

Simply Jesus

The Life and Ministry of God's Son

Inductive: Lesson 17

Introduction

As respected religious leaders of the day, the scribes and Pharisees were the ones to whom the people looked for spiritual understanding and direction. Jesus pronounced “woe” on both groups: the Pharisees who instructed using the scriptures and the scribes who interpreted them for practical application. Over time, Jesus had pulled back the layers of falsehood by not only addressing the incorrect teaching but also revealing that these men were interfering by taking away the *key* to knowledge. They had not entered into the truth themselves, and those who wanted to enter in were being hindered from finding the way. In turn, these leaders had begun to assail Jesus vehemently, cross-examine Him, and lie in wait to arrest Him (Luke 11:52–54).

Jesus offered up the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Meanwhile, the crowds continued to come and to grow in size; only now they weren't a quiet multitude resting on a hillside or beside a lake in a meadow. They had become an innumerable multitude pushing, shoving, yelling and even trampling one another. The entire scene in Luke 12 took place amid a noisy crowd, the perfect circumstance for on-the-job training in how to stand firm for what one believes. Denouncing the hypocrisy of the Pharisees while attempting to diffuse the angry crowd, Jesus specifically lays out what to do when life and limb are on the line: “Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God” (Luke 12:8–9).

Did you know

Have you ever been singled out—put on the spot to speak up for your Christian beliefs? It can be a life-defining moment or perhaps even a life-threatening experience. The word “confess” literally means “to say the same thing” or “to agree with God.” Jesus knew the disciples would face dangerous situations down the road. He uses the circumstances in Luke 12 to make the point that when under pressure to capitulate, they would need to be able to stand firm and confess Him before men so that He could in turn confess them before the Father in heaven.

Honing a bold witness for Christ should be on every believer's “to do” list as we await and prepare for the Lord's return. There is no need to worry about what we are to say, we have the promise that the Holy Spirit will teach us in the moment how/what is appropriate to defend what we believe (Luke 12:11–12).

Open your Bible and lesson each day by beginning with a word of prayer.

Up Close ~

The chart below represents a reader's guide to the contents of this week's lesson. The topical teachings and/or events covered are followed by the primary scriptural text as well as the supportive parallel passages. You will be able to receive and grasp a well-rounded picture of the story narrative in the Gospel harmony by reading every passage. However, using the bolded text as your point of reference (your anchor text) will allow you to determine the facts, lessons, and personal applications necessary to formulate your own conclusions.

<u>Teaching / Event</u>	<u>Scripture Text</u>	<u>Parallel Passages</u>
Prepare for His Coming	Luke 12:35–56	
What is the Kingdom Like?	Luke 13:6–9; 18–19; 20–21	
The Narrow Way	Luke 13:22–35	

First Impressions: Group Discussion

Reflect for a moment on the passages you have just read.

Respond by recording your first impressions from your initial reading of the text. Be prepared to share one of your impressions with your discussion group.

Heartbeat: Luke 12:40 NKJV (Memory verse)

(Write it out once in the space below. **Practice it each time** you open your lesson.)

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

41 Then Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all people?’

42 And the Lord said, ‘Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season?’

43 Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.

44 Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has.

45 But if that servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, 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. 47 And that servant who knew

his master’s will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. 48 But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

49 I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!

50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!

51 Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division.

52 For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three.

53 Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.’

54 Then He also said to the multitudes, ‘Whenever you see a cloud rising out of the west, immediately you say, “A shower is coming;” and so it is. 55 And when you see the south wind blow, you say, “There will be hot weather”; and there is. 56 Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it you do not discern this time?’

Luke 13:6–9

What is the Kingdom Like?
Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

6 He also spoke this parable: 'A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard,
and he came seeking fruit on it and found none.

7 Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on
this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?'

8 But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also,
until I dig around and fertilize it.

9 And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.'

Luke 13:18–19

Parable of the Mustard Seed

18 Then he said, 'What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it?

19 It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and put in his garden; and
it grew and became a large tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches.'

