

## **Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ**

### **Discipleship by the Jordan River**

Last time...Jesus was invited to eat a meal at the house of a Pharisee...  
and Light exposed the darkness as Jesus sounded the alarm to the Pharisees, scribes, and lawyers, just as He did to them in the Galilee and in Jerusalem

John 8:47      **He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God.**

This time...Jesus turns from the hypocrites to teach His disciples by the Jordan River

We will be in Luke 12

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of His ministry beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized;  
and there He abode (John 10:40)

v1      In the meantime...He began to say...Beware the leaven:  
While Jesus is sounding the alarms to the self-righteous Pharisees, scribes, and lawyers, a sizeable crowd gathers there by the Jordan River  
Jesus never passed up a teaching moment so He turns from the “Jews” to the people

First of all, His first teaching point: Beware the leaven of the Pharisees,  
which is hypocrisy

Jesus previously taught that to the 12 in Matt 16:1-12 after His confrontation with the Pharisees in Capernaum (John 6)  
in His 2<sup>nd</sup> year of ministry

In the context of His teaching in John 11:35 and of the “6 Alarm” conversation just concluded,  
the Pharisees are false lights  
their leaven/doctrine is darkness

With the benefit of additional context, Jesus’ teaching to these disciples regarding the religious leaders is the same message as to the 12

Regardless of location, the message of Jesus is unchanging  
Heb 13:5

With that in mind...

v2-9 I say unto you:

What does Jesus then teach these disciples down by the Jordan River where John the Baptist baptized?

Just what He taught the 12 disciples as He prepared them to go on their first mission trip (into Galilee) without Him (Matt 10:26-33) also in His 2<sup>nd</sup> year of ministry

3x Jesus says, “I say unto you”...Thus saith the LORD  
With one very wonderful addition – v4...”My friends”

Jesus

- the LORD – the God of Israel
- The Son of Man – Kinsman-Redeemer
- The Son of God – the Holy One of Israel
- I AM – the voice in the burning bush
- Messiah that came from eternity – God the Savior
- The Word that was made flesh

considers those frail and flawed people who choose to follow Him to be His friends!

The message repeated:

- the mysteries of God will be revealed...to those who believe
- do not fear man, who has limited and temporary power to harm you (if you do believe)
- fear God, Who has absolute and eternal power to harm you (if you do not believe)
- man is against you, God is for you...so Fear Not
- If you confess Me, I will confess you but if you deny Me, I will deny you
  - in Matt 10: to His Father
  - here: to the angels of God

Why is Jesus teaching the same thing?

- His Word will never pass away
- His pure Word is relevant to all people of all locations in all times
- It is needful for all His disciples

v10 against the Son of Man...against the Holy Ghost:

Now Jesus teaches this crowd of disciples that which He previously taught a crowd of disciples in the Galilee after the Pharisees falsely accused Him of casting out a dumb demon by the power of the prince of the devils (Matt 12:31-32) in His 1<sup>st</sup> year of ministry

Shall not be forgiven – the Unpardonable Sin is to not believe God the Holy Spirit’s witness of Jesus Christ (His words and works)

v11-12 they bring you unto:

Jesus “returns” to the message He gave to the 12 in preparation of their first mission trip (Matt 10:16-20)

when...not if

they...those who do not believe, thereby blaspheming the Holy Ghost

bring...with hostility

you...believers, followers of Jesus

unto the synagogues...before religious leaders

and unto magistrates and powers...before civil/secular authorities

take ye no thought...no anxiety, no worry

how are what thing ye shall answer...how you will defend yourself against false accusation

what ye shall say...how you will answer/refute the false accusation

the Holy Ghost shall teach you...the inspired words of God will be given to you

in the same hour...at that time, when you need words (not before or after but right on time)

Jesus repeats the forewarning to those who follow Him on the narrow path on which He walks will

- be hated as He is hated
- face difficult circumstances
- be given Divine help in the midst of trouble

Case in point: Acts 23:6

At this point, someone in the crowd brings a personal issue to His attention

v13 divide the inheritance:

A “younger brother” wants Jesus to tell his (older, the firstborn) brother to split the family inheritance with him

This man is concerned with

- worldly treasure
- being dis-possessed

v14-15 who made me a judge...beware of covetousness:

Jesus, of course, is speaking practical truth concerning eternal matters, matters of the heart

This request from the crowd is concerned with a worldly matter

This young man is missing the point and needs a change of perspective from the worldly to the heavenly

“Discern and be on guard against covetousness...of worldly treasure

Ex 20:17...the 10<sup>th</sup> Commandment

Rom 7:7...a matter of the heart and not of the hands

A man’s life...the value of, the object of

consists not in the abundance of the things he possesses.”

