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## Luke 12:1-12

### CURING HYPOCRISY

Hi. My name is Jason and I'm a Hypocrite. I have a history of ugliness that's been covered up by side-stepping, mask-wearing, half-truth telling, and deceptive action. Hypocrisy is not limited to the Pharisee, the high church, or overly-religious. If **anyone** has been a Christian for a while, then there's a good chance Pharisaical tendencies have developed. These tendencies can take many forms.

There is the Pharisaical tendency of cover-up. For many men it could look like this: wearing sunglasses so no one knows that you're sneaking peaks a woman who is not your wife. Or for some men you might plan your day around the next time you can be alone so you can gaze at sexual pictures or videos.

Another form of a Pharisaical tendency is disguising a sin as a virtue. For some this could look like sharing the latest news about someone else in the form of a prayer request.

What about the Pharisaical tendency that takes on a form of religion that looks holy but it actually has no heart value to God. This could be something like slipping a large check into the offering yet ignoring the poor right outside these walls. I once had a pious friend who told me his own story, "There was a lady who was going way over the speed limit...so I had to catch up with her to tell her she was speeding."

Here's one that gets many younger folks. Almost out of desperation they will do nearly anything to get the attention of their peers at the expense of their integrity with the Lord.

I come to you today as a guilty party. I do not stand up here as one who is above temptation, failure, and Pharisaical tendencies. I do not stand here as one who has overcome weakness...but I do stand here as one in need of the One who overcame the world and all its issues. I stand here today as one who knows my pride is ugly but His mercy is beautiful; that my sin great but His grace is sufficient. And I stand here today hopefully not alone.

Do you know your Pharisaical tendencies? Have you examined your heart for hypocrisy? Do you know how to stand with the One who knows men's hearts, exposes men's hearts, and redeems men's hearts?

Let's pray then get into the text.

Last week Pastor Glen mentioned how it always seems like when he's up to preach that he is bringing a hammer. Well, when I read the text from Luke that was scheduled to be covered for today... I figured I'd pick up the hammer where Glen left off. So, when you read today's passage with me, don't shoot the messenger.

Grab your Bibles and open up to Luke 12. While you're finding Luke 12, let me set the stage for you. Jesus and His disciples were just in a scene where they were eating at a Pharisee's house. Jesus did not ceremonially wash His hands before they ate their meal, the host was "surprised" and then Jesus went off on him and the other experts of their religion. Can you imagine you being a disciple with Jesus in that time of confrontation? Let's pick up the story in the last two verses of chapter eleven and continue to read through verse 12 of today's chapter.

Wow, what a passage, huh?! Today, we are going to cover the 3 things Jesus addresses to His disciples here: 1. The caution, 2. The cure, 3. The confidence. Remember the BIG PICTURE context here, Jesus is making His push towards Jerusalem where He will be publicly crucified for our sins. While He is on His Gospel mission, He is simultaneously preparing His disciples for their future ministry where they will face the same things He is facing there. What things, specifically? The battle for human hearts while taking on persecution.

The Religious Sect, known as the Pharisees, tried to force a system on people that was ineffective to save a soul. The Disciples Jesus chose to start the Church were going to have to face the same types of confrontations their Master faced. And Jesus knew they, and us, would be tempted to become like these Pharisees that we read about today. Hence, the caution.

*"Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."*

**The caution: Beware of Hypocrisy.** Why would Jesus say this? In the following verses He tells us the cure of hypocrisy, but why does He give this caution? The Pharisees were long gone at this point. Their hearts were hardened. They were tied to the system they created. Yet, we cannot say, "I will never be like that!" Jesus knows what the human heart is capable of; and I believe this is why He likened the Pharisaical hypocrisy to yeast.

Here is a little background on yeast: When viewed under the microscope, one sees round or oval cells about 1/100 of a millimeter in diameter. If individual yeast cells were placed side by side it would take approximately 1200 cells to measure 1cm in length. REALLY SMALL!

Under favorable conditions, a single yeast cell will bud into a colony. Get this, the yeast will continue it's budding for as long as the conditions for multiplying are present. Remove those conditions and the yeast will turn dormant; however, the yeast is not dead. In its dormant state, if the yeast comes in contact with the right conditions, it starts the process of budding again.

So Jesus said beware of the yeast of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy. Watch out for this stuff!! Once it gets in, it is there ready to multiply. Let's make sure the conditions are not favorable!! Amen?!?! Jesus helped His disciples know how to make sure this yeast is kept in check.

