



## World Christian Fellowship

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### Cure for Hypocrisy.

### Fear God!

### Luke 12:1-7.

**Luke 12:1-7**, *In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first of all, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. <sup>2</sup>For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. <sup>3</sup>Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops. <sup>4</sup>"And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. <sup>5</sup>But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!*

<sup>6</sup>"Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. <sup>7</sup>But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

In Luke chapter 11 says that false religion is all hypocrisy.  
False religion does not truly know God.  
It cannot bring someone to God and to His kingdom.

False religion does not provide forgiveness, redemption, it does not empower people to do what is right to please God.

False religion is deception.

It is all lies and hypocrisy.

All false religion is hypocrisy. All the leaders of false religion are hypocrites who claim to know God and to know truth and to be able to lead others in the right way and are utterly unable to do it.

The Judaism of Jesus' day was, of course, hypocrisy.

It was a corruption and a perversion of true Old Testament worship. It was apostate.

Judaism had defected from the truth, and it was hypocritical. This became very clear when Jesus came.

Jesus, only spoke truth, because He was the truth incarnate, and He made it crystal clear how hypocritical the false religion of Judaism was.

Jesus came preaching the kingdom, preaching the good news of forgiveness, salvation, giving people the hope of heaven if they trusted in Him.

Calling people to repentance and faith and acknowledging Him as Lord, Messiah and Saviour. He confirmed the truthfulness of that message in a massive, extensive display of supernatural miracles to make it very clear that He was indeed God in human flesh speaking the truth.

However, in spite of the truthfulness and the miracles to attest to it, the people of Israel, both in Galilee and in Judea around Jerusalem, the people held tightly to their hypocritical religion. They held tightly to their form of apostate Judaism, and they held tightly to their self-righteousness, their works, their ceremonies to the degree that they were increasingly hostile toward Jesus.

Hostility was orchestrated and led by the leaders of the apostate religion, the Pharisees, and the scribes. They put a spin on everything Jesus did. Ultimately to make the greatest impact on the people in turning them against Jesus. They told the people that Jesus actually was from Satan, not God and that what Jesus did He did by the power of Satan, not the power of God.

**Luke 11:15**, *But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons."*

The ultimate blasphemy, the opposite to the truth!

They called Jesus satanic, when in fact He was divine. They said He did what He did by the power of Satan, when what He did, He did by the power of the Spirit.

They have rejected their Messiah.

**John 1:11**, *He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.*

They held tightly in the grip of an apostate form of religion which is in the fabric of their lives. So strong is that grip on them that they bought into the spin that the Pharisees and scribes put on the ministry of Jesus and they too echoed that it was in fact satanic.

Jesus confronts them at a lunch.

**Luke 11:37**, *And as He spoke, a certain Pharisee asked Him to dine with him. So He went in and sat down to eat.*

Jesus pronounced upon these religious hypocrites six curses.

Religion is not a noble attempt at being good. It is not a noble attempt to reach God and to make ourselves better.

Religion is just the opposite.

It is a descent into satanic deception.

Jesus said He had more in common with sinners, tax collectors, prostitutes, and the scum of society than He did with the religious leaders.

Religion is man at his lowest. The descent in Romans chapter 1, man at the very bottom is inventing God. Having rejected God, he has gone all the way to the pits of hell.

As we come to chapter 12, the people are becoming fixed in their resentment, resistance, animosity, and rejection of Jesus.

The character of the crowd has changed. In the early years of His ministry they were really interested, they were curious, hungry, excited, and enthusiastic. They were coming off the ministry of John the Baptist, they were eager for the kingdom, they were eager to find out if He was the Messiah.

They were stunned and shocked by the amazing power that He exhibited in all His thousands of miracles which He did day by day. He was very attractive to them. They were thinking maybe He could be the Messiah.

But as the months went on, that began to change. By the time we come into chapter 12, most of the crowd has sided with the Pharisees and the Sadducees and His enemies.

Most of the crowd is rooted and dug in and entrenched in their false religion and they see Jesus now as the enemy.

