

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. **Enjoy discovering more about Him!**

"VALUED" | LUKE 12:1-12 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

What are common ways people show others they are valued or special?

"Beware of Pharisaical Yeast" (Luke 12: 1-3)

Jesus warns of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees to the crowd, saying eventually the truth behind the hypocrisy is revealed. **Why is Jesus against hypocrisy? What are ways to protect ourselves from being hypocritical?**

"Reorient Your Fears" (Luke 12: 4-5)

Jesus teaches that God decides our spiritual eternity and therefore is more important than people who can kill our physical bodies. **How does focusing on God's sovereignty impact our view of death?**

"Not Forgotten and Of More Value" (Luke 12: 6-7)

Jesus shares that God remembers little birds and we are much more valuable than they are, so we don't need to fear being forgotten by Him. **What does that show about God? If we truly believed God knows us really well how would we live?**

"Acknowledge Christ" (Luke 12: 8-12)

Jesus shares that what God is looking for at judgement is whether or not someone denied the Son of Man and the work of the Holy Spirit. **What are specific ways to acknowledge Jesus in our lives?**

REFLECTION QUESTION:

While God's judgment is definitely serious, Jesus proved that we are not forgotten and valued by His death on the cross for all of humanity's sin. This gives his followers confidence in the face of persecution and even death. **Have you been feeling valued or forgotten lately by God? Ask God to remind you of His love for you and to give you confidence He is with you.**

Valued

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-7 Lar: OpUnity. Start Pnt. C@R. Found. Men's. Good News Club.
- B. Slide 8 Chad Robichaux/Save Our Allies movie, Bev Hills.
- C. Prayer:

II. Slide9 Intro: Valued

- A. Jesus' fame is now growing but so is His opposition and publicity.
- B. Jesus moves from *warning the Pharisees* to warning His followers.
- C. (from 12:1 to 13:9) The base theme is ... *There is a coming judgment!*
- D. But also we will look at our Value. *Which would you place of more value on ... \$300,000 or 3 oranges?*
 - 1. Major A. H. Peuchen (Canadian businessman & Yachtsman aboard the Titanic) Left \$300,000 in money, jewelry and securities in a box in his cabin. He said, "*The money seemed a mockery at that time ... I picked up 3 oranges instead.*" How do you place value on someone or something? How does God?
- E. Slide10 READ all 12:1-12.

III. Slide11a BEWARE OF PHARISAICAL YEAST (1-3) Hypocrisy (Kristyn/Admin Assist)

- A. In 2020 many home bakers went from using the *active dry yeast packets* (which were no longer available) to Wild Yeast (natural leaven) which is a combo of water and flour that uses *the wild yeast in the environment* and leads to *fermentation*, to create a living organism that leavens bread (sourdough).
 - 1. So Jesus says, *beware of the leaven of the pharisees*, or beware of their *pharisaical yeast*, which will get in you and start to *ferment* into *hypocrisy* in your life.
 - a) *Hypocrisy* = play acting, never genuine.

B. Listen, if that's who you *hang around*, that's what you *listen to*, you're gonna be like them, you will have the same traits.

1. What are the traits? Well, they are all about hiding: Hiding *who they are*. Hiding *their true self*. Hiding *behind a religious mask*, so people will think they are *more holy* than they really are.
2. But God knows ... He knows each of us intimately! *Listen to the this ...*
 - a) **Slide11b** Heb. 4:12,13 *For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires. 13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable.*
3. Beware of wild pharisaical yeast, *it starts small, it spreads, and eventually affects all of who you are.*

IV. Slide12a **REORIENT YOUR FEARS (4,5)** *RE-READ Fear God*

A. Everyone has fears, fear the right thing. Reorient your fears.

B. Man's power over man is strictly limited to this life. A man can destroy another man's life but not a soul. Don't fear *physical* death but *spiritual* death, *the 2nd death*.

