

WHOM SHOULD I FEAR?

Luke 12:4-12

HOW DO YOU RESPOND TO REJECTION?

No one likes to be rejected.

We all want to be accepted and liked.

So, when opposition to Jesus arises, how will we respond to it?

Will we remain faithful to Him?

Will we take a stand for Him?

Will we turn and run?

Will we deny Him?

Jesus deals with the options when we're face-to-face with rejection

INSTRUCTION IN VIEW OF REJECTION 12:1-19:27

As Luke deals with those who accept Jesus,

he describes conduct which should characterize His disciples,

in light of the opposition by Pharisees and scribes 12:1-48

5 CONTRASTS direct our attention to proper perspective on priorities.

Lesson # 1 12:1-3

Don't focus on:

But rather focus on:

External appearances

Internal attitudes of the heart

Warning: Don't copy the hypocrites!

Those who follow Jesus shouldn't imitate the hypocrisy of the Pharisees.

God will reveal the inner thoughts and motives behind actions,

which people try to hide.

LESSON # 2

Don't focus on:

But rather focus on:

The opposition

The GOD WHO CARES

PROPER ATTITUDE CONCERNING REJECTION 12:4-12

Warnings in light of growing rejection: *Reactions to rejection*

Our Lord's instructions to His disciples in light of growing rejection

deal with different ways we might react.

Basic Instruction: Fear God First

Risk of caving in—conceding defeat—capitulating to the enemy

Take a stand—trust God with it!

1. FEAR GOD RATHER THAN MEN 12:4-7

Faced with persecution for our faith, we should not be concerned about human opposition, but rather, fear God.

The passage is about trusting God when faced with persecution.

Trust Him and let Him show us how to respond.

People who follow Jesus shouldn't be concerned about what human opposition can do to us, but fear God;

The power of the opposition ends at death; God will care for His children.

We ought to fear God, rather than man. 12:4-5

The fear of God conquers all other fears

He who truly fears God need fear nothing else.

All men can do is kill the body; God can condemn the soul.

Ex. – David – 1 Sam. 17 –

Enemy **42-44**

God's people **24, 25a, 33**

David **26, 45-47**

Ex. Israel vs. Canaan – Num. 13Enemy & God's people 31-33Caleb 30; 14:6-8**The power of the opposition ends at death
but God always cares for His children. 12:6-7**

If God cares about little things like the sparrows,

He certainly cares about us!

An *assaria* – least valuable coin (1/16 denarius => a day's wage)Five sparrows were sold for two *assarias*.

Sparrows are most common, widely distributed, numerous of birds.

They were of little value and sold cheaply.

They sold two for one cent and five for two cents.

The extra one was thrown in free – of little individual value.

They are about as cheap as anything you could buy.

Nevertheless, *God doesn't forget about them!*

Every single one of them is valuable to God – how about us, then?

Ironsides: "*God goes to every sparrow's funeral!*"

Not one falls to ground without the Father's knowledge.

We are of more value than many sparrows!

Therefore we need not be afraid.

We can trust God to take care of us.

Hendriksen: *The Prairie Pastor*:

Said the robin to the sparrow,

I should really like to know

Why those anxious human beings

Rush about and worry so.

Said the sparrow to the robin,

Well, I think that it must be

That they have no heavenly Father

Such as cares for you and me.

2. ACKNOWLEDGE HIM BEFORE MEN 12:8

Not a reference to reciting a formula

An affirmation of genuine faith – an agreement with God concerning Him.

We agree with Him publicly, before other people.

He agrees with us before angels – in God's presence

It's a reference to witness-bearing.

We get together and agree – we speak in support of one another.

Moody: told of a young boy in a prayer meeting he attended who said:

"If I tell the world about Christ, He will tell the Father about me!"

Isn't it interesting that those who stand for the truth of Christ are hesitant to speak for

Him, while those who proclaim error do so boldly?

We sing "Oh For a Thousand Tongues to Sing"

and don't use the one we own!

3. DON'T DISOWN HIM 12:9

This is the negative side of the confession just mentioned in v. 8.

Those who cave in to the pressure, who capitulate, who deny or disown Him will be disowned.

If we deny Him publicly, in front of other people,

we can expect the same kind of denial before the angels of God

4. DON'T BLASPHEME THE SPIRIT 12:10

If we join them – a reference to deliberate rejection of the evidence

– even after being convinced of its truth by the Spirit of God.

Meaning clarified in the context of Matt. 12:28-36 and Mk. 3:28-30

The Pharisees have all the evidence.

They can tell Who this is.

They reject the evidence and their inner conviction from the Spirit of God.

They willfully reject the evidence of supernatural power that they attest to,
by attributing the works of God to Satan Himself.

Instead of repenting and turning to Him,

they harden their heart and turn their back on Him.

They don't want to receive Him – in spite of all the evidence

– therefore they're about to lose it!

They're entrenching themselves and confirming commitment to reject Him

True followers are questioning the consequences of following Jesus.

Will it be worth the price?

He tries to help them focus on the more important issue of the consequences of rejection

If you're concerned about having committed it, you haven't!!!

5. DON'T WORRY ABOUT WHAT TO SAY

**THE SPIRIT WILL TEACH YOU HOW TO ANSWER THEIR
ACCUSATIONS 12:11-12**

The issue here is defense.

How do you answer the accusations?

Declare what the Spirit affirms, as a faithful witness before the opposition.

The Holy Spirit will indicate what we ought to say.

Fulfilled in Acts 4, 21-22, 24, 26 – and still today!

In contrast to the Pharisees who are blaspheming the Spirit,

His followers will be taught how to respond by the Spirit.

It's not our clever answer that convinces people.

We need to be ready to give an answer to those who ask.

The answer has to be Spirit-directed

HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND TO THE REJECTION OF OUR LORD?

WHAT DOES GOD WANT US TO DO ABOUT IT?

Trust Him!

Cling to Him.

Remain faithful.

Keep your perspective – focus on Him.

"HIS EYE IS ON THE SPARROW!"

An anonymous poet exclaims:

When the birds begin to worry

And the lilies toil and spin,

And God's creatures all are anxious, *Then I also may begin.*

For my Father sets their table,

Decks them out in garments fine,

And if He supplies their living, *Will He not provide for mine?*

Just as noisy, common sparrows Can be found most anywhere -

Unto some just worthless creatures,

If they perish who would care?

Yet our Heavenly Father numbers Every creature great and small,

Caring even for the sparrows,
Marking when to earth they fall.
If His children's hairs are numbered, *Why should we be filled with fear?*
He has promised all that's needful,
And in trouble to be near.