From here on the tone of Jesus' ministry has changed to warning and judgment that has escalated. For most, the decision has been made and Jesus now warns them of the coming judgment. Not so much the promises of coming blessing, although they will come, but the warnings of judgment that fall on those who reject Him.

**V 1**, *In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together,*

**V 13**, *Then one from the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."*

**Luke 13:1**, *There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.*

Because that connects all of this to the same event. The crowd gathered. He spoke to the crowd. Someone in the crowd interrupted Him. Later Peter interrupted Him.

**Luke 11:54**, *lying in wait for Him, and seeking to catch Him in something He might say, that they might accuse Him.*

This is one discourse that took place at one time, and it runs from **Luke 12:1 to 13:9**.

It is a long discourse punctuated by a couple of interruptions. The background here of all that our Lord says is judgment.

**V 5**, *But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!*

**V 19**, *And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry."*

**V 20**, *But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?'*

**V 35**, *"Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; Why?*

**V40**, *" Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."*

**V 46**, *the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.*

**Luke 13:5,** *"I tell you, unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."*

**Luke 13:9,** *And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.'*"

An escalating backdrop of judgment. Jesus now begins His ministry of warning!

There will be promises.

There will be calls to follow Him.

There will be words of blessing to those who do.

But primarily the note that He sounds is warning of judgment.

Now as we come to this, there is a massive crowd that is collected around Jesus. This is in Judea in the south. They all know the conflict between the Pharisees, the scribes and Jesus. It is the most riveting, compelling, fascinating, and dramatic event that takes place anywhere when Jesus and the Pharisees get together.

**V 1,** *In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first of all, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.*

The same period sort of initiated by that lunch when that hostility between the Pharisees and Jesus had been escalated to its fever pitch.

Remember Jesus left the lunch at the end of chapter 11 and it says they were very hostile toward Him and looking for ways they could pounce on Him and attack Him and actually kill Him.

So, while that was going on, the crowds began to grow. The phrase "so many thousands of the multitude had gathered".

The Greek word is *murīadōn*.

It is a plural of *murion*.

**Murion** means "ten thousand."

It is the highest number that has a word in the Greek language. So that is why when you read about multitudes of angels, it is ten thousand times ten thousand because there is not a word for anything more than ten thousand. They did not have a word for 100 thousand.

So, what you have here is the plural of that. It literally says, "So many ten thousands of the multitude." Multiply tens of thousands.

It would not probably be twenty thousand. It could be thirty, forty, fifty. This is a massive crowd that is now collecting because this is the biggest issue going on in Israel right now.

Religion dominates their life. The Pharisees and scribes dominate their religion, and they are confronting this Jesus, the miracle worker.

Huge crowds drawn by the conflict and most of them are hostile. Most of them are entrenched in their false religion. They are a part of the hypocritical, apostate.

It is so large that they are stepping on each other.

What does that simply mean?

They did not have any electronics and they did not have any sound system. They did not have any microphones.

If the crowd is tens of thousands of people, how are you going to hear the dialogue between Jesus and the Pharisees?

Everybody trying to get close, and you have a mob scene and they are literally stepping on each other.

Jesus began saying to His disciples, *first of all,* " really important to point this out.

Jesus is not speaking to the crowd. They are going to hear, but He is not speaking to them. He is speaking to some within the crowd who would fall into the category of disciples.

The Greek is **mathētēs** means a learner, a student.

They still are there because they are attracted to Jesus. This is not the hostile group. Some of them, of course, by now had become true believers and some were in the process. It is to them that He speaks. It is to those who have not made up their mind, those who are just coming to understand who He really is, the learners, the real students.

**Verse 1**, He began saying to His disciples, *first of all*. He is not going to cast His pearls before swine.

**Genesis 6:5**, "My Spirit will not always strive with men."

There comes a point when you go beyond, and you are fixed in your unbelief. But in that crowd scattered there are some still interested!

**V 4**, "*I say to you, My friends.*"

He is talking to those that are friendly toward Him.

**V 1**, "*Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees,*" which is hypocrisy.

Do not get caught up in a damning, hypocritical, false religion. That is exactly what He's saying.