Luke 13:20–21

Parable of the Leaven

20 And again He said, 'To what shall I liken the kingdom of God?

21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal
till it was all leavened.'

Luke 13:22–35

The Narrow Way

22 And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.

23 Then one said to Him, 'Lord, are there few who are saved?' And He said to them,

24 'Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you,
will seek to enter and will not be able.

25 When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, "I do not know you, where you are from,

26 then you will begin to say, "We ate and drank in Your presence, and
You taught in our streets."

27 But He will say, "I tell you I do not know you, where you are from.

Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.

28 There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out.

29 They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south,
and sit down in the kingdom of God.

30 And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last.'

31 On that very day some Pharisees came, saying to Him, 'Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill you.'

32 And He said to them, 'Go, tell that fox, "Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.

33 Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following;
for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.

34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing!

35 See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!"

(Scripture from the New King James Bible, © 1980 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission.

Observation: Look!

Pray. Read the Bible passage several times, trying to get a big picture of what is going on.

Left Column (Facts): Following the writer in the order he tells the story, briefly describe who is involved, what is happening, when and where the events are taking place.

Right Column (Observations): Look closely to observe details. Some questions you may ask:

- What do you know about the people involved in the story? What questions does the story raise? What sources of conflict do you see? What does Jesus identify as true and important to life?
- Put yourself in the Biblical character's shoes. What were his ambitions? How did the character relate to others or to God? What problem did he think he faced? Did Jesus identify a different problem in his life? What did he discover about God? How did he respond?
- Are there any words that you are not familiar with? Look up the definition.
- Are there words or phrases that are repeated or emphasized? Why are they key?
- Identify comparisons, such as "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven..." What do you know about leaven (yeast)? Identify contrasts, such as "You have heard it said...but I say to you..."
- Extra: Record information you may find in Bible dictionaries, maps, handbooks, or encyclopedias. Understanding the culture/time in which Jesus lived will help you discover the meaning of the text.

Luke 12:41–56

Prepare for His Coming!

What does it say? (Facts from passage)

What do I see? (Personal research/observations)

Luke 13:6–9 What is the Kingdom Like? Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

What does it say? (Facts from passage)

What do I see? (Personal research/observations)

Luke 13:18–19

Parable of the Mustard Seed

What does it say? (Facts from passage)

What do I see? (Personal research/observations)

Luke 13:20–21

Parable of Leaven

What does it say? (Facts from passage)

What do I see? (Personal research/observations)

Luke 13:22–35

The Narrow Way

What does it say? (Facts from passage)

What do I see? (Personal research/observations)

Interpretation: What does it mean?

Pray. The more time you take to observe the passage, the more you will have a basis for understanding what God's Word means. Interpretation **always** seeks to answer the questions, "What was God saying to the original audience?" and then, "How does that same truth relate to life today?" Asking yourself questions will help you see the spiritual lesson in the text: What does this teach me is true about God? What does it teach me is true about mankind? Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to the promise? Is there an example I should follow or avoid? A spiritual lesson is a timeless truth that points to God and speaks to the heart of man. Stating the lesson in a sentence of 10 words or less will help you keep it simple and memorable.

Application: How does it apply to me? Pray. Practicing Biblical truth day-to-day is the only way to grow in Christ and reflect the glory of God. To apply the spiritual lesson you have learned from the text, you have to take deliberate action. Take the time to examine yourself, and ask: Does this spiritual lesson point out error in my thoughts about God? Does it point to error in my attitude or actions? How does this lesson relate to my home life, my work, my relationships, how I spend my time, etc? What change is required? What practical steps will I take to make that change? Write your application in the form of a question to help make it personal.

Luke 12:41–56

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

Luke 13:6–9

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

Luke 13:18–19

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

Luke 13:20–21

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

Luke 13:22–35

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

Behold & Be Transformed

What did you see as you beheld God's Son?

How does beholding (looking upon) Him, motivate you to change your thoughts, habit, attitude, speech or actions?

Pause . . . What is the most significant lesson you have learned this week?

Ponder . . . How will you put it into practice?

Pray . . . Write out your prayer and be specific.
