

The Good News About Jesus as Luke Wrote It

Chapter 12:1-59

HoneyBee base version for oral translation

September 2023 Draft¹

Background

- Jesus could speak to 1000s by standing where his voice sounded louder. The 12 may also have repeated his messages to different sections of a crowd.
- Families who gathered on their flat roof tops during evening hours could shout news to each other.
- All Jewish hearers would understand that “the one who has authority to cast into hell” is God, whom to fear is wisdom (Prov 1:7).
- Sparrows were one of the cheapest items sold for poor people’s food in the marketplace and were the smallest of all birds.
- In many Jewish accounts, the heavenly court consisted of angels.
- Synagogues functioned as meeting places for Jewish local courts.
- Jewish people viewed the Holy Spirit to be a spirit of prophetic inspiration and empowerment.
- People often called upon rabbis to settle legal disputes.
- Most poor people owned some property, a house, a field, an animal.
- Keeping lamps lit and burning required a ready supply of oil and staying awake.
- At the Roman festival of Saturnalia, masters served their servants.
- Jews divided the night into three watches.
- Wind from the West brought rain from the sea, wind from the South brought heat from the desert.
- Those who owed taxes to the government could be imprisoned until family or friends paid the debt.

History

- Jesus’ popularity grew amongst the poor people of Galilee, as he met their health needs, and humiliated arrogant, non-repentant religious leaders and rich landowners.

Themes

- “The Holy Spirit will teach you what to say.”
- “Seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.”
- “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”
- “God will require/expect much from everyone to whom he has given much.”

Jesus warns against hypocrisy and encourages fearless faith²

¹ Although law teachers and Pharisees opposed Jesus, people came in big crowds to see and hear him. There were so many people that they were stepping on each other. Then Jesus said to his disciples,

¹ Licensed for use under Creative Commons. Text in *italics* is implied from historical or cultural context. Superscripted ^(pl) means plural, ^(sg) singular, ^(inc) inclusive, ^(exc) exclusive pronoun.

² OR Do not be like the hypocritical religious leaders! Rather, be courageous, not fearful!

“Do not become hypocrites like the Pharisees. Their evil hypocrisy spreads to others as yeast spreads in bread dough.² People will not always be able to hide the things that they *have stolen*. And God will someday/eventually expose to everyone every evil thing that people do in secret. Someday, everyone will hear clearly everything evil thing that you^(pl) said in dark places. And everybody will hear in public all the wicked secrets that you^(pl) whispered in closed rooms.

⁴ My friends, listen carefully. Do not fear people who are able to kill you, because after they kill you, there is nothing more that they can do to harm you. ⁵ But I warn you: fear God, because after he kills you, he has power to throw you into hell! Yes, God is the only one whom you should fear! ⁶ You know that sparrows³ are worth so little that you can buy five sparrows for only two small coins. But God remembers⁴ them all *and cares for them!* ⁷ You are worth more to God than many sparrows. God even knows how many hairs you have on your head. So, do not fear what people can do to you!

⁸ Please listen carefully. If you tell/admit to others that you are my disciples, then I, who am the Divine Human Son, will tell to God and to his angels that you are my disciples. ⁹ But if you deny to others⁵ that you are my disciples, then I will deny to God and to his angels that you are⁶ my disciples. ¹⁰ I also want you to know that if someone says wrong things about/against me, (*because I say that I am*) the Divine Human Son, God is willing to forgive that person. But if someone speaks against God’s Holy Spirit,⁷ then God will not forgive that person.

¹¹ Synagogue leaders, local rulers, or Roman authorities may arrest you because you are my disciples. When they do that, do not worry about how you will answer them when they accuse you. Do not worry about what you should say to them, ¹² because the Holy Spirit will tell you, at that very time, what you should say.”

Jesus warns his disciples about greed and commends trust in God⁸

¹³ Then someone in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, tell my *older* brother to give me my part from our family inheritance!” ¹⁴ But Jesus replied to him, “My friend, nobody hired me *as an arbitrator/lawyer* to decide about how to divide or to distribute your family inheritance.”

¹⁵ Then he said to the whole crowd, “Watch out! Guard yourselves from⁹ becoming greedy, desiring more things or more money. You can never make your life happier or more secure by obtaining many possessions.” ¹⁶ Then Jesus told the people this parable:

“There was a certain rich man whose crops grew very well. ¹⁷ So he said to himself, ‘I do not know what to do, because I do not have any place big enough to store all my crops!’ ¹⁸ Then he thought to himself, ‘I know what I shall do! I shall tear down my *small* grain bins and build larger ones! Then I will store all my wheat and other things in the big new bins. ¹⁹ Then I shall say to

³ OR small birds. OR finches. (If you do not have sparrows, you may use your name for another common little bird (e.g. chickadee, wren, finch, swallow.)

