

December 11, 2016

## ***I Want to Know Jesus***

***"I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead."***  
Philippians 3:10-11

***"I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God..."***

***"Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions..."***

***"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. Life is more than food and the body more than clothes..."***

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

***"Be dressed and ready for service..."*** Luke 12:1-59

There are times in the gospels when it seems that the author has simply jumbled together a mixed bag of teachings from our Lord with no real pattern. Our context for today in Luke 12 is one of those times, but I am convinced that there is a pattern to Jesus' teachings as Luke records them.

The whole chapter, in deed the next several chapters of Luke's gospel contain our Master's teachings on the fundamentals of a spiritual life. He begins in this chapter by laying down a fundamental principle for our walk with him: ***"...whoever acknowledges me..."*** This entire chapter is, I am convinced, Jesus' description of what a life spent in acknowledgement of him might look like.

Such a life will, Jesus teaches, have the world and its many, many possessions in perspective. That's no small feat in a world where the accumulation of possessions consumes us all. It is so easy to think that our personal value is directly tied to the value of our possessions when nothing could be further from the truth.

When we face our final accounting before the Father, and we all will ***"...give an account..."*** (Romans 14:12), the question will not be how much we gathered ***"...into our barns..."***, but what we did and do with those things we possess. If we selfishly consume our blessings on our own gratification, the definition of greed, then we will be held accountable for that. If we share what we have, even if that is only a cup of water, then we will be held accountable for that too.

So, how do we achieve this proper perspective? Jesus would say, ***"...do not worry about your life..."*** How can we give up worry? Ultimately it is all about surrender. If I really believe that my God and Father knows me so well that he can tell the number of hairs on my head, then I can also trust him to provide everything I need. When I surrender these concerns to him, I find peace of mind and hold my many possessions in their proper perspective.

Remember this simple rule, ***"...where you treasure is, there your heart will be also."*** If I count my many possessions as the most important thing in my life, then my life will reflect that. If I count my relationship with Jesus as the most important thing in my life, then that will be reflected as well. What is in my heart always shows.

So, how do we live day by day in a world that insists that we love possessions and riches? Our Master shows us the way by reminding us to be ready to meet him. The truth is not one of us

can tell how long or short our lives will be. Gloria often reminds me of the importance of living without regrets. When our time comes, we need to be ready to leave this world behind. That time will come, our Lord often reminds us, as a "...*thief in the night*..." When we least expect it the trumpet will sound and the Lord will appear. In that moment none of what seemed so important in this world will mean a thing. Being fitted spiritually for the next world will mean everything. So, are we ready? M

**PEOPLE**

A photograph showing a person in winter clothing using a shovel to clear snow from a parking lot. Several cars are parked in the background, partially covered in snow. The scene is set in a snowy, overcast environment.

**Tell them bad weather  
is coming, and they prepare!**

**Tell them JESUS is coming,  
and they do nothing!**

**"Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son  
of man cometh at an hour when ye think not."**  
Luke 12:40