

Live with a Kingdom Perspective, Part 1

Luke 12:29-32

Go ahead and turn over to our text. Luke 12, we are looking at verse 29 and following, to remember, Jesus here is preaching, speaking to primarily to his disciples, to those who have heeded that call to discipleship, that radical call. They've chosen to deny themselves. They've chosen to take up their crosses. They've chosen to follow him. These disciples, these are the people whom, back in chapter 12 verse 4, he calls friends.

As we've seen, for Jesus, for these friends, the environment is becoming increasingly toxic, hostile. It is eventually going to turn violent. Despite the circumstances, despite these unfavorable times, Jesus chooses to train his disciples in the midst of this. He chooses to prepare them for the future. And the future, for them, is not gonna get better, it's gonna get, temporally speaking, it's going to get worse. Can we identify with this?

His commands here, it assume a foundation of trust in his disciples. When he commands their conscience, he assumes he knows, they trust me. At least some. Maybe they can suffer and struggle through little-faith thinking. But foundationally, they trust him. These commands are meant to instill a sense of assurance in them. "Do not fear," verse 4. "Fear not," verse 7.

Twice, once in verse 11 and once in verse 12, "Do not be anxious." So to deepen their sense of confidence, to put them at even greater ease, Jesus assures them they are of far greater value than animals and plants, and God takes care of those. verses 22 to 28, if God sustains, preserves, adorns all the lesser lifeforms in his creation, won't he do the same for them? In fact, won't he go beyond the physical, won't he go beyond the temporal to minister to their deepest needs because they are created in his image and they are redeemed by him? Won't he minister to their very souls? He does. God sustains them spiritually. He preserves them eternally with eternal life, and he adorns them in the very beauty of Christ's righteousness, the beauty and perfection of his very own son.

So armed with all those assurances, Jesus impresses his point even further in these verses. Look at verses 29 to 32, “And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your father knows that you need them. Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you. Fear not, little flock, for it is your father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

Jesus is speaking there from a kingdom perspective. And that, what, that is what he has come to call his disciples to, is to share this kingdom perspective, calls them out of this world with all of its mundane, trivial concerns, and he calls them to join him in living with a kingdom perceptible. In other words, don’t live like the world lives: striving, fighting for stuff. Don’t covet mundane, temporal treasures of the earth. Don’t let your heart get anxious over trivial things, passing fleeting things. Live like those who have been given a kingdom, for goodness’ sake! You’ve been given a kingdom, an eternal kingdom. Live like it! As children of Abraham in faith, like him, we don’t find any rest here on earth. We’re nomads. We’re pilgrims. We’re wanderers just passing through. Like Abraham, we, too, in a

sense live in tents. We look forward to a city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. That is kingdom thinking on behalf of Abraham.

And folks, this is my prayer for us, it's my prayer for Grace Church, for all faithful churches, really, during this time, living in this time, for all of us as Christians, whom God has chosen to live in such interesting times. I'm asking God to teach us to live above the mayhem. I'm asking God to help us in our thought life, in our habits, and in our actions to transcend all this turmoil and chaos and confusion. We need to live with a kingdom perspective. We need to live now for what mattered a thousand years ago, and we need to live now for what's going to matter a thousand years from now. What's happening right now in our time is a blip. It will soon be gone. So instead of walking around with our stomachs in knots, bewildered and perplexed, wringing our hands, fretting and worrying about what's gonna happen, we need to fix our gaze on Christ. That's it. We need to set our hearts on what Jesus has promised us, the kingdom of God, because our future in him is nothing but bright and glorious.

Unless your heart is tied to the world, you're not destined to be swept away with the world in all of the judgments that are coming. If you still have some strings attached, you need to cut them now because this ship is sinking. So don't go down with the *Titanic*. Don't rearrange the deck furniture on a sinking ship. As Christians, our, our future is bright. Our hope is certain and eternal. "For all the promises of God find their Yes, and Amen in Christ."