“Beware” is actually “take heed to yourselves.”  
What He's saying is, “watch yourselves,” very personal.  
Protect yourselves.

What you need to protect yourselves from is the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy.

Jesus compares the kingdom of God to leaven.

**Luke 13:20-21**, *And again He said, “To what shall I liken the kingdom of God? <sup>21</sup>It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.”*

### **What does the leaven do?**

You take the leaven and you put it in the dough, and it permeates.

The word for “leaven” is **zumē**, from which you get “enzymes.”

Jesus is saying, beware, take heed, protect yourselves from the permeating, fermenting influence of the Pharisees.

Save yourselves from the damning influence of their apostate religion. Avoid all contact with it.

Getting near people in false religion is like taking hold of that. You would not do that and stain your physical body and stay away from that as regards your soul.

Getting near a Pharisee is like walking across a tomb and being defiled by it. Beware of the permeating, fermenting influence of false religion.

We live in a world today which is just literally engulfed in false religion.

**Matthew 16:6**, *Then Jesus said to them, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees."*

**Mark 8:15**, *Then He charged them, saying, "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."*

- Pharisees it was fundamentalism, works, legalism, and materialism.
- Sadducees it was scepticism, rationalism, and liberalism.
- Herod it was political ambition, secularism, and corruption.

Jesus says this stuff permeates everything.

**1 Corinthians 15:33**, *Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."*

The reason association with evil people corrupts good morals is because of what they say. Do not expose yourself to a sermon, to a teaching, to a lecture, to communication through media, to a conversation that is going to give you evil, deceiving lies. It will corrupt you.

**Psalms 1:1**, *Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;*

You have got to avoid the hypocrisy that is all around you.

### **How do you do that?**

How does one avoid being a hypocrite?

**Luke 12:2-12**, the Lord's give you three things.

1. Honour God,
  2. Honour Christ, and
  3. Honour the Spirit.
- ✓ God is mentioned in verse 5 as the One who after He has killed has authority to cast into hell and He's also mentioned in verse 6.

- ✓ The Son is mentioned in verse 8 as the Son of Man who must be confessed and mentioned again in verse 10.
- ✓ The Spirit is mentioned in verse 10 and again in verse 12.

You cannot honour God without honouring Christ and you cannot honour Christ without honouring the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit points to Christ and Christ shows us the Father.

## **1. Fear/Honour God.**

Escaping hell starts with honouring God.

**V 5**, "*Fear the One who after He has killed has authority to cast into hell.*"

Fear or honour.

God must be honoured. God must be feared.

What hypocrites are like?

They do not fear God, but they fear men.

They live their lives to please men.

They live their lives for the outside, which is visible and not the inside, which is invisible.

Stop fearing men and start fearing God.

Everything the Pharisees and scribes did, Jesus said they did it before men.

### **Remember the Sermon on the Mount?**

Everything they did!

- They fasted to be seen of men,
- They prayed to be seen of men,
- They gave to be seen of men.
- They lived their superficial morality to be seen of men.

The truth was they were painted white on the outside, but they were rotten like dead men's bones on the inside.

**Matthew 23:27**, *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.*

It was all about a show for men!

### **Why should you fear God?**

- a) **God will uncover what is hidden.**

**V 2-3**, *For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known.<sup>3</sup> Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what*

*you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops.*

No one escapes exposure. Everybody is revealed.

This is a favourite saying of our Lord.

**Luke 8:17**, *For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light.*

Jesus also spoke about the same thing while He was ministering in Galilee.

**Matthew 10:26**, *Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.*

**Mark 4:22**, *For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed, nor has anything been kept secret but that it should come to light.*

This is a principle drawn out of the Old Testament.

because at the end of the book of

**Ecclesiastes 12:14**, *For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.*

Nobody gets away with anything. Hypocrites may be successful here, but that is it.

Not all hypocrites are successful. In most cases if you are a hypocrite, generally it will come out. Time and truth go hand in hand. Given enough time you know the truth about someone.

