

Luke 11:33-12:3

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Preacher: Jonathan Lee

[0:00] Good evening, church.

First of all, happy Mother's Day to all our moms here tonight. I hope you had a wonderful Mother's Day so far. Preparing a sermon for a total rookie preacher like me can be a daunting task.

But this week, I am so grateful to God because He has given me so much grace. First of all, I just stumbled upon this wonderful book by Paul Miller.

And the book is called Love Walked Among Us. And I found a lot of resources in this book, just purely by accident. I picked up this book and I just found a lot of resources that, you know, helped me prepare for tonight's sermon.

And secondly, you know, I am grateful to our pastors because they've been very supportive and also very encouraging.

[1:26] So, you know, for somebody who just preached like two, three times in his whole life, it can be a very nerve-racking task.

But with a lot of support and a lot of encouragement from our pastors, you know, the task can be also a lot less daunting. So, I thank my pastors.

And, you know, as we were called to encourage one another, I also, you know, gently urge all of us to, as we encourage one another, don't forget to encourage our pastors.

Last Sunday, Pastor Greg taught us about how Jesus met oppositions.

As he cast out demons, there were people saying, oh, he must be the prince of demons. And they were demanding, you know, heavenly signs.

[2:32] And Jesus said, there is no sign for you except the sign of Jonah. Somebody greater than Jonah is here, but, and yet, you guys still refuse to believe.

And tonight, we continue. So, Jesus, after, you know, telling the group, the people that there is no sign other than Jonah, he resumes his teaching by talking about the parable of light.

Now, the interesting thing about this parable is just a couple of chapters before, in Luke chapter 8, he told them the exact same parable about the light.

And this parable is also found in Mark chapter 5, and also found in Matthew chapter 5, verses 14 and 16.

So, this parable must be important and significant for Jesus to repeat all over again. So, tonight's passage, we'll look at from Luke chapter 11, verses 33, all the way to chapter 12, verses 1 to 3.

[3:51] But I'd like to look at the first three verses, and also the last three verses first. Because I believe it's a continuous teaching of Jesus about the parable of light.

But in the middle, he is interrupted by Pharisees, because one of the Pharisees invite him to a meal. So, let's turn to Luke chapter 11.

It's found on page 870 in your pew Bible. We'll read chapter 11, verses 33 to 36, and then we'll skip to chapter 12, verses 2 and 3.

No one, after lighting a lamp, puts it in a cellar or under a basket, but on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light.

Therefore, your eye is the lamp of your body. When your body is healthy, your whole, I'm sorry, when your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light.

[5:05] But when it is bad, your body is full of darkness. Therefore, be careful, lest the light in you be darkness.

If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, it will be wholly bright. As when a lamp with its rays gives you light.

Now, we're going to chapter 12, verses 2 and 3. Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed or hidden that will not be known. Therefore, whatever you have said in the dark shall be heard in the light.

And whatever you have whispered in private rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops. Now, just quickly go back a few chapters to Luke chapter 8, verses 16 and 17.

It's on page 8, 865. Chapter 8, verses 16 and 17.

[6:11] No one after lighting a lamp covers it with a jar or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a stand so that those who enter may see the light.

For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light.

So, I mean, this sounds like a very, you know, pretty common sense, right? Who puts the lamp under a basket or hides the light?

The whole purpose of light is to illumine in the room. But why is Jesus... Talks about this parable over and over, and all three Gospels record this parable.

What is the significance and what is the importance about this parable? So, what is this light that Jesus is talking about?

[7:20] Or could it be who is Jesus talking about when he talks about this light? Now, in John chapter 3, Jesus, you know, Jesus told us, the light has come into the world.

But people did not like the light. Because when the light came, the things that were done in darkness, all their evil deeds, their sinful nature was revealed.

So, what Jesus is telling us here is, when you receive me, when you have Jesus in you, when you have the Gospel, when you have Jesus' mission in you, now you bear the light.

In Matthew chapter 5, the same parable, Jesus tells us, you are the city on the hill. Cannot be hidden. So, I will just read from John chapter 3.

You don't have to go there. The light has come into the world, and people love the darkness rather than the light, because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.

[8:51] But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that he may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.

So, in this first three verses of tonight's passage, Jesus tells us, you are the light.

If you receive me, and do what I tell you to do, you are like the light that's supposed to be standing on a lampstand. Not be hidden, not be covered, but to make the room bright, chasing away all the darkness.

And in chapter 12, verse 2, you know, verse 8, it was in, it was one, you know, he talks about the lamp, and then he says, nothing will be hidden.

In this chapter, it was broken up in chapter 11 and chapter 12, like I said, because before he even finished telling the disciples what he said in verse 2 and 3, he was invited to have a meal with the Pharisee.

