



The ROAD LESS TRAVELED

The Road Less Traveled (Luke) Sept 17: The Coming Kingdom

Series Summary: In the middle section of the Gospel of Luke, we see a unique aspect of Jesus' ministry- his life and ministry on the road. We see him interact with strangers, answer difficult questions, and teach with boldness. Along the way, Jesus teaches his disciples —and us as well —what the Kingdom of God is and what it means to follow Him.

Big Idea: If we are busy trying to create our own kingdoms in this life, then we have missed the supreme importance of the coming kingdom- an eternal kingdom.

Schedule:

- Live teaching
- Small group

LIVE TEACHING

Series Lead in: In the middle section of the Gospel of Luke, we see a unique aspect of Jesus' ministry, his life and ministry on the road. We see him interact with strangers, answer difficult questions, and teach with boldness. Along the way, Jesus teaches his disciples —and us as well —what the Kingdom of God is and what it means to follow Him.

Luke 12:13 Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”

The Old Testament laws covered most cases (Num 26–27; 33:54; 36; Deut 21:17), but sometimes an issue would arise that needed intervention in order to make a

decision. **Problems like this were often brought to rabbis for them to settle** (see 10:38–42).¹

Luke 12:14-15 Jesus replied, “Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?” **15** Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”

Transition - Jesus wanted to set the stage for what we are to ultimately value.

Luke 12:16-17 And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. **17** He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’

What a great problem to have! If this is your greatest problem, you have been blessed. But here is the issue: it is often the blessings that we receive from God that we turn into stumbling blocks and sinful idols. The issue is not with the possessions or blessings God has given us. The issue is with our hearts.

Luke 12:18 “Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. (A fairly wise thing to do, not necessarily bad. However, look at his frame of mind...)

Luke 12:19 And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.” ’

The mindset was that when I have enough saved up and I have reached this level of wealth, I can then begin to enjoy life because I no longer have to work. **His ultimate goal was comfort.**

Point: This, in so many ways, is the American dream. This is what we see every influencer on tiktok and YouTube preach. Do whatever makes you happy. You deserve whatever brings you comfort. But look at what Jesus says to us living with only this in mind...

Luke 12:20-21 “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’ **21** “This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”

¹ Bruce Barton et al., Life Application New Testament Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 2001), 308.

Jesus wanted to make it abundantly clear that if we live for this life, we have missed the point. If we are busy trying to create our own kingdoms in this life, we have missed the supreme importance of the coming kingdom, an eternal kingdom.

Transition - How do I go about doing that?

Luke 12:22 Then Jesus said to his disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear.

This life is about more than just the here and now. This life is not about my kingdom. **This life is meant to be invested in the coming kingdom.** Therefore, I will not allow the worries of today, this life, and this kingdom, to consume me.

Luke 12:24-26 Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! **25** Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life? **26** Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?

Worry is a thief, and it steals our most valuable commodities. Your worry steals your time, happiness, and peace (all gifts from God) and gives you nothing in return.

Luke 12:27-30 "Consider how the wild flowers grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. **28** If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! **29** And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. **30** For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them.

Our eternity is the ultimate answer to our worries today. God cares for the lilies that are here today and gone tomorrow. How much more will God provide for you, whom he gave his one and only Son for? If we're consumed with worry about a particular part of our lives then this may call for the big question- is Jesus enough for you? Why do you feel like that part of your life HAS to be there?

Luke 12:31-34 But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. **32** "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. **33** Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. **34** For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Big Idea: If we are busy trying to create our own kingdoms in this life, we have missed the supreme importance of the coming kingdom, an eternal kingdom.

Segway to Small Group: If we are going to live with eternity in mind, we must live with an anticipation of Christ's return. In small group we are going to discuss how we do go about doing that?

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Get them talking: What do you think it means to live for eternity? Put that phrase, “live for eternity” in your own words.

