

Would You Stand Still in a Fire?

Sunday, March 17 – 8:00 & 10:45

Second Sunday in Lent – 2019

Wednesdays of Lent: Services at 11 & 7; Meals at 12 & 6

Introduction: Dear friends: Can you imagine *laying down your life*, so that others could live? Jesus did that for us – *because He loves us!* He said, “**Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends**” (John 15:13 NAS). Jesus taught the following, *prior to today’s text*, as recorded in Luke chapter 12, *as He journeyed to Jerusalem*:

- ✦ Beware of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees!
- ✦ Fear God, but do not fear people!
- ✦ Acknowledge to others that you know me!
- ✦ Be rich in God, but not in the things of this world!
- ✦ Do not be anxious, God will provide what you need!
- ✦ Be ever ready for my unexpected return!
- ✦ I have come to divide believers and unbelievers!
- ✦ Recognize the significance of my words!
- ✦ Repent now before the final judgment!

In today’s text Jesus will **urge** others, **express** His own determination, and **show** concern for the unrepentant.

1. **The Setting:** ³¹ **At that very hour...** // Just prior to today’s text, Jesus had been teaching about the kingdom of God, and He said, “**Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able... [Jesus also said:] some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last**” (Lk. 13:24, 30 ESV).

- a. The Lutheran Study Bible has this explanation:

“Outsiders and people from the dregs of society (tax collectors, sinners, and Gentiles) will be saved, while supposed insiders and important people (religious and civil leaders) will lose out. The determining factor is **faith in Jesus, not wealth or social status**” (TLSB, 13:30).
 - b. When Jesus mentioned about *the first being last, thus being shutout of God’s kingdom*, those words may have **hit a nerve** with the Pharisees! Maybe they understood that Jesus was talking about people like them – *who were important in the eyes of others and who trusted in themselves for eternal life!*
2. **A Warning: ...some Pharisees came and said to him, “Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.”**
- a. That is quite an unusual statement from Pharisees, *since those who were Pharisees generally opposed Jesus. And why the opposition? Jesus taught that *He is the way to heaven*, while the Pharisees believed *they could earn their way to heaven by following the law*.*
 - b. On the surface, their warning makes it sound like they were trying to help Jesus; however, Dr. Just, *in the Concordia Commentary*, made this comment: **“the motive for their warnings about Herod’s evil intents may be to turn Jesus from his appointed path, to keep Jesus from completing God’s plan of salvation”** (559).
 - c. Think about Jesus: He was born to die, so He came to live for us, and then to die for us – *just outside of Jerusalem!* If Jesus would have listened to their warning and run away, *He would have showed Himself to be a false prophet*. But that was certainly not the case; *see below!*

3. **Jesus' Determination:**

- a. ³² **And he said to them, “Go and tell that fox, ‘Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I finish my course. //** What is meant by “today and tomorrow”? Those words “**describe Jesus’ ministry of releasing those captive in bondage to Satan, sickness, and sin**” (CC, 560). *Jesus did that work over and over again!* Then, Jesus spoke about His course and “the third day.” What does that mean? Jesus told His disciples, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day” (Matt. 20:18-19 ESV). So “the third day” is when Jesus was raised, *thus finished His course – from His birth to His resurrection!*
- b. ³³ **Nevertheless, I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following, for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem.’ //** It is unlikely that the three days are literal. This is the point: Jesus ♣ was determined and ♣ kept pressing forward to Jerusalem! And why? Since He † is a prophet, † knows He will be condemned in Jerusalem and † knows he will die just outside of Jerusalem!

4. **Jesus' Great Concern for the Unrepentant:** ³⁴ **O**

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! // Since God loved Jerusalem so much, *over and over again He sent prophets to proclaim His Word and call the people to*

repent. However, and sadly, over and over again, those messengers of God were brutally murdered! Even though the hen and chick story tied to Yellowstone National Park seems to be a myth, *a hen DOES protect her chicks under her wings and COULD give her life to save the lives of her chicks caught in a fire!* So Jesus, like a mother hen, *invites all to gather under the protection of His wings;* then He endured hell, *so that we – through Him – might all have heaven!* As many in Jerusalem **“were not willing,”** so we are also unwilling in various ways... to **▶**read the Bible, **▶**forgive others, **▶**gather here, **▶**attend BC, and **▶**put God’s Word into practice in our lives! Let us each ask: In what way am I resisting God’s help, guidance, or protection?

5. **The Promised End of Jerusalem:** ³⁵ **Behold, your house is forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!’** // Jesus spoke of **“...your house,”** thus *God’s house*, the temple in Jerusalem, *which was the place of the daily sacrifices.* And what did Jesus come to do? To offer Himself as the ***once for all sacrifice!*** Therefore, the temple sacrifices should have ceased, *but they did not until the destruction of the temple in AD 70.* Regarding the words, **“Blessed is he who comes...”** Jesus was looking ahead to *Palm Sunday* and even *His final return in glory!*

This Week’s Challenge: Think about Jesus staying on the cross for YOUR salvation; what is your response?

Let Us Pray: Dear Lord Jesus, as You did not flee *but stayed on the cross to bear our sins and our punishment*, help us to **▶**be thankful, **▶**trust in You, and **▶**be devoted to You!

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