[10:15] So, Jesus is keep telling his disciples and us, you guys are the light, and you guys are supposed to shine the light by, you know, obeying my words and do what I tell you to do.

And then we will explore more of that when we come back after we study the next section. So now, let's look at Luke chapter 11, verses 37 to 53.

So as Jesus is having a meal at this Pharisee's house, he also exposes their hypocrisy.

The same account, the more detailed and more expanded account of this, this parallel account, my kids are laughing right now, because every time I say the word parallel, they think I don't pronounce it correctly.

So, sometimes, you know, they'll sit me down and say, Dad, this is how you say the word parallel, parallel. So, every time I use the word parallel, they are laughing. They're picking on their poor immigrant dad.

[11:47] So, the same account is also found in Matthew chapter 23. We're not going to go there. If you want to look at it later, it is much more detailed account of what Pharisees and the lawyers.

So, basically, the Pharisees, if you're not familiar with the term, these were the religious leaders at the time. They were the Bible teachers and the lawyers because it was during the theocratic society.

The lawyers, pretty much, they're the religious law experts. So, Pharisees and the religious law experts, they are watching what Jesus is doing and they are just basically kind of trying to see what he says to, you know, trap him.

verse 37. While Jesus was speaking, a Pharisee asked him to dine with him.

So, he went in and reclined at the table. The Pharisee was astonished to see that he did not first wash before dinner.

[13:07] So, they must have said, you know, to themselves, look at him. He doesn't even wash. What kind of teacher is he?

So, Jesus knew what they were thinking. Verse 38. And the Lord said to him, now you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness.

So, these so-called religious leaders, experts in Bible, they were so focused on how they appear in public.

In other parts of the gospel, you know, they make these long prayers. They would like to pray in public. They want people to see how they pray, what they pray.

There was one incident where, you know, this Pharisee is just praying to God and he sees a tax collector who couldn't even raise his head and yet he says, thank God, you know, I am not like this tax collector.

[14:21] I fast, I do this, I do that, thank God, I am not like him. So, the Pharisees were so, so, it's almost like they're just image driven.

as long as they appear holy and, you know, righteous in front of the people and yet, inside, Jesus said, you guys are just full of wickedness and greed.

Verse 30, verse 39, and the Lord, I'm sorry, verse 40, you fools, did not him who made the outside make the inside also, but give as elms those things that are within and behold, everything is clean for you.

But woe to you, Pharisees, for you tithe mint and rue and every herb and neglect justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done without neglecting the others.

So, even giving offering or tithe, giving one tenth, they are so careful whatever they grow in their garden, whether it's a mint, any kind of herb, they are so careful to even give ten percent of that.

- [15:52] And I sometimes wonder whether they did that so they can say, oh, look at so and so. they consume all their vegetables, their gluttons. Look at me.

I give tenth of everything including all the things that I grow in the garden. I wonder if they missed the real, what God really wants from us is heart of David.

King David said, everything came from you, from what we have received from your hand, we give back. So, it's almost like returning a portion.

Do we really give something to God or are we just simply returning some portion of it that we receive from God? Apostle Paul says, God loves cheerful giver.

So, these Pharisees, sometimes I wonder whether they did this so methodically to look good, to appear, I am so holy.

- [17:01] Everything that I grow, even the little herbs, I give tenth back, you know, as a tide. And Jesus says, but you guys neglect looking after the poor.

giving to the poor. You guys do all these things, but you neglect justice and you neglect to look after the poor.

Verse 43, woe to you Pharisees, for you love the best seat in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. Again, they like to be revered, I'm sure they were.

because people probably looked up to them because they were, you know, religious leaders and because they constantly kept up this image of being holy and righteous.

I'm sure a lot of people, they looked up to them. But Jesus said, you guys are looking for greetings in a marketplace.

- [18:11] Probably, you know, they enjoy being called rabbi, teacher. when people called them rabbi, when people greeted them, when they were sitting at the best seat in the synagogue, they were probably just gloating.

But, is that, is that the attitude Jesus had? Did Jesus come to be respected, honored, seated at the best seat in the synagogue?

Basically, did he come here to be served? served. It was totally opposite. Jesus came to serve, instead of being served.

But the Pharisees here, it sounds like, they just want to be served, instead of serving. They want to be greeted at a marketplace, be called teachers, rabbis.

verse 44, woe to you, for you are like unmarked graves, and people walk over them without knowing it.

- [19:27] In the Old Testament, if you come in contact with the dead body or grave, you are considered unclean for seven days. So, people are very careful not to touch the dead body or touch the grave.

But what Jesus is saying is, you guys are like unmarked graves. People may associate with you not knowing what's inside of you.

You may appear holy and righteous on the outside, but inside, because you are full of greed and arrogance and wickedness, it's almost like you caused them to sin.

