

# CAPITOL STUDIES

MAY 14, 2025 • WEEK 18



## LUKE FOR LEGISLATORS

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### *Theme Verse*

Luke 19:10

For the Son of Man has come to **seek** and to **save** that which was **lost**.



## Winning Over Worry



SOMEONE IN THE CROWD SAID TO HIM, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.” <sup>14</sup>But He said to him, “Man, who appointed Me a judge or arbitrator over you?” <sup>15</sup>Then He said to them, “Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.” <sup>16</sup>And He told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man was very productive. <sup>17</sup>And he began reasoning to himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?’ <sup>18</sup>Then he said, ‘This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. <sup>19</sup>And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.”’ <sup>20</sup>But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?’ <sup>21</sup>So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God” (Luke 12:13-21).<sup>1</sup>

*Arin Hess*

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## INTRODUCTION

“[T]his secular humanist *mistook time for eternity*. He was evidently still a young man. He assured himself that he had ‘many years,’ but he was going to be dead before daybreak. Even as he was gloating over his fortune and his future full of fun and frolics, looking again and again at his bankbook and his balance sheet, the voice of God rang forth. God had been looking at the balance sheet that *He* was keeping of this man’s life. He wrote across the whole thing one word—*Bankrupt!* ‘Thou fool...,’ He said, ‘So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God’ (12:21 KJV).”<sup>2</sup>

Everything we have belongs to God. We must hold it with open hands so that He may have it at any moment. Treasure here on earth is temporary. Treasure in heaven is eternal. “[S]tore up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matt. 6:19-21). “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.” – Jim Elliot

The hand is the obedient and obliging agent of the human heart. The greed of a selfish, closed heart causes us to hold things with a clenched hand. The gratefulness of a compassionate, open heart reveals itself in a generous, extended hand. “The parable of the rich fool demonstrates the dangers of covetousness and of not recognizing that our resources are merely gifts from God to be used for his service.”<sup>3</sup> In the next portion of Luke 12, Jesus assures His disciples that if their hearts are open to Him and their gifts are given for His use, they will never lack. He will always provide for their needs.

## I. WORRY IS DESTRUCTIVE

*Luke 12-22-24*

*And He said to His disciples, “For this reason I say to you, do not worry about your life, as to what you will eat; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. <sup>23</sup>For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. <sup>24</sup>Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap; they have no storeroom nor barn, and yet God feeds them; how much more valuable you are than the birds!”*

The word translated “worry” in Luke 12:22 can mean “to be torn apart” or “to strangle,” and the phrase “doubtful mind” (Luke 12:29) means “to be held in suspense.” “It is the picture of a ship being tossed in a storm. ‘Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow,’ said Corrie Ten Boom; ‘it empties today of its strength.’”<sup>4</sup>

“Consider the ravens, God feeds them. In antiquity ravens were considered careless creatures that even failed to return to their own nests. For the Israelites they were unclean birds forbidden to be eaten and so of little value. Yet the Old Testament says that God cares for them.”<sup>5</sup> (See, e.g., Lev. 11:15; Deut. 14:14; Ps. 147:9; Job 38:41.)



*Luke 12:25-26*

*And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life's span?*

*<sup>26</sup>If then you cannot do even a very little thing, why do you worry about other matters?*

"The Greek here is odd, reading literally 'add a single cubit to his length.' A cubit was a unit of measure of about eighteen inches.... The term for 'length' can mean either 'life span' or 'height.'" <sup>6</sup> Either way, worrying about it is pointless. "We fret over matters that are not our responsibility.... We fuss over what we cannot change." <sup>7</sup> Why?

