

The Life of Jesus – Fools, Slaves and Strife

Preamble

Luke 10:21-18:27 is one long section in his gospel. In it he records a number of encounters, meetings and “discussions” that Jesus has with his disciples, the “crowd” and a wide variety of individuals, friends, Pharisees, and no doubt others which Luke has compiled. This week we will look at one part of this section in which Jesus again challenges not only his audiences but also us today.

Background

Last week we left Jesus denouncing the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, and reminds his audience of God’s care and warning against blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Then suddenly a man in the crowd interrupts him . .

Note the changes in Jesus’ listeners: He, Me, You, Them

Texts

Luke 12:13-59 (note Matthew 6:19-21; 25-34); see also Exodus 2:11-15; 18:13-26.

Areas for Thought and Discussion

(There’s little chance we will get through all this but we’ll do our best . . . !

	<p>Ppt1 Three Gk words translated as <i>life: bios, psyche, zoe</i> Bios: quantitative life, possessions, length of life Psyche: values and relationships constituting personhood Zoe: quintessential life, the life offered to humanity in the call to follow Jesus, and through him to live in a personal relationship with God</p>
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<p>The parable of the rich fool (vs. 13-21) Jesus talks to the person in the crowd then to “them” (the crowd?)</p> <p>What treasures might we be tempted to store up for the future? What does it mean to be “rich before God”?</p>	<p>Intro: LC: younger of 2 brothers; family feud? Mostly <u>O man</u> V 15: <i>life: zoe – life of following Jesus and living in a personal relationship with the Father</i> Note use of I, ME, MY, MYSELF. No acknowledgement of God’s gift and provision or the local community. Augustine: “he did not realise that the bellies of the poor are much safer storerooms than his barns”</p>
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<p>Stop worrying! (vs. 22-31)</p> <p>To which people group(s) would Jesus address with these words today? Should the church of today preach the same as Jesus did on this topic? If so, how?</p> <p>What are <i>YOU</i> worrying about? Be honest!</p> <p>Look up Luke 12:30-31 in as many translations as possible. What is implied in the words translated as seek, strive, desire, worry about, be concerned, run after etc. about? How would <i>you</i> fill in the gaps in v37?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“For it is the nations of the world that _____ after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, _____ for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.”</p>	<p>Talking to the disciples, referred to in v 32 as his “little flock”</p> <p>V 29: <i>do not keep worrying</i>: searching for more than you need; stop vacillating between faith and whether God will care for you</p> <p>Ppt 2&3 – effects of stress</p> <p>V 30. Strive: (<i>search for, crave, demand, clamour for</i>). Material things, status, honour ... leads to stress and death.</p> <p>V 31. (<i>seek something, seek by thinking, meditating, reasoning, enquiring</i>). Spiritual things – this seems to me to be a non-stressful striving. Leads to eternal life.</p>
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<p>Give alms! (vs. 32-34)</p> <p>How closely should we aim to replicate St Francis of Assisi?</p>	<p>What’s meant by 33b? q.v. 10:4 <i>carry no purse</i>. By being continually generous here on earth your heavenly purse will keep getting filled</p>
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<p>The Watchful Slaves (vs. 35-38)</p> <p>Within the context of vs. 36-38 how do you understand v. 37?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them.”</p>	<p>Fasten his belt = sleeves rolled up; ready for action</p> <p>What picture comes to mind in phrase two? Total reversal of roles, of acceptable behaviour, humility/honour and life of service to others. Q.v. John 13 - washing the disciple’s feet. BUT the master expects the servants to be waiting and alert. <i>Gk serve = diakonia => deacon.</i> What does this say about the deacons in today’s churches?</p>
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<p>The Unfaithful Slaves (vs. 42-48)</p> <p>What do you think of the justice described in this section?</p>	<p>Total contrast to v 37. Where does Jesus get this imagery from? How Romans treat their slaves? Jews treat</p>
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	<p>their slaves? (There were probably Romans listening.) Strange how Jesus reverses the order: Matt's you have heard but I say. Lk I say but your current practise is. Ref to Agag - 1 Sam 12</p>
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<p>Division! (vs. 49-53) (<i>John Bercow's famous call</i>) Does this refer only to families? If not, then to whom? Does v. 51 imply that it is <i>Jesus</i> that brings division? If that is the case, how much should we, as Jesus-followers, cause division or seek to heal division?</p>	<p>V 40. <i>How I am stressed. I am distressed, tormented, what vexation I must endure? Jesus experiences conflicting emotions: his distress is caused by force of circumstances. q.v. Phil 1:23. Paul is "hard pressed between the two" – torn apart mentally.</i> Baptism of fire – experience of Neb's fiery furnace. "Decision and division are not intended to exclude or to doom and damn, but 'to make ready a people prepared for the Lord'" (LkCom 386)</p>
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<p>Interpreting the Time (54-56)</p> <p>Given the war in Ukraine, the Financial Crisis, the Energy Crisis, the current Strikes, Covid and the NHS(S) crisis etc. and the state of Christianity in the world today how should we interpret the "present time" ?</p>	<p>How should the disciples have interpreted their present time?</p> <p>Show Ppt 5 – how do this stats make you feel?</p>
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Final section not included in the circulated notes:

<p>Settling with Your Opponent</p> <p>⁵⁷ 'And why do you not judge for yourselves what is right?' ⁵⁸ Thus, when you go with your accuser before a magistrate, on the way make an effort to settle the case, ^[f] or you may be dragged before the judge, and the judge hand you over to the officer (<i>bailiff</i>), and the officer throw you in prison. ⁵⁹ I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the very last penny.</p>	<p>Accuser – bringer of a charge Is this a throwback to 12:13-14?</p> <p>Current examples?</p>
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