If the graves were marked, people would not have touched it. But because Pharisees were like unmarked graves, people stumble upon them.

And verse 40, 45, now one of the lawyers answered him, teacher, in saying these things, you insult us also. And he said, woe to your lawyers also, for you load people with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers.

[20:47] Woe to you, for you build the tombs of the prophets whom your fathers killed. So you are witnesses and you consent to the deeds of your fathers, for they killed them and you build their tombs.

so now the religious law experts are offended. So they say, Jesus, why are you offending us?

And Jesus said, because you guys make these incredible demands. You have to do this, this, this, this. You make these demands on people and you don't even lift your finger to help them.

And then he also talks about your forefathers have killed all these prophets. And then you build the tomb, the monuments, so you're basically consenting to it.

So in Matthew chapter 23, these lawyers tell Jesus, well, the lawyers have this thing, they say, well, if we lived in our ancestors' time, we would have never done that.

[22:09] They say, if we lived during our ancestors' time, we would have never killed those prophets. So again, they have this self-righteous attitude.

And Jesus keeps pointing these out. Verse 52. I'm sorry, verse 49.

Therefore, also the wisdom of God said, I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute, so that the blood of all the prophets shed from the foundation of the world may be charged against this generation.

from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it will be required of this generation.

So throughout the Old Testament, you'll see how when prophets come, so prophets are like the light.

[23:24] they come and they tell the nation, you guys are doing wrong. You guys are worshipping idols, you need to turn from worshipping idols, you need to turn to God.

So they are lights pointing people to God, but so many of the prophets, they were killed. So many kings, when you read the kings and the chronicles, when they don't like what they hear, they will put prophets in prison or kill them altogether.

So Jesus is saying, you ancestors and you guys are guilty of this. And isn't that true, how they continue to do that?

And eventually they kill Jesus. Verse 52, woe to you lawyers for you have taken away the key knowledge, key of knowledge.

You did not enter yourselves and you hindered those who are, who were entering. I believe the key knowledge that they were sort of putting behind while they were loading people with these burdensome rituals and the laws they demand.

[24:58] The key knowledge, I believe, is love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might, and love your neighbor.

Instead of pointing the people to God and his kingdom, these law experts would just keep laying down these rules and laws.

So they, instead of focusing on what's really important and crucial, they are just focusing on these other things.

so in Deuteronomy chapter 10 verses 12 to 20, this is what God told his people.

And now Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you? God, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the Lord, which I am commanding you today for your good.

- [26:24] Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, and the earth with all that is in it. Yet the Lord set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them.

You above all peoples, as you are this day, circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart and be no longer stubborn. For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe.

He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner, therefore, for you are sojourners in the land of Egypt.

You shall fear the Lord your God, you shall serve him and hold fast to him, and by his name you shall swear. So God told his people to love me, and then have compassion on fatherless, the widow, the sojourners, basically people who can be marginalized in society.

And yet, the scribes, the lawyers, and the Pharisees, it sounds like they completely ignored this, and they were so busy putting themselves in public, having the form of holiness, but inside, it was all just their greed, wickedness, neglecting the poor.

- [28:17] In other parts of the gospel, Jesus rebukes lawyers, because they were swallowing up, probably, with those properties, using their technicality to take up with those properties.

So, what can we learn from, you know, all this exposed hypocrisy of Pharisees and lawyers?

are we to just say, oh, you know, those are terrible people, they're a bunch of hypocrites? I think we, we need to also, you know, examine ourselves, reflect upon this.

The book that I just mentioned, Love Walked Among Us, he mentions three interesting things. He says, judging, blocks compassion.

Judging blocks compassion. Self-righteousness blocks compassion. Legalism blocks compassion.

- [29:34] And I would like to just share a couple of points from that book. Paul Miller says, we are remarkably perceptive of others' shortcomings and sins, but curiously blind to our own.

We are remarkably perceptive of others' shortcomings and sins, but curiously blind to our own. people. We'll often notice things wrong with people, but does that initial look lead to compassion and helping or to judging and distance?

We'll often notice things wrong with people, but does that initial look lead to compassion and helping or to judging and distance?

When we realize that we don't have it all together, we can care for people because we no longer feel morally superior to them.

Consequently, we are quicker to help than to give advice, quicker to listen than to lecture. Lastly, Paul Miller says, our helplessness is the door to the knowledge of God.

- [30:58] without changing the heart, obsessing over rules is like spray painting garbage. I think we all are guilty or at least have done this to others, whether we have done this to our family members, our coworkers, our friends, or even in our church community.

that we judged. We felt, hey, I am, I never do that. This, I am holier than thou kind of attitude, this arrogance.

