

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon October 27, 2019
Luke 12: 57 – 59 “Judge What is Right”

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?"

57 "Yes, and why, even of yourselves, do you not judge what is right? 58 When you go with your adversary to the magistrate, make every effort along the way to settle with him, lest he drag you to the judge, the judge deliver you to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. 59 I tell you, you shall not depart from there till you have paid the very last mite."

1 There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. 2 And Jesus answered and said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? 3 I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. 4 Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem? 5 I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish." 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 it and fertilize it. 9 And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.' "

- I. Introduction
 - a. Still speaking to the multitudes v54
 - b. Continuing to correct the hypocrites who have no discernment of the times
 - i. They have ignored the signs of the coming judgment storm
 - c. The following section (13:1-9) about current events and the fig tree parable emphasize the call to repentance present in today's verses of focus, and also firmly connects individual sins with cultural judgments.
- II. Today's Sermon: Luke 12: 57 – 59 “Judge What is Right”
 - a. False Self-Judgment v57
 - b. The Coming Righteous Judgment v58,59
 - c. Questions to know, love and obey God
- III. False Self-Judgment v57
 - a. "Yes, and why, even of yourselves, do you not judge what is right?"
 - b. “Even of yourselves”

- i. The multitudes have proven more than willing to apply discernment to the weather signs in order to prepare for coming weather events; yet, they have remained unwilling to apply this same process of judgment to their own time and their own souls.
- ii. Calvin “Here Christ opens up the source of the evil, and, as it were, applies the lancet to the ulcer. He tells them that they do not descend into their consciences, and there examine with themselves, as in the presence of God, what is right.”¹
 - 1. The hypocrite never applies intense scrutiny to their own soul. Their blindness to Scripture includes both their outer and their inner world.
 - 2. Lk 6:45 “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”
- iii. Hypocrite = an actor, a stage player, a pretender, a dissembler
 - 1. Dissembler = one who conceals his opinions or dispositions under a false appearance
 - 2. "kisses of an enemy"
 - 3. Luke 12:1-2 "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. 2 For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. 3 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."
 - 4. The hallmark of the hypocrite is friendliness to your face followed by hidden, concealed words spoken about you in dark inner rooms to others.
 - 5. Contrast between a hypocrite (enemy) and a friend
 - 6. Proverbs 27: 5,6 "Open rebuke is better than love carefully concealed. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."
- c. So, this entire generation was infested with hypocrisy. Twice now in Luke 12 Jesus has described the multitudes as hypocrites. Individual hypocrites create a hypocritical generation, rejecting Jesus and His Word, thus piling up more sin and debt before God.

¹ Calvin, J., & Pringle, W. (2010). [*Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 278). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

- i. Bock “In context, the point is that one should consider the nature of the time and respond appropriately to one’s spiritual indebtedness.”²
- IV. The Coming Righteous Judgment v58,59
 - a. 58 When you go with your adversary to the magistrate, make every effort along the way to settle with him, lest he drag you to the judge, the judge deliver you to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. 59 I tell you, you shall not depart from there till you have paid the very last mite.”
 - b. Bock “Jesus illustrates the point of reflection: a legal, civil dispute. Γάρ (*gar*, for) indicates that 12:58 explains 12:57. One needs to make a judgment because of the legal situation in which a person might fall.”³
 - c. “When you” = Now Jesus shows this generation of hypocrites what awaits them and all like them. “When you” = this will certainly occur in the near future of these people listening to Jesus.
 - d. “When you go with your adversary to the magistrate”
 - i. You = that generation of hypocrites
 - ii. “Your adversary” = the hypocrites of that time had made Jesus their adversary
 - 1. Adversary = an opponent in a suit of law.
 - 2. 1 Peter 5:8 “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”
 - a. Just like in Luke 11:15 where that hypocritical generation accused Jesus of being a servant of Satan: “15 But some of them said, “He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.”
 - iii. “magistrate” = political ruler.
 - 1. Used of both Gentile and Jewish rulers in the NT.
 - 2. Also used to describe Jesus in Revelation 1:5 “Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.”
 - 3. In context, these hypocritical Jews will go with Jesus to the Jewish and the Roman earthly courts, and what they don’t realize is that by so doing, they are sealing their own conviction in the heavenly court and finalizing their missed opportunity to repent and love Jesus Christ, their Messiah, Who is The Magistrate over all magistrates.
 - e. “make every effort along the way to settle with him”
 - i. “Make every effort” = give diligence, take pains, endeavor, work hard, make it your business.

² Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1198). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

³ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, pp. 1198–1199). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

- ii. “Along the way” = there is time to change course. This fits within this entire section of Luke, this travel narrative which began at the Transfiguration and will end when Jesus arrives in Jerusalem. “Along the way” is a nice summary statement of this entire timeframe.
 - 1. Charges have been brought. Court has yet to meet.
- iii. “to settle with him”
 - 1. KJV “that thou mayest be delivered from him”
 - 2. To settle = to be released, to be set free, to be delivered
 - 3. Christ shows the hypocrites that “along the way” it may appear He needs deliverance from them, but the reality is that they need to be delivered from God, and Christ, the One they’ve made their enemy, is their only hope.
 - a. They think they have Christ (“him”) in their grip. The opposite is true. The Almighty Creator has them in His grip of wrath, and they need to quickly exercise great diligence and care to be delivered from His coming wrath.
- iv. “make every effort along the way to settle with him”
 - 1. This is a Gospel call from the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 2. Sproul “Jesus pleads with them to make their peace with him before it is too late, before that last judgment comes, and the sentence is brought down.”⁴
- f. “lest he drag you to the judge, the judge deliver you to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison.”
 - i. Sproul “The judge is obviously God, and the adversaries are obviously Jesus and those who are standing in opposition to Jesus. Jesus’ message to his contemporaries, is this: ‘Look, I am here. We are discussing my identity, your allegiance. Let’s settle this issue now. We are opponents, and we are headed for the court. But my Father is the Judge and if you don’t settle with Me outside of the court, then the Judge is going to throw the book at you. He will turn you over to the constable, and the constable will throw you into prison.’”⁵
 - ii. Jesus warns the multitude of the coming judgment upon that generation, but this warning also extends to eternity. Their coming cultural and national destruction accomplished by Jesus Christ via the arm of Rome, called The Great War, will also spell eternal destruction for the millions of Jews who will die outside of Christ during that annihilating war.
 - iii. For individual hypocrites:

⁴ Sproul, R. C. (1999). [*A Walk with God: An Exposition of Luke*](#) (p. 273). Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications.

⁵ Sproul, R. C. (1999). [*A Walk with God: An Exposition of Luke*](#) (p. 273). Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications.

1. God is the Judge
 2. The officer is the angel who casts and seals souls in hell
 - a. Officer = one who does the work of inflicting punishment or taking vengeance
 3. Prison = same word used of Sheol in 1 Peter 3:19
 - a. “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, 19 by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, 20 who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah...”
 4. This is the description of the suffering in hell that awaits those who die outside of Christ.
- iv. For the nation of Israel
1. McDurmon “The meaning for these Jewish debtors is simple. They had not lived up to their end of the covenant with God. They had taken advantage of His blessings and mercies. They had racked up huge piles of debt, and now the bills had come due. Of course, all it would have taken to pay in full would have been to repent and believe in Him; they could easily have settled in the way. And indeed, there was still time. But the time was coming, soon, when these people would be called to account. If they had not settled out of court beforehand while they had the chance, they would face the full sanctions of a court trial, and the legal remedy would fall against them.”⁶
 2. The accumulation of individual judgments (unrepentant covenant-breaking unfaithfulness) amounted to almost complete corporate cultural judgment and destruction during The Great War (AD 66-73), then completed in the Bar Kokhba revolt (AD 132 – 136).
- g. I tell you, you shall not depart from there till you have paid the very last mite.
- i. Bock “Every last cent will be extracted from the debtor, although how this could be done from prison is never directly addressed. In ancient life, the debtor was beaten in prison as incentive to his family and friends to pay the debt (see Wolff 1974: 554–55 on private law and torts). In fact, generally there was little possibility that one would get out of debtor’s prison.”⁷
 - ii. Every single thought, word and deed of the life will be reviewed in the Presence of God on the final day. “Every last cent” means that not even the smallest sin will be ignored or overlooked. Perfect justice

⁶ McDurmon, J. (2011). *Jesus v. Jerusalem: A Commentary on Luke 9:51–20:26, Jesus’ Lawsuit Against Israel* (pp. 37–38). Powder Springs, GA: American Vision.

⁷ Bock, D. L. (1996). *Luke: 9:51–24:53* (Vol. 2, p. 1200). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

will perfectly list out every single last offense, without exception. This is the opened book of your life mentioned in Revelation 20.

- iii. There is no hope of ever paying off this debt before God. No human being has the resources to make full payment to God.
 - 1. Revelation 20:11,12 “Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.”
 - iv. Any unrepentant culture that finds itself under the accumulated weight of their own sin will also be perfectly judged, down to the last mite. It was true of Israel, and it remains true of any nation, throughout all of history.
 - 1. Deuteronomy 28:15-20 ““But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: 16 Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country. 17 Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. 18 Cursed shall be the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks. 19 Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out. 20 “The Lord will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me.”
 - h. Sproul “Christ has paid that debt, and if you despise his payment, then all you have left is to pay it yourself. His payment, however, is perfect and gracious and will cover every last cent of your indebtedness. Everything that we owe can be settled out of court. Therefore, the judgment is a moment of triumph for Christ and for his people.”⁸
- V. Questions to know, love and obey God
- a. Deuteronomy 5:29 “29 Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!”

⁸ Sproul, R. C. (1999). *A Walk with God: An Exposition of Luke* (p. 273). Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications.