

## **Luke 12**

### **Reflection & Small Group Discussion Questions**

1. Look back at the last two verses of Chapter 11 leading up to the passages. How might this change in the atmosphere play in the psyche and hearts of the disciples?
2. Set the stage. What does this crowd feel like? What are the characteristics? What would you feel like caught in the middle of a trampling crowd?
3. For a fuller observation of the context, we have a “pressed upon and provoked pressure” from religious leaders in addition to a literally crushing crowd pressing in on Jesus and the disciples. What is his “first” response. . . or more specifically, “who does he tend to first” in this pressure cooker situation? Why do you think this is so? How does this reflect and foreshadow the very lesson he is teaching?
4. What does hypocrisy have to do with a crushing crowd and being hunted down? Why do you think this is the time to talk to them about it? Is there anywhere a throughline? A word of comfort in the eye of the storm?
5. It seems that Jesus is telling them both to not be afraid and to be afraid. Or, even more paradoxically, be more afraid in order to not be afraid. How can we understand this as a word of comfort and/or exhortation to us in situations of fear or great anxiety?
6. Look at Psalm 86:11-13? How is the fear of the Lord a comfort for the Psalmist? What is the connection with what Jesus is explaining in Luke 12:4-6?
7. How can we understand verses 8-12, is there comfort from a Spirit that cannot be blasphemed? What does that mean exactly? How can we understand this?
8. As we review the entire passage (including 11:53-54), what are your main take-aways? See if you can summarize in one short sentence, or even a few words?
9. Flowing from this understanding, what specifically do you think God calling you personally, and us as a community to? Who is it that he is calling you, and us to more fully become? Paint the picture? What are the steps to get there?

### **Notes on blaspheming the spirit/role of the Spirit from helpful commentaries**

This may appear to be a place where the Spirit in a position superior to that of Jesus. Closer examination shows, however, that the contrast is not between the Spirit and the Son. The contrast is between deserting Jesus in his earthly ministry in one particular situation and rejecting the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in bringing salvation.

Trent C. Butler, [Luke](#), vol. 3, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 203.

**Blasphemes against the Holy Spirit.** Blasphemy is not limited to speaking evil of the Holy Spirit. It can also mean a hardened attitude toward God and unrelenting opposition to what he is doing through his Spirit in leading individuals to faith.<sup>1</sup>

**11–12.** But we should not think of the Holy Spirit primarily or only as one whom we must be careful not to blaspheme. He is our helper. He is present with God's people, especially with God's persecuted people, to give them the assistance they need when they stand before the authorities. Jesus speaks first of being brought before *the synagogues*, which points to persecution by the Jews. The synagogue could be a court or a school as well as a place of worship. He speaks also of *the rulers and the authorities*, a comprehensive expression which might refer to Jews or Gentiles or both. Being accused in this way could be a terrifying experience. But Jesus tells his own not to be anxious at such a time about what they are to *answer* (the Greek term is often used in the technical sense of 'make a legal defense'). The reason? *The Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say* (cf. 21:14f.).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Robert H. Stein, [Luke](#), vol. 24, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 348.

<sup>2</sup> Leon Morris, [Luke: An Introduction and Commentary](#), vol. 3, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 229.