That is what Jesus is speaking of today and that's the mindset. I want you to grab that; I want you to have that. I'm praying that the Holy Spirit will instill and strengthen and auger that in and work it into the very fabric of your soul so that you do not struggle during the times we are going through, so that you rejoice instead with great confidence. This is, this sermon is all about, this is what Jesus is teaching here, it's all about your assurance. It's all about your confidence and strength in him. The verses here, 29 to 32, they divide into two points, two verses for each point. So first point, what not to seek; second point, what to seek.

Okay, first point: What not to seek. What not to pursue, which I'm going to state in this way. To live with a kingdom perspective, first, refuse what's mundane and trivial. That's the point. Refuse what is mundane and trivial. To live with a kingdom perspective, you want to refuse what is mundane and what is trivial. Just refuse it, turn away from it. Refuse to join the mad dash of the world, to, to keep on seeking what is mundane and trivial, what is common, what is passing away. Gives a command in verse 29, and you'll notice there it's a two-fold command about what not to seek. And then in the next verse, verse 30, he gives two reasons why we should obey that command. So two-fold command, and then two reasons.

Let's start with the two-fold command in verse 29. He says, "And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried." That second, that's a command, "nor be worried." It's a, more literally, it's do not keep worrying. So two imperatives, two commands: do not seek, do not be worried. Do not seek, do not be worried. They're present-tense commands, both of them. Which means there is this continuous, ongoing sense. So it's, do not keep on seeking, do not keep on worrying. Those two issues are connected, aren't they; what you seek, what you worry

about? They're connected. What you seek and what you pursue that is obviously going to be a constant preoccupation for you. It's going to be a continuous reason for deep and abiding concern for you. And Jesus forbids both, constant worrying, along with what causes it, which is the thing that you're seeking. So stop doing that. Stop living that way.

When Jesus says, "Do not seek what you are to eat or what you are to drink," it might seem like he is just simply summarizing what he said in the immediately preceding verses; the immediately preceding context, in verses 22 to 28, might seem like a summary statement. Don't, "Don't seek what you are to eat, what you are to drink." But that is not the case. It is not a repetition of that. It's not a summary of that. "Do not be anxious about your life" is what he said in verse 22. He says, "What you'll eat, nor about your body, what you will put on." So that verse and the verses that follow they're confronting anxiety. The command in verse 29, predominant here is, "Do not seek." So that command forbids a certain kind of ambition, not the anxiety per se, the results from chasing it. He's getting to the heart of the matter, forbidding something that is directive

of the will, something that influences what we want. And what is that something?

It takes us back to a sin he confronted earlier. Look at verse 15. He says, "Take care, be on your guard against," what? "All covetousness." So in verse 29, when he says, "Do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink," eating and drinking, joined together like that, in this context, those two actions didn't come up in verses 22 to 28, but they did come up and they were connected together, they are linked together, in the parable of the covetous fool, verse 19. That's what the fool wanted for himself, isn't it? To relax and then eat and drink and then be merry. His relaxation allowed him to consume, eat and drink, and the result of the consuming was merriment. That's about as far as his limited mind could go. That's what heaven looked like to him.

Jesus wants us to take everything that we learned from verses 13 to 21. Remember that covetous younger brother in the crowd, "tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." The rich fool in the parable? He wants us to take all that teaching forbidding covetousness, and he wants us to insert it here in



verse 29. "Don't seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink." Do not seek to fulfill covetous desires; that's what he's saying.

That's the folly of the covetous fool is that he is seeking as his ultimate payoff what he is going to eat and what he is going to drink. That's his utopia. That's his heaven on earth: to kick back, relax, consume at will, indulge his appetites, feed his desires, give himself pleasure. That is the good life. That's what he's after. And Jesus is saying don't do that. Don't seek that. Don't make that your aim. Don't make that your goal, your ambition. Get off that train right now. Stop the mad dash trying to get more and more of what is essentially mundane trivial stuff: food, drink. "Why not? Why shouldn't I pursue that?" Because he says, you are made for so much more. That is what is in his mind. As we can see in verse 29, covetousness and worry they are linked together, aren't they? Inextricably linked. That's why following from that section, verses 13 to 21, all on the, on all on sin of covetousness that falls with 22 to 28, all about anxiety. Because anxiety follows covetousness.

A covetous heart, as we were saying, one a heart that is detached from the worship of God, will do nothing but covet. It'll do nothing but try to consume and fill empty voids, spaces, and it will never be satisfied because our hearts were made for worshiping God and God alone. You cut off that lifeline and you're dangling and consuming everything in the created world. Coveting, coveting, coveting, never, never fulfilling, and so you're anxious, anxious, anxious. Same thing here. That's why Jesus connects the two commands, "Do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink," and put literally here, "Do not keep on worrying." Again, we saw that in the parable of the rich fool. Coveting produced anxiety even in him; saw into his thought life there. Jesus brought us into that, so Jesus forbids it.

There's a different verb here than in verse 22. In verse 22, Jesus, when he commanded against anxiety, he commanded, used the verb *merimnao*, "Do not be anxious." Here, it's *meteorizomai*, from *meteoros*. It's where we get our word for meteor. *Meteoros*, the word, *meteoros*, it refers to something that is suspended in midair, like a meteor, suspended up just hanging there. Greek scholar A.T. Robertson puts it this way. He says, it's to, "The

word," the word, "means to lift up on high, to lift oneself up with false hopes, to be buoyed up." And then, then he uses a metaphor, "It's to be tossed like a ship at sea; a ship that goes up and hangs there on a wave." Picture here of anxiety, doubt, instability in the mind, lifted up, standing firmly in midair.

That metaphor of a ship at sea, I don't know if you've ever been on a ship at sea in the middle of a very violent storm, but there's a feeling of instability being caught up in a severe tempest, tossed around by a very powerful storm. This is, this is referring to a double-mindedness that comes from being driven in one direction by the wind of a desire, then blown in another direction by a worry, and then pulled in yet another direction by a different desire, blown by the wind of yet another anxiety. This is about the doubting man in James 1:6 who is caught always in two minds. The one who doubts, what is he like? "The wave of the sea," right, "that is driven and tossed by the wind." Let not that man expect to, "receive anything from God; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."

Conflicting desires create worry, instability in the mind. He's carried up to the crest of the wave like a ship on the sea in the middle of the storm. And once at the top, he's exposed to these confusing winds, blown left, blown right. Then he falls down into the trough of the wave, down into the very belly of the ocean. He's anxious. From that trough he's looking up at high walls of water on either side of him, feeling like he's going to be crushed. Clinical psychologists diagnose people like this as bipolar, as manic depressive, and actually we can see from the Bible, this man is just suffering from competing lusts. Going up, going down, going up, going down, tossed to and fro by care and anxiety. Isaiah calls them the wicked, Isaiah 55, er, 57:20, they are like, "The wicked are like the storm-tossed sea, for it cannot be still, and its waters churn up mire and muck." Jesus commands his disciples; that is not for you. That is not the way I want your minds to be. Don't do that. Don't live that way. Stop the mad dash, refuse to join this endless pursuit that the world pursues of mundane and trivial things. Why? Because you're made for so much more.

To this two-fold prohibition, don't seek, don't be worrying, he adds a two-fold reason, verse 30. Why not seek what they

seek? Why not be anxious like they are? "For the nations of the world seek after these things," number one. And, "your father knows that you need them," number two. Two reasons. Reason number one, first reason, not to seek to fulfill covetous desires, not to be preoccupied by worry, be double-minded, because that is what idolators act like. Don't be like them. "Nations of the world" that is a distributive statement there, as in "all the nations of the world," each and every nation that does not know, does not worship the true and living God, each one of them is characterized by exactly this. That is why nations continue to go to war.