⁴ OR never forgets. OR knows/thinks about.

⁵ OR you say to others that you are not.

⁶ OR I will say to God and to his angels that you are not.

⁷ OR says that the Holy Spirit is the devil. See Mark 3:28-29.

⁸ OR Do not be greedy! Trust God to provide for you!

⁹ OR Be careful! Avoid. OR Be alert like a soldier guarding a gate! Do not allow yourselves to.

myself, “I have now stored up enough food and possessions to last for many years. I shall enjoy life,¹⁰ eating, drinking, and doing whatever I want to do!”

²⁰ But God said to him, ‘You *are a* foolish man!¹¹ Tonight you will die! Then all the things that you have stored up for yourself will belong to someone else, not to you!’”

²¹ *Jesus ended this parable by saying, “This is what will happen to all those people who store up things on earth just/only for themselves, but who are not rich with God’s generous love.”*¹²

²² Then Jesus said to his disciples,

“So I want to tell you this: Do not worry about things that you need in order to live. Do not worry¹³ about whether you will have enough food to eat or enough clothes to wear. ²³ Your life is more important than having more food, and your body is more important than wearing nice clothes.

²⁴ Think about the birds: They do not plant seeds, and they do not harvest crops. They do not have rooms or buildings in which to store crops. But God provides food for them. And because you^(pl) are much more valuable *to God* than birds, *God will provide what you need!*²⁵ You cannot add any time/years to your life¹⁴ by worrying about it! ²⁶ So, since worrying cannot add to your life time, you should also stop worrying about other things.

²⁷ Think about the way that pretty flowers¹⁵ grow. They do not work to earn money, and they do not make their own clothes. Remember King Solomon, *who lived long ago*. Although he wore beautiful clothes, his clothes were not as beautiful as one pretty flower. ²⁸ *You^(pl) women* cut dry grass and burn it in your cooking stove. Although grass does not live very long, God gives it pretty flowers. So God will also give to you the clothes that you need, even if you have only a little faith in him.

²⁹ Stop being concerned about finding enough to eat and to drink, and stop worrying about those things. ³⁰ *Do not be like non-believers* in every nation who are always concerned about finding such things. Instead, trust your Father in heaven who knows that you need those things.

³¹ Instead, be passionate about obeying me,¹⁶ because I am the Messiah, the King whom God promised to send to you. Then God will also give to you the things that you need.

³² Although you who are my disciples are like a small sheep flock now, your Father in heaven wants to make you kings over the whole world. ³³ So go sell all your possessions, and give to poor people the money that you get for those things. If you do so, then you will have everlasting rewards safe in heaven. These will be like purses that no insect can harm, filled with money that

¹⁰ OR live an easy life.

¹¹ OR stupid. OR a fool.

¹² OR himself filled full with God. OR earning rewards from God in heaven.

¹³ OR Stop worrying.

¹⁴ OR make your life last/continue a little longer.

¹⁵ OR lilly (lilies). (You may translate “pretty flower” more specifically as the name for one of the specific flowers that grow in your area that everybody is familiar with.)

¹⁶ OR obeying me and inviting other people to obey/worship me. OR making God’s Kingdom be filled with many people and be bountiful / good / peaceful / fruitful. (The Greek says “seek God’s kingdom”.)

no thief can steal. ³⁴ Then you will always be thinking about the everlasting rewards/treasures that God has for you in heaven.

Be ready!¹⁷

³⁵ “Always be like servants who are dressed for work, and who keep their night lamps burning.

³⁶ They are waiting for their master to return from a wedding feast *lasting several days*. And they must be ready to serve him as soon as he arrives and knocks at the door. ³⁷ If those servants are awake when their master returns, he will be very pleased with them. I promise you this: He will put on work clothes, he will tell his servants to sit down, and he will serve to them a meal. ³⁸ If that master comes sometime between midnight and dawn, and finds his servants ready to serve him, then he will praise those servants.

³⁹ Think about this: If a house owner knew what time at night a thief was coming, he would stay awake and would not allow that thief to break in and *steal his things*. So, *if servants are ready, then they are doing no more than what their master would do*. ⁴⁰ So, you also must be ready for me to return, because I am¹⁸ the Divine Human Son who came from heaven, and I will come again *from heaven* at a time when you do not expect me to come.”

