

When Good Things Become Bad Distractions

Luke 12:1-21

Being distracted is so easy! Jesus points out one overarching idea by highlighting two problematic attitudes that can distract a disciple.

2 attitudes that will distract you as a disciple:

1. A **fearful** approach to what others **think** will keep you from **fearing** God.
2. A **selfish** approach to the accumulation of **wealth** will keep you from a God-honoring use of resources.

Fear God Not Man - Luke 12:1-12

Jesus discusses the issue of whom to fear because the world's rejection for identifying with Him is a real prospect!

- An effort to maintain popularity (aka - Fear Of Man) easily leads to **hypocrisy** and/or **heresy**.
- God knows **everything** about us and will eventually reveal it.
- A being who knows all our secrets and has authority over eternity should be **feared**.
- To fear the multitude and turn away from God is to make the wrong choice.
- The fear of God can bring incredible comfort regardless of circumstance.

Be Rich Toward God - Luke 12:13-21

Jesus addresses the issue of possessions and wealth because comfort pursued through possessions and wealth can lead us to neglect the pursuit of God.

- **Greed** can cut through relationships.
- We are going to have to **reject** the cultural assertion that life consists of the abundance of possessions.
- Acquiring wealth is not the problem.
- The attitude of acquiring wealth for our own **ease** and **comfort** is the problem.
- Don't pursue riches only to put pennies toward **godly** pursuits.

Key Idea: Look to God and pursue Him with an **undistracted** eye.

Application

- **Respect** for God and His knowledge of us means we can live life like an open book. We can have nothing to hide.
- **Confess** and **repent** of worldly attitudes toward money.

Invest in the Kingdom by putting **money** forward in Kingdom pursuits.

Luke Chapter 12

Reading and Study Guide

Bible Reading

- Read Luke 12
Or
- If you want to listen to it you can visit our Facebook page or our Vimeo page - NewStoryKC

Quick Review

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or something that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

Personal Study

Read Luke 12:1-12 - Aaron talked about the fear of the Lord versus the fear of man this past weekend. It seems weird to talk about fearing the Lord. Ed Welch wrote the following:

"The basic idea is that the Lord is with us and he is also over us. He is the great and Holy God and is to be feared. This is a good fear because whatever we fear controls us. When we fear the Lord, we are controlled by him and his words. In short, we do what he says. We can pick out his voice from all the competition. And we certainly need to hear it. When we bow to sinful temptations, we usually ignore the Lord or justify ourselves with "this will be the last time." To stand against strong temptations, we need something quite powerful. God's voice is perfect for such times. It strikes fear in our hearts."

What is your reaction to the above statement?

This week, we recommend you consider reading this short article about the fear of the Lord.
<https://www.ccef.org/the-fear-of-the-lord-for-today/>

What can you put into practice based on this description of fearing the Lord.

Read Luke 13-21. Jesus takes time to warn his disciples about another distraction - the accumulation of wealth for your own comfort and ease. This text calls for self-examination. How do I tend to feel about what God has given to me? Is it mine? Am I steward of what has come my way? Am I generous? Do I take the things that God has given to me and store them up for my own purposes? Do I seek to grab what others have?

Read Luke 12:22-34 This section is really all about our attitude toward our daily needs. If we are fearing God (realizing who He is and that He is over us - He is great) - then we have nothing to fear. God is in the business of caring for needs and we are to use what we have to care for others as well. Check out Zacchaeus' response of faith and trust in Luke 19:

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. **2** A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. **3** He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. **4** So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. **5** When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." **6** So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. **7** All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner." **8** But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." **9** Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. **10** For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

What would this type of trust require in your life right now? Is there a step that you can take toward trusting God like that?

Read Luke 12:35-48. To fear God means that we must be prepared to and engaged in serving. Here Jesus teaches us about eschatology (future things) - not to inform us of the details of the future but to prepare us to serve God faithfully today. We serve and we wait.

Where do you struggle to serve the most - inside the church? At work? In the home? In your neighborhood? Toward those who have offended you?

This week we want to recommend several books to you on the subjects of distractions to following God - fear of man and unwise stewardship. These books are available for purchase online and in your bookstores.

- When People Are Big and God Is Small - By Edward Welch
- What Do You Think Of Me? Why Do I Care? - By Edward Welch
- The Treasure Principle - By Randy Alcorn