1. Rev.20:6 *Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the **second death** has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.*
Then in 20:14 *Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the **second death**, the lake of fire.*

C. **Slide12b** Get the mindset of 2 Cor.4:17,18 *For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, 18 as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are **transient**, but the things that are unseen are **eternal**.*

1. **Slide12c** Friends, how do we endure these afflictions? By holding onto these 2 truths: 1) *your life* is not your own. 2) *this life* is not all that there is

D. So telling them *do not fear those who kill the body* (4) Was this an important statement to the 1st century believers? *Yes!*

1. **Slide 13** **Matthew** suffered martyrdom by being slain with a sword in Ethiopia. **Mark** died at Alexandria, after being cruelly dragged through the streets. **Luke** was hanged on an olive tree in Greece. **John** was put into a caldron of boiling oil, escaped death in a miraculous manner, & afterwards banished to Patmos. **Peter** was crucified upside down at Rome. **James the Greater** was beheaded at Jerusalem. **James the Less** was thrown from a lofty pinnacle of the temple, and then beaten to death with a fuller's club. **Philip** was hanged up against a pillar at Hierapolis in Phrygia. **Bartholomew** was flayed alive. **Andrew** was bound to a cross, where he preached to his persecutors until he died. **Thomas** was run through with a lance at Coromandel in the East Indies. **Jude** was shot to death with arrows. **Matthias** was first stoned, and then beheaded. **Barnabas** of the Gentiles was stoned to death by the Jews at Salonika. **Paul** after various tortures and persecutions was at length beheaded at Rome by the Emperor Nero.

a) *For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.*

E. Don't be bluffed into *silence* or *insecurity* by the threats of *religious bullies*. msg

F. (5) *Hell* is real, but *temporary*. *Gehenna* is real, but *eternal* -

1. And since **God** is **holy**, **omniscient** (all knowing), **omnipotent** (powerful), **omnipresent** (everywhere present), He is the only one qualified to sentence someone there.

2. **Now** there are many who do not like this idea that the bible teaches eternal punishment,

a) **Annihilation Theory**: if you die outside of Christ there is no punishment, you just cease to exist. Sounds more palatable, **but then this warning would make no sense at all.**

3. But Jesus says this *not out of malice but* out of love, warning those He loves. He knows this is heavy so He follows it up with *comfort*.

V. Slide14 NOT FORGOTTEN & OF MORE VALUE (6,7) READ

A. *Fearing you are worthless* is the opposite of hypocrisy (i.e. *I'm better than I am*).

B. Here we read that 5 sparrows sold for 2 pennies; in Matthews account 2 sparrows for 1 penny. Put these together *if you buy 4 sparrows ... you get 1 free!* :) Lk's blue lite sp

1. But even *that 1 free sparrow* does not fall w/o God noticing.

a) It's free, let's just give this 1 away, who cares? God cares.

b) Or we can say, God attends the funeral of every sparrow.

C. *Hairs on your head numbered* - they say the average head has about *100,000 strands of hair* on it.

1. Have you ever counted the hair on your head? What this is showing is that *God knows things about you that you don't even know about yourself*. He knows the *intimate intricate details* of who you are!

D. So He tells us to *fear Him* (5) and to *fear not* (7). *To fear or not to fear, that is the question.*

1. Well, we are to *fear him* in reverence, yet *fear not* in judgment (*assurance* in Him who is *mighty to save*).

E. Slide15a **Valued:** You are *important* to God. You are *precious* in His sight. You are *never lost in the crowd*. *If He provides for the least of His creatures, how much more for His most esteemed creatures.*

1. Our identity becomes shaken when we place it in the hands of *imperfect people*. But when our identity is in the hands of *a loving and perfect God*, nothing can move us.

2. Who can put a value on you when the Most High God made you? God calls you *His poeima/poetry, His masterpiece*. The God of this universe calls you *His own*.