⁴¹ Peter asked, “Lord, do you tell this parable only for us disciples? Or is it for everyone else also?” ⁴² The Lord replied,

“I tell this parable for anyone who is like a wise, faithful servant who wants his master to appoint/trust him to manage his other servants and to *do things such as* give the other servants their food¹⁹ at the proper time, *while the master is gone away on a long trip*. ⁴³ If that servant is doing his work well when his master returns, then his master will be very pleased with him.

⁴⁴ You can be sure that his master will put him in charge over all his possessions.²⁰

⁴⁵ But if that servant thinks to himself, ‘My master probably will not return soon’, then he might start to beat/abuse the other servants, both male and female ones. He might also start to eat too much food and to drink till he gets drunk. ⁴⁶ So if his master returns on a day when the servant does not expect him, then his master will punish him severely.²¹ The master will then banish that wicked/bad servant to a place with other dishonored unfaithful servants because the master no longer trusts him.

⁴⁷ If a servant knows what his master wants him to do, but does not get himself ready, or does not do what his master desires, then his master will beat him severely.²² ⁴⁸ But if a servant did

¹⁷ OR Jesus instructs his disciple to be ready for his return, commending those who endure opposition.

¹⁸ OR return. I am.

¹⁹ OR what they need.

²⁰ OR all that he owns. OR all his household activities and affairs.

²¹ OR will cut him off from himself and his work. OR will cut off his arms and legs. (Here the Greek text says literally “he will cut him in pieces”. Various interpretations on this include: (1) this a hyperbolic figure of speech that means very severe punishment; (2) this is an idiom that means being cut off or banished from the master’s presence and work place; (3) this should be understood literally (which would result in death.)

²² OR beat him many times.

not know what his master wanted him to do, and so did things for which he deserved to be punished, then his master will beat him lightly.²³ *In the same way, when I return from heaven, I will judge/decide about everyone.* I require obedience from those who know my commandments. And I demand faithful service from those whom I trust to care for *my other disciples.*”

Jesus’ message will cause divisions among people²⁴

“I came from heaven to remove evil from the earth, in the way that fire burns up grass. I strongly wish that I could do so now,⁵⁰ but I must first be baptized with suffering and death.²⁵ I am strongly committed to complete/finish all that I must suffer.⁵¹ Do you think that I came from heaven to cause people to live together peacefully? I did not!²⁶ Because I have come, some people will be divided from other people.²⁷

⁵² Some people in one house will believe in me, and others will not. In a house where five people live, two may believe and three will not believe, or three may believe and two will not believe.

⁵³ A man will oppose his son, or a son will oppose his father. A woman will oppose her daughter, or a woman will oppose her mother. A woman will oppose her daughter-in-law, or a woman will oppose her mother-in-law.”

⁵⁴ Jesus also said to the crowds,

“In this country, when you see a dark cloud forming in the west, you immediately say ‘It is going to rain!’ and that is what happens.⁵⁵ In this region, when the wind blows from the south, you say, ‘It is going to be a very hot day!’ and that is what happens.⁵⁶ By observing the clouds and the wind, you are able to discern what is happening regarding the weather. But because you are hypocrites, you are not able to discern *who I am and what God is doing* at this present time.

⁵⁷ That is why you cannot decide what is the right thing for you to do *now while you still have time to do so.* *God will one day judge you for what you have done and for what you say about me. So do with God what you do with someone who accuses you. So do with God what you do with someone who accuses you.*⁵⁸ When someone wants to accuse you^(sg) before a court judge, you should try to settle things with him before you go to court. If he forces you to go before the judge, then the judge may decide against you and order the court officer to arrest you. Then that officer will put you in prison.⁵⁹ You can be sure that if you go to prison, you will never get out, until you pay all that the judge says you owe. *Similarly, you ought to repent from your sins and believe in me before you die. Otherwise, you will never be released from hell.*

²³ OR Jesus warns everyone that trouble is coming, and commends those who do what is right.

²⁴ OR The foolish religious leaders.

²⁵ OR first I must experience severe suffering as I die. OR I must first suffer and die. (Here, Jesus uses “baptized” in a figurative way. It means ‘an overwhelming experience’. It does not have anything to do with water. If using baptism as a metaphor might be confusing to your people, then omit the metaphor and just say the meaning.)

²⁶ OR Certainly, I did not come from heaven to cause people to live together peacefully!

²⁷ OR will be in conflict with other people. OR will oppose other people.