

► Read Luke 12:4–34.

1. There is a theme running through much of this week’s passage. Look at the following verses, and then write down this theme: verses 4, 7b, 11, 22, 25–26, 29b, and 32.
2. Review Luke 11:53—12:3. Given what has been going on prior to this week’s passage, to whom do you think Jesus is referring when he speaks of “those who kill the body and after that can do no more” (v. 4)?
3. Of course, Jesus’ command not to fear “those who kill the body” (v. 4) is relevant for believers of all times and places. What forms can this fear of people take? (vv.1b, 9; * 9:26)
4. Why should we not be afraid of mere humans who oppose us because of our faith?
 - a. vv. 4–5

Why is the One whom we *are* to fear trustworthy?
(vv. 6–7)

b. vv. 8–9

Fearing God

The fear of God “is continually regarded in the Bible as a necessary ingredient in right living. It is... a recognition of the greatness and the righteousness of God on the one hand and our readiness to sin on the other”¹ To ‘fear’ God “is to render the proper respect and reverence that is due to [him].”²

The Son of Man

“Up to this point in Luke, the term Son of Man has been an indirect way for Jesus to refer to himself in his authority to forgive sin (5:24), his table fellowship with sinners (7:34), or his approaching suffering (9:22). Here it alludes to a role in the judgment...”³

c. v. 12

5. In verse 10, Jesus makes a potentially confusing contrast. It is possible to reject or deny the Son of Man and later accept him and be forgiven.^{4**} But what sin does Jesus state will not be forgiven?

► **Read Luke 12:13–21.**

6. The man who calls out to Jesus in verse 13 may or may not have a legitimate grievance against his brother—we are not told. Nevertheless, Jesus uses strong language to warn the man against greed.

At its root, what is greed? (Col. 3:5; Eph. 5:5)

How is this so?

7. Why is the rich man in Jesus' parable a fool?
a. 1 Chron. 29:11–12; Rom. 1:21, 25

b. v. 20; 1 Tim. 6:6–10; (📖 Eccl. 2:18–23)

c. Prov. 11:28

d. Eccl. 5:10

Blaspheming Against the Holy Spirit

“To commit [the unpardonable] sin one must consciously, deliberately, and maliciously reject the testimony of the Spirit to the deity and saving power of the Lord Jesus. Since only the Holy Spirit can convince and convert the unsaved, a continuous and final rejection of His wooing and His witness shuts off the only possible avenue whereby the saving work of Christ is applied to the sinner in his need.”⁵

“Christians often worry that they have committed this sin, but such a concern is itself evidence of an openness to the work of the Spirit...”⁶

8. Instead of “stor[ing] up things for himself” (v. 21), what should the rich man have concerned himself with? (v. 21)

What does this look like? (1 Tim. 6:17–19)

► **Read Luke 12:22–34.**

9. What kinds of things does Jesus command his followers not to worry about in this section? (vv. 22, 29)
10. What do you think the difference is between the perspective of the rich fool, who says, “Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry” (v. 19b) and the perspective of someone who follows Jesus’ teaching “Do not worry” (vv. 22, 29b)?
11. What are we to learn from considering the ravens and the lilies? (vv. 24, 27–28)
12. What point does Jesus make about worrying in verses 25–26?

Far from helping, how do you think worrying might be harmful, and even sinful?
13. What do you think Jesus means when he says that “life does not consist in an abundance of possessions” (v. 15b) and “life is more than food, and the body more than clothes” (v. 23)?
14. Jesus repeatedly commands us not to worry, not to be afraid, and not to “set [our] heart[s] on what [we] will eat or drink” (v. 29). What does he command us to do instead? (vv. 31, 33)

What promises go with these commands? (vv. 31–32)

15. Uniting all the parts of this week’s passage is a fundamental contrast. On one side, we see an earthly perspective that is characterized by worry and fear about what other people can do to us, how we can get food and drink and clothing, and how we can accumulate money and possessions—all of which are forms of striving after a temporary security at best. On the other side, we see a kingdom perspective that is characterized by trust in the God who cares for us and who guarantees us eternal security.

At the end of the passage, Jesus states, “where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (v. 34). With this in mind, consider the questions below.

- a. What do you tend to persistently think or worry about? store up? invest time, energy, or money in? treasure?

- b. Which of these do you think might indicate that your treasure and your heart are here on earth?

- c. How does overvaluing these things bring worry and fear into your life?

- d. How would a deeper trust in God and a greater valuing of his kingdom change your life?

- e. How can such a change in what you value come about? (Ps. 139:23–24; Phil. 4:6–9; Col. 3:1–5)

* For further study

¹ Leon Morris. *The Gospel According to St. Luke: Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 1980), 209.

² Philip W. Comfort, Gen. Ed. *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary*. Vol. 12 (The Gospel of Luke; Acts) (Carol Stream: Tyndale, 2006), 188.

³ Darrell L. Bock, *Luke, Volume 2: 9:51–24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1996), 1139.

⁴ Frank E. Gaebelin, Gen. Ed. *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary with the New International Version of the Holy Bible in Twelve Volumes*. Vol. 8 (Matthew, Mark, Luke) (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 960.

** For example, Peter denied Jesus three times and was restored. See John 18:15-17, 25-27; 21:15-19.

⁵ Comfort, 189.

⁶ Lane T. Dennis, exec. ed., and Wayne Grudem, gen. ed., *ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 1982, note on 12:10.