

# Further up, Further in

## Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

### “KEEPING THE END IN VIEW”

For individual study or group discussion

As we resume our study in the *Gospel of Luke*, we've seen that the advent of Jesus set the climactic stage for Israel's redemptive history. His arrival ushered in the Kingdom of God, but this Kingdom looked very different than what most people had expected. It was an upside-down Kingdom—one that created a new reign that welcomed, not the self-righteous and privileged, but the penitent and poor in spirit.

In the second half of Luke's Gospel, the mood shifts as Jesus begins his journey toward Jerusalem. The tenor of his message turns from restoration and hope to warning and judgment. In Luke 12:1-12, Jesus focuses on future judgment as he calls his disciples to keep the end in view so that they will beware of hiding, knowing all will be revealed (vv. 1-3). He also exhorts his disciples to fear the One whom they do not have to be afraid of, because he rules, cares for, forgives, and provides for them (vv. 4-12).

#### **Beware of hiding, knowing all will be revealed (vv. 1-3)**

Jesus has left the dinner setting at the home of a Pharisee, where he just pronounced woes upon the religious leaders (Luke 11:37-54). He is now outside, surrounded by thousands of people, continuing his denunciation of the religious practices of the Pharisees while zeroing in on their hypocrisy: “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.” He continues to warn that “Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known” (vv. 1-2). As R. Kent Hughes summarizes, “The limitless capacities of divine omniscience assure perfect exposure to hypocrisy.”<sup>1</sup>

- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle wanted to prove a point that “*There is a skeleton in the cupboard of every household, no matter how respectable that household may be.*” Purportedly, a story written about a prank Doyle played on a local cleric was published in the 1897 issue of *The Strand* magazine: “*He [Doyle] determined to put this opinion to a practical test. Selecting for the subject of his experiment a venerable Archdeacon of the Church, against whom the most censorious critic had never breathed a word. He went to the nearest post-office and dispatched a telegram to the revered gentleman: ‘All is discovered! Fly at once!’ The Archdeacon disappeared, and has never been heard of since.*”<sup>2</sup> According to 1 Peter 2:1-12, how should followers of Christ live?
- Speaking to his disciples first, Jesus warns them of “the leaven of the Pharisees” (v. 1). Why do you think he addressed the disciples first on the subject of hypocrisy and not the crowd in general? How does one protect oneself from that kind of false religion? (See also 1 John 1:6, Matthew 7:3-5, and James 1:22.)

#### **Fear the One you don't have to be afraid of (vv. 4-12)**

According to Jesus, there is something worse to fear than death, “Fear him who has authority to cast into hell” (v. 5). But for those who belong to God, Jesus illustrates his tender watch care over them by describing God's concern for the sparrows. Sparrows were sold in the marketplace for two pennies and were considered worthless. But not to God. Each is known and cared for by him. How much more then, the worth of humanity? Jesus underscores our value by noting the Father knows the number of hairs on our heads. Jesus' words should comfort us. We are known and loved by God. As theologian John Frame summarizes, “*Christians struggling because of difficult circumstances can take great comfort in the fact that, no matter what befalls them in this life, nothing happens outside of their heavenly Father's loving plan for their ultimate salvation.*”<sup>3</sup>

- If sparrows are intimately known by God, what is his knowledge of your life and how well do you think he understands you?
- Knowing that God rules, cares, forgives, and provides for you, how has Luke 12:1-12 helped you reevaluate your fears and anxieties?
- Read Deuteronomy 10:12-22 and Ecclesiastes 12:13-14. How do these passages speak into your understanding of how to live as a disciple of Christ?

DATE: August 20, 2023

SPEAKER: Brian/Wil

SERIES: Gospel of Luke

PASSAGE: Luke 12:1-12

## Family Dinner Table

### “Here I Stand”

*“Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason...my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me.”<sup>4</sup>*

On trial for heresy at the Diet of Worms for his stand on the supremacy of Scripture, Martin Luther knew his life was in peril for what he had written, but he stood firm in the face of death. When asked by a councilman whether he would heed the summons to the trial, Luther responded: “*You ask me what I shall do if I am called by the emperor. I will go even if I am too sick to stand on my feet. If Caesar calls me, God calls me. If violence is used, as well it may be, I commend my cause to God. He lives and reigns who saved the three youths from the fiery furnace of the king of Babylon, and if He will not save me, my head is worth nothing compared with Christ. This is no time to think of safety. I must take care that the gospel is not brought into contempt by our fear to confess and seal our teaching with our blood.*”<sup>5</sup>

The Diet of Worms proved to be a turning point for the church, as it charted the course for reformed Christianity for centuries to follow—God's Word reigns supreme over the traditions of men and liberty of conscience over the tyranny of authority.

- Often it's our fear of what we might lose (money, reputation, job, safety, etc.) that lies behind our disobedience. Discuss with your family how God's promises can eliminate those fears and lead to courage.

### PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

**Child Evangelism Fellowship,**

*supported partner ministry*

### PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

**Ruth and Keith Powlison,** *supported missionary partners who have been serving with MTW for 35 years.*

<sup>1</sup> Hughes, R. Kent. *Luke: That You May Know the Truth*, Volume 2. 1998. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 38

<sup>2</sup> Brombley, K. (2014, July 31). All is discovered! fly at once!. A Study of Fandom. <https://arthurdoyle.wordpress.com/2014/07/31/all-is-discovered-fly-at-once/>

<sup>3</sup> Frame, John. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief*. 2013 Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing.

<sup>4</sup> Bainton, Roland H. *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther*. 1950 New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 185, 174