False light/darkness: He who dies with the most toys wins  
Money can buy peace and happiness

Jeff Bezos, Founder and CEO of Amazon was recently called the richest man to ever live: any more valuable to God than a homeless man?  
Does money hold Bezos’ breath in its hand?

Material wealth is not the goal, it certainly is not the answer to man’s greatest need

Bank records do not reflect the quality of a life

In the world, a man’s value and the object of life is measured with a number...money and stuff

In the kingdom of God, a man’s value and the object of life is

- found in Christ Jesus
- measured in faithfulness

1 Cor 4:1-2

Ps 24:1

Who possesses ALL things in the universe?

What does that make us?

There is liberty in NOT owning anything and in NOT comparing/competing with others on a false “score”

We came with nothing, we will leave with nothing...so which is a better measure of the value and object of a person's life, the world's or God's?

My appeal to the softball league members:

We spend much time and effort (years and years, worries and worries) in preparing for retirement

But what happens after retirement?

Should we not also invest time and effort in our eternity?

Should we not examine what the Bible has to say about that?

In the Galilee, Jesus taught His disciples that the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of worldly riches will spiritually bankrupt a person, choking out fruitfulness of the Word of God

(Parable of the Sower, 3<sup>rd</sup> Soil, Matt 13:7, 22)  
in His first year of ministry

Jesus continues His teaching on money and possessions

v16-19 a parable...a certain rich man:

A parable, of a certain rich man...the kind of person most people desire to be

Listen to the words of this man:

- "I" 6 times
- "my" 4 times
- his goal in life: retire, eat, drink, and be merry  
(play vs work, indulge his flesh)
- the authority in his life: "Soul" (self)

Consider how he lived

- applied all his energy toward the accumulation of worldly wealth
- hoarded for himself vs shared with others (the poor and needy)
- not content, not grateful
- more and bigger are better
- he is the center of his universe...self-centered
- he is a "self-made man" so esteemed by the world
- self-sufficient, self-dependent, and self-congratulatory
- living luxuriously, even riotously

What does God have to say about such a man and his life?

v20 fool:

The wise and longsuffering God, who holds the breath of this rich man in His hands, considers this man esteemed by the world to be a fool

he neglected the end of the matter – death, then eternity

Luke 16:15b that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God  
(RADICAL difference in perspective!!)

Lessons from another very rich man, a real man not a parable character

Ecc1 2:10-11

Ecc1 5:10-15

Ecc1 6:1-2

Ecc1 8:8a

Ecc1 12:13-14

Wisdom from that same rich man

Prov 10:2

Prov 11:4

Prov 11:28

Prov 13:7

Prov 23:4-5

v21 treasure for himself and is not rich toward God:

Jesus puts the period on the parable of the rich fool

A person whose life is all about worldly wealth...the end of all his means...  
lives an impoverished life

A person who desires to be materially wealthy but not spiritually wealthy is a fool  
Treasure is amoral, the heart of unregenerate man is immoral

v22-25 Take no thought...life is more than:

Twice more in His teaching to His disciples by the Jordan River where  
John the Baptist baptized Jesus says, "I say unto you"...  
Thus saith the LORD

The first time is here, when He teaches these disciples what He taught the  
disciples in Galilee:

Do not worry/be anxious (Matt 6:25-27)

- about your body's material needs
- about your next meal
- about clothes to wear

Life is so much more than these temporary things  
When was the last time you went hungry?  
When was the last time you walked around naked?

Every day, the Creator takes care of every bird on planet earth,  
estimated to be between 200 and 400 Billion  
He most certainly will take care of His children!

