



Good News **for all people.**

The Gospel of Luke

Week 11 **LEADER** Discussion Questions

Week of 11/6/22

Text: Luke 12:13-34

Icebreaker: What's your gut-level response when the church (whether at Calvary or other churches you've been a part of) talks about money?

This is meant to help gauge what kind of experiences people have had and detect whether there might be some strong responses as you dig into the discussion.

1. In verses 13-15, how would you describe Jesus's response to the person from the crowd who wants Jesus to take his side in the dispute over an inheritance? What is it about covetousness, or greed, that would provoke this response from Jesus?

Jesus is firm...and perhaps even mad. This isn't a minor issue as the inheritance seems to be a wedge in the relationship between these brothers. Possessions are temporary. People are eternal. Yet, this is a circumstance where the temporary is potentially harming what's lasting. Greed has this kind of self-absorbed impact as it takes over a person's life.

Application: Maybe you're all too familiar with this kind of scenario. How can money get in the way of relationships?

Some may have first-hand experience with this. Proceed with care as some may be part of a family that has had long-term damage from this very kind of scenario.

2. In the parable of verses 16-21, what do you notice about the man's line of thinking that's problematic?

Notice the pronouns—"I" and "my." This man is even talking to and reasoning with himself. The picture is of someone entirely self-centered and concerned only for his own interests.

Application: How would you compare the attitude and planning of this man in the parable with our own culture's attitude about money and possessions?

There are a lot of different comments that could fit here. We should point out that a wealthy person and a poor person (and everyone in between) can struggle with covetousness. It's not only a problem for the rich! We might think of spending our lives to build financial portfolios that are self-serving rather than for the good of others too. It's not bad to save and invest. It's not bad to have resources or even significant wealth; however, the problem arises when we stockpile and accumulate wealth to primarily benefit ourselves while ignoring the needs of others.

3. In verses 22-31, why does Jesus command his disciples to not be anxious or worried about their lives? What are the things Jesus is telling them to not be anxious about?

Jesus tells them that God knows the needs of the disciples and can be trusted to provide the necessities of life—food, water, and clothing. They are of more value than those other parts of God's creation that he sustains, so they don't need to worry about their own sustenance.

Application: Think of the expectations we have about the kind of standard of living, or “creature comforts,” we should attain. How do you think they impact our experience of anxiety?

It’s important to view this in its context. Jesus is not promising large homes, luxury cars, or high-compensation jobs. Most of us reading these questions have never faced the struggle over whether we’ll have enough food to eat to survive and might even have a skewed vision of what we actually need to survive. Our lives can become complicated by the assets we own and the wealth we have. These can lead to a greater level of anxiety for us than those who have little choice but to simply trust God to provide food, water, and clothing. We might pray about whether anxiety we might be feeling could be eased through a greater generosity.

4. Jesus tells us in verses 30-31 that there’s a distinction between Jesus’s followers who trust God to provide and “all the nations of the world” that “seek after these things.” What do you think it means to “Instead, seek his kingdom?”

The answer seems to at least include the instruction of verse 33. More fundamentally, though, seeking the kingdom happens when Jesus’s followers trust God to provide what they need to survive. This faith is the foundation from which an anxiety-free life over life’s necessities can be built that results in generosity toward others. We are encouraged to live generously when we have no fear of whether we will have enough ourselves. This generosity towards others is part of what it means to seek the kingdom.

Application: Do you notice a difference in what you observe about how Christians and non-Christians handle money? Explain.

5. Verses 32-34 allude to God as Shepherd, Father, and King. How do these roles help instill faith that God can be trusted to provide so that Jesus’s followers can be generous toward others?

These images or roles should help us think about the care and strength and provision of God. People who are unconcerned about whether they’ll have enough or be taken care of are generally able to live with a greater generosity because there’s no “competition.” There’s no concern that the generosity shown to another will endanger one’s own livelihood.

Application: Let’s meddle a bit! What do you have that you don’t need and could sell to give to the needy? Consider how you might do it as a LifeGroup to make it a collective effort.