- a) When you place your value on what *others* say about you, you are like a **famous painter asking** a person *who doesn't even have the skills to paint what his painting is worth.*
3. Slide15b Saadi *Persian Poet* asked, *If a gem falls into mud it is still valuable*
4. We all long to be valued, accepted, prized, to be worth something to somebody, to have a life that matters. **And then** you find out God said, *You matter! I didn't make anyone else like you. You're not a reprint, you are a one-of-a-kind, an original creation, stamped by none other than ME!*
5. **God made you in His image. He declares your worth. He has made you accepted in the beloved.**
- F. **Illust:** There was a man who loved old books. He met an acquaintance who had just thrown away a Bible that had been stored in the attic of his ancestral home for generations. *"I couldn't read it,"* the friend explained. *"Somebody named **Guten-something** had printed it."* *"Not Gutenberg!"* the book lover exclaimed in horror. *"That Bible was one of the first books ever printed. Why, a copy just sold for over two million dollars!"* His friend was unimpressed. *"Mine wouldn't have brought a dollar. Some fellow named **Martin Luther** had scribbled all over it in German."*
1. **God's name** scribbled all over **you** brings you worth!
 2. **And You** written all over **God's hands** brings you worth.
See, I have written your name on the palms of my hands. Is.49:16

VI. Slide16a **ACKNOWLEDGE CHRIST (8-12) READ**

- A. (8,9) This explains what our *disposition* should be towards God.
1. Not merely acknowledging His existence. **It encompasses confession and profession.**
 2. Slide16b Jesus encourages them *not to be afraid* but to **acknowledge** their faith publicly. *"Faith is a crow which loves to perch on scarecrows."*
- B. (10) We all criticized **Christ** (this was our default position pre-salvation). **It's different** from *the blasphemy of HS* [aka *unpardonable sin*].

- C. There have been *several interpretations* of this. I believe these 2 are the best.
1. **Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit** is attributing the miracles of Christ & the power of the HS *to the power of Satan* (which seems to be the context of Mt & Mark)
 2. **Slide16c Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit** is the **persistent and relentless rejection** of the sealing work of the Holy Spirit.
 - a) Focus that is not on a single moment but on the totality of one's life.
 - b) *Eg. Acts 7:51 NLT You stubborn people! You are heathen at heart and deaf to the truth. **Must you forever resist the Holy Spirit?** That's what your ancestors did, and so do you!*
- D. **Not be forgiven** - **God** has not shut him out, **but** by his repeated refusals **he** has shut himself out.
1. **That is what happened to the scribes and Pharisees.** They had so blinded and deafened themselves to God that when He came, they called him the devil. (11:15)
- E. The one man who can never have committed *the unforgivable sin* is **the man who fears that he has**. For once a man has committed it, *he is so dead to God that he is conscious of no sin at all.*
- F. (11,12) **Do not be anxious on how to defend yourself or what you should say** -
1. **What is our reaction to persecution?** He helps with our *outward response* (what to say) in our *inner attitude* (anxiety).
- G. **At age 16 Andor Foldes** was already a skilled pianist, but he was experiencing a **troubled year**. In the midst of the young *Hungarian's* personal struggles, one of the most renowned pianists of the day came to *Budapest*. **Emil von Sauer** was famous not only for his abilities; he was also the last surviving pupil of the great **Franz Liszt**. **Von Sauer** requested that **Foldes** play for him. **Foldes** obliged with some of the most difficult works of **Bach, Beethoven, and Schumann**. When he finished, **Von Sauer** walked over to him and **kissed him on the forehead**. "My son," he said, "*when I was your age I became a student of Liszt. He kissed me on the forehead*"

after my first lesson, saying, 'Take good care of this kiss - it comes from **Beethoven**, who gave it to me after hearing me play.' I have waited for years to pass on this sacred heritage, but now I feel you deserve it."

1. **God the Father has Kissed you** with His thoughts toward you. *How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand.* Ps.139:17,18
2. **Jesus has kissed you** sweet saint with value & worth.
3. **The Holy Spirit has kissed you** with His love poured into your hearts.

H. **Will you pass on His Kiss?**

I. Keywords: Fear, hell, Holy Spirit.