



## Sermon Discussion Questions

July 14, 2024

“The Power ...”

# POWER WHEN WORRY TAKES OVER

Luke 12

1. **Opening Discussion Questions** (in a group setting you may only want to choose one)
  - a. Three of the many synonyms for “worry” are anxiety, concern, and fear. What does each of these four words mean to you? How do they apply to different situations in your life? Which of the four do you have the most difficulty controlling? The least difficulty?
  - b. One of the conditions people worry about as they grow older is a loss of memory, but maybe it isn’t just an age issue. Test your memory. What were three things you worried about on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023? What was one thing you worried about on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014? If you recall any of these worries, are they still concerns today?
  - c. Jesus knew that many people worry about possessions and money, and they certainly do so today. Most people base their decisions on getting and keeping money. Our society (wrongly) says money and possessions are what will provide security and guarantee happiness. One way to reverse this pressure is to deliberately make decisions to do things that avoid accumulating for ourselves. Brainstorm to make a list of 10 things you could do that would be the reverse of what society expects (for example, do a short-term mission trip entirely at your own expense, adopt several children overseas providing them with food, clothing and education, etc.)
2. **Sermon Outline/Key Points**
  - a. Remember God's Knowledge and Concern for You Are Perfect
    - i. You are unimaginably important to God.
    - ii. God invites you to trust His presence and provision instead of worrying
  - b. Don't Try to Stop Thinking, Try to Think About Different Things
    - i. Replacement Principle - you can't just stop thinking about things, you must start thinking about something else.
    - ii. Make God's Kingdom bigger in your mind and your concerns.
  - c. Memorize God's Promises and Use Them to Fight Worry
    - i. Scripture memorization is a powerful weapon to fight off worry.
    - ii. A few verses on worry to consider memorizing:
      1. Psalm 55:22
      2. Psalm 56:3-4
      3. Psalm 4:8
      4. Matthew 6:34
      5. 1 Peter 5:7
3. **Study/Discussion Points:**
  - a. *Sunday Afternoon* – As soon as possible after listening to the sermon set aside some time to ponder these questions prayerfully:

- i. What one thing most stood out to you in this sermon?
- ii. What new truth did you learn or of what truth were you reminded?
- iii. After listening to the sermon, is there a Scripture passage you feel led to meditate on or commit to memory this week?
- iv. What is one specific thing you feel God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
- v. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?

**b. Monday**

- i. Each day this week you will be asked to read Luke 12:1-34 (you may want to use a different translation each day) and record one command, truth, or fact that you see in the passage. Spend some time meditating on how it can/should be applied in your life.
- ii. After completing the previous exercise, reread Luke 12:1-7.
  1. Jesus starts His teaching with a warning about hypocrisy.
    - a. How would you define hypocrisy?
    - b. Why was it such a serious concern of Christ (see Matthew 6:2, 5, & 16; 7:1-5; 15:1-9; 23:3 & 25-28)?
    - c. In your opinion how serious of a problem is hypocrisy today?
  2. As you continue this week's study about "worry", look for ways that worry might be a sign of hypocrisy.
- iii. Verses 4-5 present what may be one of Jesus' most difficult commands, yet also one of the most important if we are to live the Christian life as He taught.
  1. Why is fear of what others may do to us often the cause of hypocrisy?
  2. What does verse 5 tell us we should be afraid of? How does that relate to what we are told in verse 7? Which of these two verses more closely represents your thoughts about God?
  3. Although Jesus' command in verse 4 is extremely difficult, obedience has been demonstrated countless times over the 2000-year history of Christianity. Read Acts 7:51-60 for one of the best and earliest examples. From this passage, what makes it possible for a Christian to "not fear those who kill the body"?

**c. Tuesday**

- i. Read Luke 12:1-34 and find another command, truth, or fact in the passage. How can/should it apply in your life?
- ii. Today, reread and focus on Luke 12:8-12
  1. Jesus progresses from His teaching on fear to our acknowledgment of Him to others. What is the obvious connection between these two topics?
  2. Many studies have concluded that the main reason more American Christians are not sharing their faith is fear. In our country how would you compare the fear experienced when sharing your faith with the fear of those who can "kill the body"? What are we afraid of when sharing – is it really fear or is it more