And maybe sometimes we really push that legalism. so, if I can make a contrast between the platform that Pharisees and the scribes were standing on, it was judging.

It was self-righteousness and arrogance and the legalism. Now, Jesus, on the other hand, he's standing on this platform that is abundantly mercy, love, compassion, and forgiveness.

What a contrast. Now, in John chapter 8, there is this woman who was caught in the middle of adultery.

[32 : 49] So, they brought this woman, you know, in that time, in that society, it was lawful to stone this woman to death.

And they brought her to Jesus and they start asking Jesus, Moses told us to stone someone like this who was committing adultery.

What do you say? And Jesus wrote something on the ground and then he told the crowd, those of you who have never sinned, throw the first stone.

And then one by one, the Bible says, starting from the old to young, they dropped the stone and then they walked away.

at the end, it was just the woman and Jesus. And Jesus asked the woman, woman, where are they?

[34 : 03] Has no one condemned you? She said, no one, Lord. And Jesus said, neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.

No more. instead of having judgmental, I am better than you, I am holier than you, or being so caught up in legalism, can we be, can we be like Jesus?

Neither do I condemn you. Jesus had every right, to condemn this woman.

Jesus had every right to judge her, punish her, and condemn her. But Jesus didn't. The mercy, the forgiveness, the compassion, Jesus said, I do not condemn you either.

Go and sin no more. How quickly we judge our brothers and sisters. How quickly we judge our co-workers, our family members.

[35 : 21] And how often we feel, hey, I, just like the scribe, the lawyers said, if we lived during our ancestors' time, we would have never killed those prophets, never.

And how often we have that same attitude. Oh, I would have never done that. I would have never done that. and how quickly we apply.

Well, that's against the law, that's against the Bible, that's against this. Using the legalism to put others down. And I would also like to ask, I'm sure some of us here tonight were hurt in the past, or maybe still hurting from these remarks, or people passed, you know, judgment on you, or people pressed you with legalism.

Maybe you were taught in a such a, in a very legalistic you know, teachings. Whatever it is, if you are carrying such a burden, or wounds from the past, bring it to Jesus, where is he's waiting.

He's waiting for us with mercy, compassion, love, and forgiveness.

[37 : 03] People may have hurt you in the past, with this Pharisee-like, scribe-like teachings and attitude, but what Jesus is saying is, come to me.

I do not condemn you. Come and receive healing, receive mercy, receive my love, my compassion. now, chapter 12, verse 1.

In the meantime, when so many thousands of people had gathered together, that they were trampling one another, he began to say to his disciples first, beware of the leaving of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. Therefore, whatever you have said in the dark shall be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops.

Verse 3 was a little bit, it was a little bit tricky. what is he saying that all this hypocrisy will be revealed, or is he saying, you have light in you, and proclaim the gospel.

[38 : 41] Now, next week, Pastor Matt is going to continue chapter 12 where Jesus talks about, do not fear the man, acknowledge me before man.

So, I wonder if verse 3, chapter 12 verse 3 is Jesus leading people, his disciples saying, proclaim the gospel.

Do not fear man, acknowledge me before man. Now, now, now, now, now, now, now, now, now, now, now, now, now, the light, going back to the light, parable of light, I will read this parable from Matthew, chapter 5, verses 14 to 16, and listen to what Jesus is telling all of us to do.

You are the light of the world, a city set on a hill cannot be hidden, nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.

In the same way, let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

[40 : 11] heaven. So, do you have Jesus' light in you? And are you let the light shine so that people around you can be drawn to that light?

Or are we still in the darkness like the Pharisees and the law experts because we're so busy judging and we feel that we are doing okay, holy, better than others?

Oh, I keep the law. I read the Bible and I follow the Bible. Are we all just wrapped up in that which is basically darkness?

Or are we like Jesus where the light shines and the mercy and love and compassion and forgiveness just flows out to others?

In a minute, we're going to sing a song that talks about there is a fountain and this fountain consists of Jesus' blood.

[41 : 43] Come to the fountain and receive the light so that we can be the light of the world.

Whatever it is, bring it to Jesus. whatever that was you're struggling in the darkness, when you receive Jesus and when he is the source of light in you, it will clear away the darkness.

Every corner of the room will be illumined. So, we are the light of the world and let our light shine before others so that they may see our good works and give glory to our Father who is in heaven.

Let us pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Lord Jesus, thank you for coming to this world and thank you for being the light that chases away all the darkness and Lord we pray that we will have you, the gospel, your mission in us like a bright light that shines so that others can see the light and be equally be blessed and all that we do, Lord, help us to do for the glory of God.

In Jesus name we pray. Amen. Let's stand together and let's sing. there's a fountain filled with our drawn from Emmanuel's hand, and sinners' plans beneath and blood lose all.