

Sometimes it is easy to get something out of a sermon. Sometimes it is more difficult. But whenever someone is accurately explaining Scripture, we are hearing God's Word. That's a privilege. It's also a responsibility. God is speaking to us. It may take some effort to hear, but it's worth the work!

Pre-Sermon: This is to help you prepare for hearing from God's Word.

- Read Luke 12:1-12
- Look back at 11:29-33. What is the subject Jesus is addressing there?
- Think about 12:2-12. What connection is there between this and the subject of 11:29-33?

Sermon Questions: These will help you evaluate how well you were listening.

- What three main things is Luke about?
- What is Luke trying to prove about what God is doing through Jesus?
- Why does Luke need to explain what God is doing through Jesus?
- What does he want to explain about it in particular?
- What are two different ways Luke explains the implications of what God's doing through Jesus?
- What three groups does Jesus work through the implications of the day of judgment with?
- Today we looked at one difference the judgment should make in our lives. What was it?
- What does Jesus tell the disciples to beware of?
- What is hypocrisy?
- Why is it dangerous? Why is it significant Jesus gave this warning to his disciples?

Sermon Synopsis: This is a short summary that will help you reflect on the message.

We have spent a long time studying the gospel of Luke. Hopefully you are beginning to get a sense of what Luke is about.

First of all, Luke's about what God is doing through Jesus. Second, it's about how God is doing that through Jesus. And third, what difference it makes.

Luke wants to explain what God is doing through Jesus. Specifically, He wants to prove that Jesus is the fulfillment of God's Old Testament plan to reverse the curse. He's going to prove in this book that the coming of Jesus is really the decisive moment in human history that has fundamentally changed the world. He has to help us understand how God is fulfilling these promises through Jesus because there are some surprises. The biggest surprise was that the Messiah was going to have to suffer and die to fulfill the Scriptures. While the disciples could have expected that if they understood the Old Testament, the fact is, they did not.

Not only does Luke want to help the disciples understand that the cross is the fulfillment of Scripture, He also wants to help his followers understand the difference the fact that God is saving this way should make on the way they live. One way he answers that question is positive. Since Jesus is saving this way, what implications does that have on our lives? Another way he answers however is more negative. Jesus isn't only accomplishing the salvation the Old Testament talked about, He is also going to be the One God uses to judge. The One God is sending to save sinners is also the One God has appointed to judge His enemies. There is a day of judgment on God's calendar, and humans are going to be judged for their response to the gospel and Jesus is the judge. And, we need to think through the implications. What difference does it make that there is a judgment and He's the Judge?

In Luke 11:33-12:12 Jesus works through the implications of the day of judgment with three different groups. He begins with the crowd. And then moves to the religious leaders. In our text, he talks to his followers. Luke 12:1-12 is for followers of Jesus. It's bringing the future forward and saying judgment day is a reality and our relationship with Jesus is key to what happens on that day

and followers of Jesus need to think through the implications of that reality for the way they live their everyday lives in the middle of this difficult world right now.

Over the next two weeks, we are going to see three ways knowing Jesus is the judge and knowing about judgment day should change the way we think and live and feel as followers of Jesus.

Today, the first.

It should change our priorities. What we focus on.

“He began to say to his disciples first, ‘Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.’”

The day of judgment should make us beware of hypocrisy. To understand what Jesus means, let’s think about the following questions.

What is hypocrisy?

Why is it so dangerous?

What is significant about the fact that Jesus has to give this warning to his disciples?

What specific reason does he give in verses 2–3 that demonstrates hypocrisy is foolish?

Why is it especially so foolish for people who believe Jesus is the Savior and Judge to be hypocrites?

When we are tempted by the leaven of the Pharisees, to focus on looking good on the outside and ignore the inside, we need to go back to Luke. What’s Luke about? God has a plan He’s accomplishing through Jesus. He’s going to accomplish it through the cross. Knowing that should make a difference! He’s the Savior! He is also the judge. And so that means what? It means we need to watch out for hypocrisy. Because it’s how people who don’t believe live. It corrupts. And it’s pointless. And yet for some reason, because we are sinners, it’s still tempting, which is why the first thing Jesus says is BEWARE HYPOCRISY!

Quote for Reflection: These quotes may help you understand the question I wanted you to be asking as a result of this message. Read and reflect.

“One of the biggest challenges facing the church in the West today is that we can easily adopt two or three spiritual practices as mere add-ons to the story we see ourselves in. We read a couple of Bible verses for inspiration, go to church for the fellowship, or send up a prayer for someone in need. But what if this just adds a spiritual dimension to days that are lived mostly without reference to God at all? What if we’re just placing a Christian veneer on a building with a different foundation? What if we share the same hopes and fears, desires and passions, as everyone else? In other words, could religious activities and spiritual disciplines look like Christian faithfulness, when in reality the primary story we see ourselves in—the narrative that gives the most meaning and significance to our lives—is the same as our unbelieving neighbors?”

“If the Scriptural Story of the world is public truth with personal implications, then we must evaluate our individual life stories in light of the greater one. The public impacts the personal. And, as we read the New Testament, we not only see the Story of our world, but also how our lives make sense within that Story. The gospel alters our life story. When we trust in Christ, the new story begins, a narrative in which we are gradually being remade into the image of Jesus. It is a story of becoming like Christ. This is the personal side of the gospel—that Christ died for you and me personally, and that God has promised to make us more and more like our Savior.”

Application Questions: These are some questions that may help put the message into practice.

- What difference does the fact that God has a plan He’s accomplishing through Jesus make on your life?
- What difference should the fact that He is doing it through the cross make on following Jesus?
- If there is a judgment day and Jesus is the judge, then what? How should that impact the way you think and feel and act? Does it?