

The Gospel Experienced Personally and Declared Boldly

Luke 12:1-7

We are called by Christ to be ambassadors for His Kingdom, salt and light in this world, and messengers of Good News to those lost and without hope. Why do we hesitate to share the Good News with others? It is either because: 1. *We personally don't understand it*; or 2. *We're afraid of other peoples' responses*. The Gospel is a contraction of two words **Good Spell** which literally means "captivatingly good news." The Old English word "*spellian*" means "to talk." The Gospel is good news that is to be shared with others. It flows from a one transformed through hearing and believing the Good News of Jesus Christ. Do I lack Gospel enthusiasm? If so, it's not a lack of commitment as much as a lack of personal joy in the experience. When we experience and enjoy the Good News *personally*, we will communicate and proclaim it *boldly*.

I. The dangerous problem in every one of us is hypocrisy – "*the leaven of the Pharisees...*" (v. 1).

The word "hypocrite" comes from ancient Greek theater where an actor would "hide" behind a mask. The Greek word *hupo* (behind) and *crite* (standard; or "wooden mask") speaks of an actor who may be behind a mask that shows anger; or sorrow; or any other emotion; but it is all "playacting" at life. The Pharisees were playacting at a religion; but in reality their hearts were far from God. "Beware..."

A. Hypocrisy is like leaven – it spreads. It doesn't take long for hypocrisy in religion to spread to playacting in relationships. The opposite of hypocrisy is "intimacy." Into-me-you-see.

B. And it keeps me out of heaven – "There is nothing covered up that will not be revealed" (v. 2).

Where in the context is anything covered up? Luke 11:44. Pharisees are like concealed tombs.

The heart of the human problem is the problem of the human heart. God must make us alive.

The Good News is God "will give you a new heart and a new spirit" (Ezekiel 36:26; Ephesians 2:5).

The Day of Judgment is the awful and solemn day when hearts are revealed. "Depart from me."

Every warning in the Bible for lives being exposed on that Day *is an encouragement to trust Christ*.

II. The Gospel is our only hope to escape God's judgment – "*proclaim it from housetops*" (v. 3).

I would like to show you something that most people miss in reading Luke 12:1-7. What is hidden

in v. 2 (deadness within) is opposite of what "*is spoken in the dark; whispered in inner rooms*" (v. 3).

The former is the "leaven of the Pharisees," but the latter "is the gospel of God's grace in Christ."

You hear it (God loves sinners; Christ came to save sinners; the Holy Spirit transforms sinners), and then you believe. Christ said, "What I whisper in your ear, proclaim it from housetops" (Matt. 10:27).

We may come in fear at first (Nicodemus came to Christ at night; Paul, Peter, Cornelius, etc...), but

after experiencing the transforming power of Christ in our hearts; we will want to shout about Him.

III. What keeps me silent in the midst of my joy is the fear of man – "*Do not fear*" (v. 7).

The emotion of fear is like a clogged sewer line; it must be pushed out by something much stronger.

There is either the fear of man or there is the fear of God. I either fear God or I will fear man.

A. The power of man pales in comparison to the power of God – Luke 12:4-5.

Yes, men may be able to kill my body, but after that, they are finished. God alone "after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell." *God uses evil means to bring about His good purposes.*

B. The love of man pales in comparison to the love of God – Luke 12:6-7.

It's one thing to believe in an all-powerful God, but in order for me not to "not fear" man, I must believe that this sovereign, all-powerful King of Kings really and truly cares for me personally.

He knows every hair on my head; I'm infinitely more valuable to Him than the sparrows.

So what's missing? Do I need faith in Christ? Do I need to know His love and power more fully?