- worry about what others will think of us? How does fear or worry affect your sharing of the Gospel?
3. Read 2 Timothy 2:8-13. What do you learn about acknowledging Christ from this passage? Why is verse 13 particularly important?
- iii. In verses 11 and 12 Jesus provides one of the reasons we do not need to “fear those who kill the body.”
1. How significant would it have been to be tried by the synagogue, rulers, or authorities (see Mark 6:26-27, Acts 12:1-2, and Acts 9:1-2)?
  2. Review the account of Stephen’s stoning in Acts 7:51-60 again and Peter’s message to the Sanhedrin in Acts 4:5-10. How do you see Jesus’ promise in verse 12 fulfilled?
  3. Read John 14:15-27. What does verse 26 suggest we must do first if the Holy Spirit is to accomplish His task of teaching us?

*d. Wednesday*

- i. Read Luke 12:1-34 and find another command, truth, or fact in the passage. How can/should it apply in your life?
- ii. Today, reread and focus on Luke 12:13-21.
  1. Compare what Jesus teaches with these Old Testament passages: Job 20:20, 31:24-25 and Psalms 49:5-9, 52:5, & 62:10. How surprised should Jesus’ audience have been at what He is saying?
  2. In your opinion, how well do you think the average American Christian does at applying Jesus’ command in verse 15?
  3. While we don’t live in an agrarian society in Northern Virginia, how do most of us “build barns”? Compare this passage with what Jesus teaches in Mark 10:17-21. What could the rich man in Luke have done with his crops that would have been more appropriate?
- iii. How do worry and fear relate to Luke 12:13-21? While the parable is usually viewed as a warning against greed, what is the most common motive that promotes greed? Keep this question in mind when you read tomorrow’s focal passage.

*e. Thursday*

- i. Read Luke 12:1-34 and find another command, truth, or fact in the passage. How can/should it apply in your life?
- ii. Today, reread and focus on Luke 12:22-30
  1. Before proceeding, meditate seriously on what Jesus is saying to us in these well-known verses and how they may apply in your life.
  2. How do worry and fear relate to the issue of greed considered yesterday?
  3. Make a list of as many reasons as you can find in verses 22-30 for why worry is unnecessary. How does our worry dishonor God? What does it say about our faith and trust when we worry?
- iii. What does Jesus tell us in verse 31 to do instead of worrying?

1. Read Jesus' explanation of the Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13:18-23. What lesson can we take away from these verses about the effect worry has on the type of seed we become?
2. Why would worry cause us to be viewed as hypocrites by the world?

*f. Friday*

- i. Read Luke 12:1-34 and find another command, truth, or fact in the passage. How can/should it apply in your life?
- ii. Today, reread and focus on Luke 12:31-34
  1. Once again Jesus tells us not to fear. What reason does he give this time? How does verse 32 provide us assurance when we obey the command in verse 31 that we read yesterday?
  2. The command in verse 33 can be shocking. How might it apply to you? Spend time in meditation and prayer asking God to show you how you should respond.
  3. While this passage talks about our possessions how might it be extended to our most precious commodity, time? Is it possible to truly seek His kingdom if we are unwilling to give Him our time?
- iii. In light of verse 34, end by making an honest list of what you treasure and pray for the Holy Spirit to help you change priorities if necessary.

*g. Saturday*

- i. Read Luke 12:1-34 and find another command, truth, or fact in the passage. How can/should it apply in your life?
  - ii. List the six commands, truths, or facts that you have identified this week. How would your life change if you were to commit to living by them?
  - iii. What relationship have you seen between worry and hypocrisy?
  - iv. Read the five memory verses the Pastor has provided in his outline. Select the one you feel is most relevant to your situation and begin committing it to memory.
4. **Application:** Sunday's sermon was about worry, but in Luke 12 Jesus shows the link between worry, fear, greed, and hypocrisy is our willingness to trust Him to provide for our needs. The key to doing so is allowing the Holy Spirit to guide and control our lives. Be particularly sensitive this week to how the Spirit leads you to:
- a. Start, change, or increase your study and memorization of His Word.
  - b. Evaluate and, if necessary, change your view of possessions to allow you to give more.
  - c. Increase your faith and trust so that worry will be eliminated from your life.

**5. Prayer Points:**

- a. Adoration – Psalms 8:1 and 29:1-2
- b. Confession – Proverbs 28:13 and 1 John 1:8-10
- c. Thanksgiving – Psalms 95:1-2 and 100:4-5
- d. Supplications – Matthew 21:22 and John 16:19