Human history is a history of warfare. From top to bottom, kings to peasants, old to young, men, women, every nation, everyone in it, the nations of the world don't just seek these things, they strongly seek these things. It's an intensified form of the verb here, the verb *zeteo*. It's intensified with a preposition, *epiezeteo*. It's intensified, strongly seeking. So covetousness drives their ambition. It is an idolatry that frustrates all their efforts. They seek diligently for food and drink. They seek diligently, endlessly, striving for filling themselves, finding fulfillment, and nothing ultimately fulfills

them. They make intensive search and extensive search the world over for what will satisfy their covetous desires, and they are never ever, ever, satisfied. Why do they keep searching, never finding rest? Because they have no heavenly father. They don't have a father. There idols that they serve, nothing but dead, rotting wood. That money you have in your pocket, colored green, fancy printing, it's dead wood. That's all it is. It's just colored with green paint.

God says through Jeremiah, Jeremiah 2:13, "My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters," and second evil, "is to hew out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water." They don't deliver and satisfy, because they *can't* deliver and satisfy. So Jesus is putting it to his disciples this way. He says, You're, you're not like the nations of the world. You're not like them at all, with no father in heaven to take care of their needs, no father to fulfill the deepest desires of the heart. The nations of the world are idolaters. They know nothing of God's providential kindness and care. They're foreigners to that, strangers to that. Don't mimic them. They're ignorant of fatherly love and compassion and care. They're ignorant. Don't mimic that.

Don't chase what they chase. Don't seek what they seek. Don't make decisions like they do. Don't prioritize what they do. Don't involve yourself in the same pursuits. Why not?

Reason number two, reason number two: Because, why not seek what they seek? Why not be preoccupied with their worries? Verse 30, because, "Your father," your, is emphasized there, "Your father knows that you need them." He emphasizes this possessive pronoun, your. Your: again calling attention to the fact that his disciples are not like the nations of the world, having no father. They, they, they have to rely on provision of lifeless idols, which means since they're lifeless idols and they're just a bunch of dead wood, they gotta rely on themselves. They gotta be their own gods. They gotta provide for themselves, provide for their own protection, all their own stuff, try to fulfill their deepest needs. What are they? Limited human beings, limited power, frail, weak. There is a time fuse on their lifespan. It's gonna end.

No, but you, you have a father who knows what you need. They don't, you do. Not only that, but your father has the power

to deliver what you need to you. When Jesus says, "Your Father knows that you need them." He knows: this is a reference to his omniscience, isn't it? His omniscience, I mean how can Jesus use the plural possessive pronoun there, your. Your, including, I mean it's, y'all, right? It's everyone. And when he speaks to disciples here, he is speaking to a whole bunch of people. Here, he calls them a little flock, so it's a little number at this time. But here we are 2,000 years later. There's us. There is all of us in human history. This promise is for all of us. So when he says, "Your father knows," what is he claiming for God the father? Omniscience. He knows everything perfectly. He knows everything intimately. He knows everything completely. He knows.

His omniscience works in perfect harmony then with his omnipotence. I mean, so much for knowing if you can't do anything about it, right? Not only does he know, but he does something about it. He can do something. He has omnipotence. He, he can provide everything his children need by the wisdom of good providence. You believe that? Good. Then don't seek what they seek. Don't worry. That's what he is saying. You are provided for by a loving, all-knowing father. You're protected by a powerful father, a powerful God, so live that way. Live like you've got a



father in heaven. That's the negative side. That's the prohibition. He prohibits his disciples from following the world around them. He's prohibiting us from following the ways and worries and the seeking and striving of the world around us. Don't seek the mundane and the trivial.

Instead, second point, to live with the kingdom perspective, seek what's glorious and eternal. To live with a kingdom perspective, here's our second point: Seek what is glorious and what is eternal. Verses 31 to 32, "Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you. Fear not, little flock, for it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."