**The cure for hypocrisy is: Fear of the Lord.**

Jesus brings up 2 "conditions" for us to beware of in our battle against hypocrisy. Listen to what Jesus said to His disciples about condition number one in verses 2 & 3.

*READ FROM BIBLE*

How's that for a sobering thought? **The first favorable condition for hypocrisy to grow in your life: covering up.**

So after reading this text, we learn that which is covered up will eventually be revealed. Those of us that choose to hide our sin in fear of looking bad to others will one day be exposed. Here is where the rubber meets the road for many of us: we cover up even our temptations to obtain that illusive appearance of righteousness.

Jesus taught that those who love their dark deeds will flee from the light; but true believers will embrace the light! Read this with me: "This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of the light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and WILL NOT COME INTO THE LIGHT FOR FEAR THAT HIS DEEDS WILL BE EXPOSED. But whoever lives by the TRUTH comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God."

Therefore, I implore you to come into the light! Walk in the light as He is in the light. Let His light chase away your darkness as you embrace His cleansing grace!

**The second condition where hypocrisy can grow: fear of man.** In this context, Jesus was mentally preparing His disciples for their future. They were going to be facing persecution, suffering, and even death...all because the world hated Jesus. And this is still true today. People, if they are not yet redeemed, hate the Truth and will do what they can to snuff it out. But how does this relate to hypocrisy? My friends, if we have not the reverential fear of the Lord, we get lax in our walk. We forget Whom we are serving. We start to bend our principles in order to not make waves; we make it our aim to avoid any possible conflict and become

man-pleasers. This is a slippery slope that eventually leads us to a place where we can deny God His rightful throne in our lives. Perhaps it could get to the point where we don't trust God with our physical lives and take destiny into our own hands.

Why does Jesus mention hell in verse 5? Well, Hell is a real place reserved for the Devil, his angels, and all who do not put their trust in Jesus. If you find yourself not grateful for Jesus' personal redemption of you, I would argue that either you are not a Christian at all or have become a hypocrite. Where ever you are at, come into the light of Jesus and get saved from yourself and your sins. 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." His grace is sufficient for you.

And what about the unforgivable sin in v10? Let me quickly try to lay out for you what the Bible says about that:

"Whomever believes in Him is NOT CONDEMNED, but whoever DOES NOT believe stands condemned already because he has NOT BELIEVED in the name of God's one and only Son."

The Bible also makes clear that anyone who comes to Jesus is first drawn by the Father (John 6:44) and that drawing is through the conviction of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8). It is my estimation, therefore, that if a person persistently chooses to reject the Holy Spirit's conviction of sin, which leads to the need of the Savior, then that person will bear the eternal judgment that awaits all who reject Jesus. That is, unless they turn from their sin and cling to the graceful Jesus! Then, hallelujah, they will have been set free! Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life." Amen? Amen! If you are not a Christian yet, surrender to the Savior now! Today is the day of Salvation!!

Anyone who has Christ can have confidence. After becoming a believer in the Lord Jesus, you are immediately blessed with the indwelling Spirit. In the closing section of our passage today, Jesus encouraged His disciples to have confidence, confidence in the Holy Spirit. **The confidence: the Holy Spirit.** Remember the context: In the previous chapter, Jesus had just verbally laid the smack down on the Religious right with eloquent and powerful words. Jesus also knew His disciples were going to face these same aggressive rulers and objections. He was preparing them to rely on the power of God and not on their own strength. Read what the Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4:7-11: "But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that His life may be revealed in our mortal body."

If we are not trusting God with the details of our lives, who's to say we will trust Him when our lives are on the line? Trust God today, in every way, for He is trustworthy! The yeast of the Pharisee, which is hypocrisy, can easily slip in when we remove our trust in God and replace it with anything else. And like yeast, that misplaced trust will grow and grow changing the whole form of your faith. Perhaps Religion has become what you trust.

Religion is a belief system that one is devoted to. I'm convinced that people use religion to answer their soul's cry for purpose. Perhaps there is someone here today who is deceived into thinking their religion, the belief system they are choosing, is actually working to get them closer to God. Any religion is false if it removes Jesus as the sole object of one's trust for there is "one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all men." (1 Tim 2:5)

You must lose your life to Christ, then you will save it.