*Philippians 4:6-7*

*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

*Luke 12:27*

*Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; but I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these.*

"The 'lily' here has been identified with various flowers.... Perhaps the most interesting suggestion is that it is the purple anemone, which is then contrasted with the royal purple of Solomon's robes." <sup>8</sup> "Solomon was the most flamboyant of Israel's kings. He was well known for his costly array. Even the queen of Sheba was overwhelmed at his magnificence. The Lord plucked a wayside weed and held it up for the disciples to see. What was the essential difference between a hedgerow flower and Solomon's vaunted splendor? Simply this: the glory of the lily grows from within; Solomon's glory was all put on from the outside. God, who so arrays the transient, short-lived little flower, can surely be trusted to provide for His own." <sup>9</sup>

## II. WORRY IS DECEPTIVE

"[Worry] gives us a false view of life, of itself, and of God. Worry convinces us that life is made up of what we eat and what we wear. We get so concerned about the means that we totally forget about the end, which is to glorify God (Matt. 6:33 'But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you'). There is a great difference between making a living and making a life." <sup>10</sup>

*Luke 12:28*

*But if God so clothes the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you? You men of little faith!*

The grass that grew in the land of Israel would quickly die once it was cut. Then it was used to start their fires. Seemingly insignificant and worthless, the grass in the fields was planted and kept by God. God's child is infinitely more valuable than grass, so why do we act as if we don't believe that?





### III. WORRY IS DEFORMATIVE

“[Worry] keeps us from growing and it makes us like the unsaved in the world (Luke 12:30). In short, worry is unchristian; worry is a sin. How can we witness to a lost world and encourage them to put faith in Jesus Christ if we ourselves are doubting God and worrying? Is it not inconsistent to preach faith and yet not practice it? The late chaplain of the U.S. Senate, Peter Marshall, once prayed ‘that ulcers would not become the badge of our faith’ Too often they are!”<sup>11</sup>

*Luke 12:29-30*

*And do not seek what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not keep worrying. <sup>30</sup>For all these things the nations of the world eagerly seek; but your Father knows that you need these things.*

“There is a broad application of this truth to all would-be disciples of Jesus in today’s culture, because modern culture is neurotic about food, drink, and clothing. TV ads feed our neuroses with alluring images of lithe legs in jeans and painted lips ecstatically downing chips and prunes and libations. Perhaps nothing does this better than airline magazines with their sumptuous beaux [fine] arts ads for champagne, antiques, carpets, watches, and ‘esoteric shopping sprees in Rome.’ Every product imaginable for the body is promoted—how to tan it, massage it, pamper it, clothe it, drug it, and stimulate it.<sup>12</sup> It’s not wrong to own things so long as things don’t own you.

### IV. HOW DO WE WIN OVER WORRY?

#### A. Resolve to Put God’s Kingdom First in Everything

*Luke 12:31*

*But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you.*

Look at earth from heaven’s point of view. Fix your thoughts on the eternal. Then God’s peace will guard your minds and hearts.

#### B. Realize that God Knows Your Needs and Will Provide

*Luke 12:32*

*Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom.*

We are His sheep, His children, His servants; He cares about us. We are part of the Father’s flock (Ps. 23:1; Matt. 26:31; Jn. 10:12-16). We have a Shepherd who knows us by name and will lead us all the way home.

#### C. Rehearse All He Has Done and Is Doing for You

He is a loving Father. “Our Father never stops thinking of us, planning for us, giving to us. Our Father is a living God and a giving God. He knows what is best for us and is resolved to bestow it on us. He has already given us His Word. He has given us His Son. He has given us His Spirit. He has given us His salvation, full and free. He has given us all things that ‘pertain unto life and godliness’ [2 Peter 1:3].”<sup>13</sup>





## D. Reflect on Your Amazing Future

It is His pleasure to give you the *Kingdom* (Rom. 8:32). That's why we should seek it and pray for it to come. We should lay up our treasures there. How can we do that?

## E. Ready Yourself for Heaven

*Luke 12:33*

*Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves money belts which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near nor moth destroys.*

**Love in the right way:** This does not mean that we are to get rid of all that we own, but neither should we have an overabundance of things. We are to give when God shows us a need. Giving to others is really giving to God. When we give to God, we lay up treasure in heaven.