**1 Timothy 5:24-25**, *Some men's sins are clearly evident, preceding them to judgment, but those of some men follow later. <sup>25</sup>Likewise, the good works of some are clearly evident, and those that are otherwise cannot be hidden.*

But some men's sins will not be known till the future, but they will be known.

**Matthew 16:27**, *"The Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels and will recompense every man according to his deeds."*

Paul spoke about this very clearly in the letter to Romans.

**Romans 2:6**, *who "will render to each one according to his deeds":*

**Romans 2:16**, *in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.*

**1 Corinthians 4:5**, *Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden*

*things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.*

Jesus uses four statements which make it clear that the opposite is true.

- I. If you conceal it, it will be revealed – unconcealed.
- II. If you try to hide it as a secret, it will be made known.
- III. If you say it in the dark, it will be heard in the light.
- IV. If you whisper it in the inner rooms, it will be proclaimed from the housetop.

**Revelation 20:11-15:** The books are going to be opened and every man is going to be judged out of those books and the record will be complete and the truth will be known.

So, you want to fear God because God is going to reveal the truth.

You are not going to get away with it.

The truth of what you are is going to come out and hypocrites will be seen for what they really are and especially if they name the name of God and the name of Jesus Christ. How horrible will be their judgment. Fear God because you cannot hide anything from Him.

**b) God will punish hypocrites in hell.**

**V 4**, *“And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.*

### **Who can kill the body?**

People.

People can kill each other. People go through life trying to prevent being killed. An extreme illustration.

Do not be afraid of those people when the worst they can do is kill your body. It is not to say that you should only be afraid of murderers. It is simply to say do not be afraid of people because, illustration from the extreme, the worst they can do is kill your body.

You can kill my body. Frankly, that is a promotion!

"Far better to depart and be with Christ,"

The worst you can do to me is usher me into the best that could ever happen to me. But, you see, the character of hypocrisy is this: It fears men. Its preoccupation is what people think, what men think.

- How can I gain their trust?
- How can I gain their favour?
- How can I gain their confidence?

- How can I have them elevate me?
- How can I get more money from them?

The Pharisees did what they did for money.

**Luke 16:14**, *Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him.*

The Pharisees who were lovers of money.

All false teachers are lovers of money.

They want the chief seats, and high places.

They want all the elaborate greetings in the marketplace.

They want to wear all the fancy robes because they want to appear to be nobler, more spiritual, more erudite, more elite, more elevated, more transcendent than everybody else.

The whole design of a hypocritical religious system is to train people to fear the leaders, to fear men, to put on a show for people.

That is the heart of hypocrisy.

**V 5**, *But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!*

**Who is that?**

Somebody might say, "that's Satan."

It is not Satan. Satan does not cast anybody into hell. Satan himself is cast into hell. He is not the king of hell. God is the king of hell. The one is God. He has the power to kill and the authority to cast into hell.

**Do you know there is nothing in the Scripture that tells us ever to fear Satan?**

Nothing!

You can run around in a panic, afraid of Satan, worried that Satan's coming in their house, coming in their room, going to make them sick, going to kill their kids. There is nothing in the Bible about that.

If you are not a Christian, Satan's your master, he is your lord. He is your father. You are living totally in his world.

But if you are a believer, you have been delivered from Satan completely. Satan is under your feet.

What should be our attitude toward Satan?

Resist the devil and he will flee.

He has no power over us.

Nowhere in Scripture are we told to fear Satan.

**1 Peter 5:9**, *Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.*

### **Who are we told to fear in Scripture?**

**Proverbs 9:10**, *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,*

*And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*

Do not fear men, fear God.

Now there are some people who do not believe in hell. This passage makes havoc of their idea by virtue of the contrast. Some people say that it just means the grave, that hell here means the grave, that He has the authority to cast you into the grave. Do not fear men who can just kill you, fear God who can kill you and cast you into the grave. That is nonsense because if there is no hell, and there is no eternal torment, then God cannot do anything to you that man cannot do.

If a person kills you and you go out of existence, or God kills you and you go out of existence, it is the same thing. So, the fact that you should not fear that men can kill you but fear God who can kill you and after that cast you into hell, makes it very clear that there is something after death.