So relax, trust the Lord Who sees everything!  
Anxiety and worry will not add to your lifespan!  
In fact, stress reduces lifespans

v26 which is least...for the rest:

If by your angst and worry you are not able to affect the things that are needful for  
your soul in this world, how do you propose to affect the things that are  
needful in eternity?

If you must trust God for simple things like food and clothes, can you not trust  
God for very weighty eternal things – your salvation – and vice versa?

btw...Jesus did not ask this question in His Sermon in the Mount  
But now, He continues teaching here what He taught there...

v27-31 Consider the lilies:

..."I say unto you" as in Matt 6:28-33

Solomon's man-made glory cannot compare with the beauty of the lilies in the  
field (by the hand of God)

So if God can cover the ground with grass/wheat, which grows quickly and is  
then burned for fuel/baked to provide food for man, how much more will  
God tend to your needs?

Do not fret about your next meal  
Do not doubt that God sees, cares, and acts

The nations/Gentiles/unbelievers of the world stress out about these things...  
and so much more!

Child of God, follower of Jesus Christ, friend of Jesus, know that God knows  
what you need and will see to it that you are cared for.

How many of us have experienced this reality:

Eph 3:20 is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or  
think, according to the power that worketh in us

O ye of little faith – worry/anxiety (like breathing to natural, unregenerate man)  
opposes faith

Who here has ever experienced financial stress?  
Who here has experienced relief from that financial stress?  
Who here has subsequently experienced financial stress again?  
Who here has subsequently experienced relief from that financial stress?  
How long do I need to go on?

Who here is a worrier?  
We are not helping ourselves, we are hurting ourselves  
We are not pleasing God for it is impossible apart from faith to please  
God  
So rather than wringing our hands and worrying, trust the Lord...  
let's seek the kingdom of God (and His righteousness)...  
and see what God will do...again!

v32 Father's good pleasure:

And lest you are wondering, it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the  
kingdom!

Note: entrance cannot be bought with even ALL the treasure in the world

So says the Good Shepherd Who calls His sheep by name and they follow Him...  
into the kingdom of God because He gave His life for them

Faith is rational  
Fear/doubt is irrational

So consider the end of the matter and re-consider "treasure"

v33-34 Sell...give...treasure in the heavens:

Jesus continues the teaching He gave on the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 6:19-21)

Be dis-possessed – the exact opposite of the young man's heart and mind in v13

Give of your abundance to those in need...manifesting the heart of God  
(Luke 11:41) Who is the God of the poor

The world despises and oppresses the poor, God takes care of the poor

Look for "timeless purses"...heavenly treasures that are Divinely secured  
Worldly treasures fly away, are stolen, burn, get spent...  
deceive and get left behind



**Rev 3:14-17**

Our choice of treasures is a matter of the heart  
Our choice matters!

In our study of LMJC, we have heard this message before

“take no thought”...do not worry, do not be anxious, do not fear  
v11, v22, v25

Life is “much more” than our flawed and finite perspective  
v7, v23, v26, v28

But rather...a needful re-orientation of perspective  
v31

Trust God, not worldly riches  
Fear God, not man  
Seek eternal, heavenly treasure, not fleeting, worldly treasure

Do we need to hear it again?

**2 Peter 1:10-13**

Phil 2:12-13 work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.  
For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *His*  
good pleasure. (to give us His kingdom!!!)

Will we need to hear this message again in the future?

Money is such a snare that Jesus taught on the subject multiples of times

1 Tim 6:6-10

**James 5:1-5**

I am rich!

My banking account statement will not tell me that but the Word of God does!

Eph 2:7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace  
in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

Eph 3:8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I  
should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

Phil 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Col 1:27 To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

Col 2:2 That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;

Heb 11:26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward

And My God has promised me

- daily bread to eat
- clothes to wear
- such things as I need (He knows, I do not)

until I see Him face-to-face

Put money in it proper place or it becomes a brutal taskmaster

May our hearts be more deeply impacted by the Word of God than ever before

May our lights shine in our spheres of influence more brightly than ever before

May our prayers to God be more frequent and more fervent than ever before

May we 2 Peter 3:18