

To Whom Much Is Given

Week 11: March 12-18 – *Luke 11-14; John 9, 10*

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Helpful Resources

Map of Palestine in the Time of Christ

Making Sense of It All

- The Big Picture

Jesus' teaching this week was pointed and sharp, specifically those comments He made regarding the Jews and their leaders. Twice He visited the home of a Pharisee and used the opportunity to point out their inconsistencies. The Jews He encountered continued to demonstrate hardened hearts and an unwillingness to accept Jesus as the Messiah. Though God had done so much for the people of Israel, they were not living up to His expectations. The same could be said of many Christians. Though God has done so much for us, we often do not live up to His expectations. "To whom much is given, much is required" (*Luke 12:48*). In this review, let's consider what the Lord has given and what is required or expected of us.

- Much Is Given

1. **The Good Shepherd** (*Jn. 10:1-42*): Jesus told this parable to distinguish Himself from the religious leaders. They were the thieves, robbers, strangers, and hired hands (*v.1, 5, 8, 12, 13*), but He is the Good Shepherd. What has our Good Shepherd done for us?

Christ is the door out of the sheepfold, the only way to escape the judgment that comes from disobeying God's law (*v.2, 7, 9*). He accomplished our salvation or way of escape by laying down His life for us (*v.11, 15, 17*). He has called us by name to follow Him (*v.3, 4, 14, 16, 27*). He leads us into good pasture or abundant life (*v.9, 10*). He has also given us eternal life with Him in heaven (*v.28*), and our salvation is secure with Him (*v.29*).

2. **We Once Were Blind** (*Jn. 9:1-34*): Jesus and His disciples met a man born blind. In a spiritual sense, we are all born blind. We are conceived in sin, separated from God, and condemned to eternity in hell. But Jesus "opened our eyes" to His salvation, restoring our sight to see Him for who He is. Praise God! We once were blind, but now we see!

- Much Is Required

1. **Avoid Hypocrisy** (*Luke 11:39; 12:1*): A hypocrite is an actor, one who puts on a mask to disguise his real identity. Thus, he is a pretender who fools others and himself, acting like someone he is not. We cannot claim to love God while forsaking His values. Christianity is not a game, and God cannot be mocked. We will reap what we sow.
2. **Confess Christ Publicly** (*Luke 12:8-12*): Jesus said, "Everyone who confesses Christ before men, He will confess him before the angels, but He who denies Christ before men will be denied before the angels." Claiming to follow Christ will get us into trouble but fear not. What can men do to us? In that moment, the Holy Spirit will teach us what to say.

3. **Guard Against Greed** (*Luke 12:15, 34*): There is more to life than what we eat, what we wear, where we live, what we do, or what we possess. Spiritual matters are more important than physical matters. Our treasures are in heaven, not on this earth.
4. **Don't Waste Time Worrying** (*Luke 12:22-34*): Worrying demonstrates a lack of faith in God. He knows our needs and will meet them in His timing. Our focus is to seek first His kingdom, His glory, and He will take care of everything else.
5. **Eagerly Await Christ's Return** (*Luke 12:35-48*): Since we believe that Christ will return, we must be "dressed in readiness." In other words, we must remain faithful to His service, do the work of ministry, and prepare our hearts and minds to depart this world.
6. **Clothe Yourself with Humility** (*Luke 14:7-14; Phil. 2:3, 4*): Pride and self-righteousness spoil our words and actions. But those who are humble will be exalted in God's eyes. When we remember that we fall short of the glory of God, we will be humble.

It is important to note that these things are not required of us to earn God's favor. Because of Christ, we already have God's favor. These things are not a list of duties required of us to maintain our relationship with Him. If we fail in one area, we have not somehow displeased Him. No, we are motivated to fulfill His expectations out of gratitude, because we have been given much. We owe Him everything. Because He died for us and set us free from the bondage of sin and death, there is nothing He could ask of us that is too much.

- Prophetic Passages

1. **Jesus Will Return** (*Luke 12:40*): While Jesus was here, He said that He would come again at a time that we would least expect it.
2. **Judgment of the Jews** (*Luke 13:6, 7, 34, 35; 14:16-24*): The Jews were hard-hearted and fruitless. They condemned the Messiah and put Him to death. Thus, God will bypass their national salvation for now and turn to the Gentiles. Remember, to whom much is given, much is required. The Jews had been given much, but they missed the Messiah.

The Bottom Line

To whom much is given, much is required. We have been given much; therefore, God expects much.

Questions to Consider

1. Re-read *John 10:1-42*. What encourages you most about your Good Shepherd?
2. Should God expect much from us? Why or why not?
3. Review the six expectations from this week (What Is Required). How are you doing?
4. With which expectation do you struggle most? Explain why.
5. What is hypocrisy? Why does living a hypocritical life dishonor God?
6. Do you find it easy or difficult to confess Christ publicly? Explain your answer.
7. Why is greed such a powerful temptation? What is the remedy for greed?
8. Why do we worry so much? What does worry reveal about us and our faith?
9. How often do you think about Christ's return? Why is that?
10. What steps can we take to be ready for Christ to return?
11. How do you battle pride? What are some ways that we can clothe ourselves with humility?