*Luke 12:34*

*For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

**Live for the right world:** If we want to have treasure in heaven, we should give to those we know are going there. We should give so that others can go there. People who are involved in Gospel ministry need our support. Together we can make a difference for Christ and lead others to a saving faith in Him.

*Luke 12:35-36*

*Be dressed in readiness, and keep your lamps lit. <sup>36</sup>Be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast, so that they may immediately open the door to him when he comes and knocks.*

**Wait for the Lord:** This “dressed in readiness” is “an idiom referring to the practice of tucking the ends of the long cloak (outer garment) into the belt to shorten it in preparation for activities like running.”<sup>14</sup>

*Luke 12:37*

*Blessed are those slaves whom the master will find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at the table, and will come up and wait on them.*

**Work for the Lord:** A servant (slave) was always looking and ready to please his master. **Are we “on the alert” to please Jesus?** “That Jesus used parables with slaves does not imply that He endorsed slavery. The parables drew on everyday facts of life in the Greco-Roman world and were not intended as social commentary. Jesus’ teaching focused extensively on justice and human dignity, as noted in the Sermon on the Mount.”<sup>15</sup>

“The Master will reward faithful, ready servants.... He will reward and honor them by *serving them* at His table. This parable recalls the great Messianic feast prophesied in Isaiah 25:6-9 [w]hen God will prepare a feast for all the people of every nation who trust Him.”<sup>16</sup>





*Luke 12:38-40*

*Whether he comes in the second watch, or even in the third, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves. <sup>39</sup>But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into. <sup>40</sup>You too, be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect.*

**Watch for the Lord:** The “any moment” return, sometimes called the “immanent return,” of Christ’s second coming is what is referred to here. “Jesus’ return at an unexpected time is not a trap or a trick by which God hopes to catch us off guard. In fact, God is delaying His return so more people will have the opportunity to follow Him (see 2 Peter 3:9). Now, before Jesus’ return, we have time to live out our beliefs and to reflect His love as we relate to others. Because we do not know exactly when Jesus will come, we must live as if it could be today.”<sup>17</sup>

## CONCLUSION

“The saintly Presbyterian pastor Robert Murray McCheyne sometimes asked people, ‘Do you believe that Jesus is coming today?’ If they replied in the negative, he would say, ‘Then you had better be ready, for He is coming at an hour when you think not!’”<sup>18</sup>

**ARE YOU READY? IT MAY BE TODAY!**

Chaplain Arin Hess

## FOOTNOTES

1. All Scripture quotations, unless noted, are taken from the *New American Standard Bible*, 1995 Update.
2. John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of Luke: An Expository Commentary*, Kregel Publications; WORDsearch Corp., 2009.
3. Mark L. Strauss and Clinton E. Arnold, Editors, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Luke*, Zondervan, 2002, pg. 111.
4. Warren Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, Volume 1, Victor Books, 1996, pg. 221.
5. Strauss and Arnold, pg. 113.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Charles R. Swindoll, *Insights on Luke*, Zondervan, 2012, pg. 330-331.
8. Strauss and Arnold, pg. 113.
9. Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of Luke*.
10. Wiersbe, pg. 221-222.
11. *Ibid.*

12. R. Kent Hughes, *Luke: That You May Know the Truth*, Crossway Books, 1998, pg. 51.
13. Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of Luke*.
14. *The NET Bible First Edition Notes*, Biblical Studies Press, 2006, Luke 12:35.
15. *The Apologetics Study Bible: Real Questions, Straight Answers, Stronger Faith*, Holman Bible Publishers, 2007, pg. 1540.
16. *Life Application Study Bible, New King James Version*, Tyndale House Publishers, 2022, pg. 2302.
17. *Ibid*.
18. Wiersbe, pg. 222.

## Personal Study Notes

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### WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

Meeting during the  
109<sup>th</sup> Legislature's  
First Session

#### SENATORS

6:45 – 7:45 A.M.  
Wednesdays  
Capitol Office #1004

#### STAFF

12:00 – 1:00 P.M.  
Wednesdays  
NE State Office Building  
Morrill Room



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