in the mission of the Master, and there was a cross in the mission of His servants.

Signs of the Coming Storm

Scripture

12:54-59 And he said to the multitudes also, When ye see a cloud rising in the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it cometh to pass. 55 And when ye see a south wind blowing, ye say, There will be a scorching heat; and it cometh to pass. 56 Ye hypocrites, ye know how to interpret the face of the earth and the heaven; but how is it that ye know not how to interpret this time? 57 And why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right? 58 For as thou art going with thine adversary before the magistrate, on the way give diligence to be quit of him; let haply he drag thee unto the judge, and the judge shall deliver thee to the officer, and the officer shall cast thee into prison. 59 I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou have paid the very last mite.

Comments

When you see a cloud rising.—Jesus had just been telling the disciples what His earthly mission would do to their lives and to the

lives of others who would take sides for or against Him. He also warned the crowds about the coming storm.

People were able to read weather signs, why couldn't they interpret the signs that pointed to the rejection of the Son of God and the resulting destruction that was coming upon Jerusalem? The setting of this whole lesson is the bitter opposition to Jesus expressed by the Pharisees and lawyers (11:52-12:1).

And why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?—With all the evidence about them, why couldn't they make the right decision by themselves? That decision called for them to align themselves with Christ; for if they let the matter go before God the Judge of heaven, they would lose their case. And many of them did just that (Luke 19:42). Before Pilate they rejected their King, and on the Day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit spoke through the apostles and charged them with the guilt of having crucified Him whom God made both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:23, 36).

with thine adversary before the magistrate.—The crowds were in danger of considering Christ as their adversary. He appealed to them to settle the issue before it was too late.

In Matt. 5:25, the same figure is used, but there it refers to the necessity of brethren adjusting their differences before attempting to approach God in worship.

Thou shalt by no means come out.—A person in debtor's prison had no possible way of earning money to effect his release. There is no escape from the final state of punishment into which sinner must go.

Summary

The scribes and Pharisees continued their attack on Jesus after leaving the house where He had dined with the Pharisee. This became the occasion for His warning to the disciples. The false teaching of the Pharisees was like leaven, transforming all who came in contact with it into hypocrites like the Pharisees. But their hypocrisy was exposed by Jesus.

For the encouragement of the disciples, Jesus told them about God's protective care. He called on them to acknowledge Him even in face of all the threats of their enemies. He reminded them that the Holy Spirit would teach them what to say in the hour of need.

A man came to Jesus asking Him to tell his brother to divide their inheritance. Jesus told the story of the man God called a

CHAPTER TWELVE

fool. He pointed out that life does not consist in possessions; the important thing is to be rich toward God. Jesus explained they could be rich in this way: it meant putting the kingdom of God first, for He said, "where your treasure is, there will be your heart also."

Since life is temporary, it is necessary to be alert to avoid being caught unprepared when the Lord comes again. When He comes, He will reward the faithful and punish the wicked.

His mission was like kindling a fire. Already there was the struggle going on between members of one's own family over their relation to Him.

Jesus chided the multitudes for their inability to see what was about to happen to them. He urged them to agree with Him before it was too late, for there will be no escape from punishment on the Judgment Day for those who fail to acknowledge Him before men.

Questions

1. What was the occasion of Jesus' warning about the leaven of the Pharisees?
2. What was it that had caused the crowds to gather at this time?
3. Why did Jesus say that the leaven of the Pharisees was hypocrisy?
4. What important lesson did Paul teach using the figure of leaven to illustrate it?
5. How can leaven be used as a symbol of false teaching and also of teaching that is true?
6. What effect does the truth of the Gospel have on those who hear it and obey it?
7. What did Jesus do about the hypocritical teaching of the Pharisees?
8. What did Jesus tell the apostles to do about what He taught them?
9. Why did He say that they were not to be afraid of them that kill the body?
10. Of whom were they to be afraid? Why?
11. What lesson did He teach by calling attention to the sparrows?
12. What lesson did He teaching by calling attention to the fact that the hairs of their heads were numbered?

STUDIES IN LUKE

13. Why did Jesus demand allegiance from His disciples?
14. What examples are given in the Scriptures of men confessing their faith in Him even in face of death?
15. Why could a word spoken against the Son be forgiven when blasphemy against the Holy Spirit couldn't?
16. What is this unforgivable sin?
17. What would the Holy Spirit do for the apostles when they were brought before the authorities of the synagogues?
18. How does God provide for the answers we may be called on to give today?
19. What was the request of the man from the crowd?
20. Why didn't Jesus do as the man requested?
21. What important lesson did Jesus teach by the story of the man God called a fool?
22. What foolish thing was the man doing?
23. What was his fatal mistake?
24. What does it mean to be rich toward God?
25. What is one to do to become rich toward God?
26. What did Jesus tell the disciples that would keep them from being anxious about food and clothing?
27. What can anxiety do for life? What can't it do?
28. What is the Father's concern about man's need for food and clothing?
29. How does one seek first the kingdom of God?
30. What did Jesus say about the heart and treasure?
31. What is meant by "Let your loins be girded"?
32. Why did Jesus liken His coming to a thief in the night?
33. Why did Peter want to know if Jesus was talking to all or just to the apostles?
34. How did He answer Peter's question?
35. What is the lesson of the unfaithful servant?
36. What about degrees of punishment?
37. What did Jesus mean by casting fire upon the earth?
38. In what way was it already kindled?
39. What did He mean when He said, "I have a baptism"?
40. What warning did Jesus give the crowds which He based on their ability to read the weather signs?
41. What storm warnings should they have been able to see?
42. What did He mean by saying that they should agree with their adversary?