Leader Note: Part of this phrase should mean that we live our lives with urgency in regards to our faith. This means that we die to ourselves daily, and in doing so share Jesus and the Gospel with those who do not yet know him. This is the direction that the rest of the conversation during small groups will go in.

“Living for eternity” can be a difficult mindset to live with because we’re not used to thinking that way. Why is it so easy to only focus on living for the moment instead of living with eternity in mind?

Read Luke 12:35-48 as a group

Leader Note (Context of Judgment): Jesus refers to a coming judgment again and again in the following passage. It is important to differentiate between the two judgments that will happen after Jesus' second coming, the Judgment Seat of Christ and the Great White Throne Judgment. The Judgment Seat of Christ is for believers, focusing on rewards for their works done in faith (2 Cor 5:10, Luke 19:11-26). The Great White Throne Judgment is for unbelievers, resulting in condemnation and eternal separation from God (Rev 20:11-15). The following section of scripture focuses on believers and our accountability for our faithful obedience at the Judgment Seat of Christ. However, the reality of both judgments after Jesus' second coming should impact how we live our lives and seek to obey the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20).

Vs. 35-40: What was Jesus trying to teach his disciples about being ready for his second coming?

Leader Note: Jesus clearly taught that while his second coming was certain, the time in which he would return was not. Therefore, Jesus' second coming is imminent. This means that it is guaranteed. It could happen tomorrow or a thousand years from now. We have no clue.

- (If you see anyone on social media who is saying that they've figured out when Jesus's return is...ignore them. They might try to sound smart, but they have no idea. They're either confused or seeking attention. Thank you for coming to my Ted Talk.)
- We do not know the time or the place (Matt 25:13, & Luke 12:40), but we have been guaranteed that He is coming again (John 14:13). Therefore, we must have an urgency to do all that Christ has commanded us to do (Rom 13:11).

Vs. 42-43: Jesus taught that part of what it means to live in light of his promised second coming is to manage what he has entrusted us with faithfully. What all has God entrusted us with?

Note: I encourage you to make an actual list of any answers that are given. After answers have run out, personally challenge your group to reflect on each answer given so that they see where they might be doing well, and where they may need to improve or make adjustments.

Leader Note: We have been entrusted with a lot, but Most importantly we have been entrusted with sharing the Gospel of Jesus with others. We have been entrusted with the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20) and the Great Commandment (Matt 22:34-40). We have a job/task to do. Yes, going to church is important and instructed. However, our greatest task is to make disciples of all nations.

- We are also entrusted with being good stewards of every relationship, how we spend our time, and the use of our spiritual gifts to bless the body of Christ (the church).

Vs. 45: The servant chose to live as if the master was never returning because he assumed it would be a long time before he came home. We can easily adopt the same mindset in our own lives. What does it look like to live as if Christ is not coming again and eternity is not certain?

Leader Note: The servant lived a life of blatant sin because he did not acknowledge his master's imminent return. We should also understand that sitting idly by and refusing to live out our faith, using the spiritual gifts that God has entrusted to us, is likewise rebellion.

- This is where we can see the concept of "practical atheism". We don't live out our scripture-given callings, we don't use our giftings (or use them selfishly), we simply don't talk about Jesus, we become comfortable in our sin, etc. This is practically living as an atheist. This is where a lack of spiritual urgency, or living in spiritual idleness, can lead us.

Based on this passage and all that we have discussed today, what does it look like to live with eternity at the forefront of our minds?

Leader Note: This is where your encouragement can go a long way. Some students may feel conviction about potential parts of their lives- if they haven't been living out their faith, or blending in with the world. Don't shy away from this conversation; some things may need to be unpacked for a struggling young Christian.

- This may also lead into a great opportunity to present the moment to believe for any student who may not know Jesus. (Verbiage: "Perhaps your response to living with eternity in mind is to believe in Jesus. Believing in Jesus leads to eternal life. I encourage you to accept His invitation to believe".)

Self reflection Question: Where do you see the need to grow in better stewarding of what God has entrusted to you?