Otherwise, there is no contrast between what God can do to you and men can do to you if there is no punishment.

All men can do is kill you.

What God can do is far worse than that because God not only can kill you physically but send you to eternal punishment.

How can you avoid being a hypocrite?

Stop fearing men and start fearing God, the true and living God who will uncover everything that is hidden and who has the authority to send you to hell.

**c) Nothing escapes God's knowledge.**

*V 6-7, "Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God." But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.*

Very simple, God knows everything.

God is omniscience.

Sparrows were little, tiny birds that the poor picked up. Caught in nets, plucked them, skinned them, roasted them, and ate them. They were so cheap you could buy five for two pennies.

In Matthew it says they were two for a penny.

So, what happened is for two pennies you got an extra one thrown in, two for a penny, or five for two pennies.

A penny was one-sixteenth of a day's wage, a **denarii**, is called an **assarion**. It was a copper Roman coin. They were cheap food for the poor.

Nobody cared about sparrows. The only reason the poor cared about sparrows was they could eat them. If there was anything you would think God would not bother Himself about it would be sparrows.

Couldn't there be one sparrow somewhere on the planet that God did not know about?

No.

If God knows about sparrows, He knows about you!

**Matthew 10:29**, *Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will.*

He not only knows every sparrow, but He knows when every sparrow hops.

**Why would God bother Himself with that?**

It is not that He learned it.

It is not that He acquired it.

God has never acquired any knowledge. God has never learned anything. If it is, He knows it.

Nobody has to tell him. He does not have to study it. He does not acquire it.

God even knows the very hairs of your head and they are all numbered.

The average is **150,000** hairs.

There are six billion people on the world, you can do a little math and find out how many numbers God must keep everybody's hair. What about when one falls out, does He catch that? If it is, He knows it. He does not acquire information.

You better fear God because He knows everything!

In the Old Testament, **1 Samuel 14:45, 2 Samuel 14:11, 1 Kings 1:52** is a familiar Old Testament phrase, "Not one hair of your head shall fall."

**Luke 21:18**, *But not a hair of your head shall be lost.*

That was God's way of saying when judgment comes, I will protect you.

**Acts 27:34**, *Therefore I urge you to take nourishment, for this is for your survival, since not a hair will fall from the head of any of you."*

God knows every hair on every person on the planet. He knows the minutest, most inconsequential details because if it is, He knows it. So do not think somehow you do not need to fear God because in the end something will slip by.

**V7**, *Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.*

This is another way of saying the Lord knows those that are His. That is where the transition comes in the text.

If you have already feared God, do not fear God. You are of more value than many sparrows.

## **Conclusion:**

At the end of the Old Testament is Malachi. Malachi is all about judgment, Day of the Lord, devastating, final, eschatological judgment. He is coming.

**Malachi 3:2-3**, *"But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's*

*fire And like launderers' soap. <sup>3</sup>He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the Lord An offering in righteousness.*

**Malachi 3:5,** *And I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness Against sorcerers, Against adulterers, Against perjurers, Against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, And against those who turn away an alien— Because they do not fear Me,*” Says the Lord of hosts.

**Malachi 3:6,** *“For I am the Lord, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.*

**Malachi 3:16-18,** *Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, And the Lord listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the Lord And who meditate on His name. <sup>17</sup>“They shall be Mine,” says the Lord of hosts, “On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him.” <sup>18</sup>Then you shall again discern Between the righteous and the wicked, Between one who serves God And one who does not serve Him.*

So, you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who doesn't serve Him.

**Malachi 4:1-3**, *“For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up,” Says the Lord of hosts, “That will leave them neither root nor branch. <sup>2</sup>But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves. <sup>3</sup>You shall trample the wicked, For they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet On the day that I do this,” Says the Lord of hosts.*

Do not be afraid. If you are fearing God, do not fear.  
He knows everything and He knows you are His.

If you are not His, time to fear God, who will uncover the truth, who will sentence you to hell, and who knows everything.

**But how do you come to know God?**

What is the only way to come to know God?

You cannot honour God unless you honour the Son.