

August 26th 2007: Enabled by the Spirit: Luke 12:1-12

Luke chapter 12.....is one of those chapters.....well worth sitting down with.....

In it...find Jesus first teaching His disciples....then the crowd....disciples....back to crowd again

In fact.....at one point→v41→Peter asks.....Lord are you telling this...to us or....?

- **We can understand Peter's confusion**.....

When we consider the potential audience Jesus had

Luke 12 :1 says.....*Meanwhile, when a crowd of many thousands had gathered, so that they were trampling on one another*

- **This was an audience to dream about**

Thousands of people eager to hear what He had to say

This is just what the Pharisees feared most.....That Jesus would get the attention

That the crowds would flock to Him.....Despite knowing that the Pharisees.....

What an opportunity Jesus had to influence so many

But instead he turned away from.....and began first to speak to His disciples

- **And what He said to them was simple.....yet so important**

Because it related to their continuing testimony to Him....as their Lord and Saviour

The key verses are 12:8-9

I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God. But he who disowns me before men will be disowned before the angels of God.

- **The crowds are eager to hear.....when it is easy to do so**

But only those who truly know the Son

Who lives are in the care of the Father.....who numbers even the hairs

Are prepared to stand up for Him.....

To confess His name.....When the going is tough

The opposition fierce

When Jesus spoke these words to His disciples.....He knew what they would face b4

He knew that His church would grow.....despite massive opposition

That the persecution would come.....and with it...the temptation to deny Him as Lord

And Perhaps.....**HE WAS ALSO thinking**.....of His own journey to the cross

How the Pharisees and Jewish leaders.....were even that day...spying upon Him

Seeking any evidence they could find in His own words...behaviour

That they could one day use against Him.....To bring a charge of blasphemy...treason

- **Perhaps**....Reminding Himselfof the Father's love

..and thinking also of how v11-12.....applied not just to.....also to Himself

When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.

Later on.....Jesus said something similar in **Luke 21:12-15**.....

The context is again "Standing for Jesus" in the midst of persecution

But this time Jesus **even says in v14**

But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. For I will give you words and wisdom.....

- **What a tremendous promise this is**::::: The Spirit will give us the words to say

- **This morning our theme has been**.....**sharing the Gospel**.....**Witnessing**

Speaking out for Jesus

And although we are not facing the physical persecution.....

We will still come under attack.....from the evil one.....when we attempt to acknowledge

And often the devil attacks from within

- **It's not that we don't want to share about Jesus**

Or that we don't care about the lost

But many of us.....worry about how to start

Then feel inadequate.....regarding what we will say

- **This promise** regarding the Holy Spirit.....speaks directly against that fear

When we decide to share the Gospel.....

To acknowledge Jesus.....through our example.....through what we say

Then if the opportunity to speak does come....we need not worry

Because God the Spirit.....will bring the right words into

So that's the answer to speaking the words

But how do we get going in the first place

How do we begin to share about Jesus.....when →

our hearts are timid.....right moment doesn't seem to appear ?????

- **The answer is really very simple**

Effective witnessing begins with prayer

- **We pray deliberately**....sincerely....and often.....→ **about** sharing.....God will act

I admit.....whenever I thought of witnessing.....I thought of the doing.....fearful

Prayer I saw as part of the process

- **But in fact.....Prayer is the main part of witnessing**

You start with prayer.....evrything else is part of the process

And surely.....no one is fearful of praying

But the praying must be on target.....(Archery at camp....)

You want to hit.....And that's what this type of prayer is all about

To help you pray on target.....I have given you a prayer guide

Write on top the name.....Then each day if possible.....pray through

The Power of Witnessing begins with Prayer

Name of those you are praying for.....

Prayer: "Lord, work in.....life and give me wisdom on how to effectively reach out to them."

Them:

Ask God to:

- Pull them toward Himself
- Open their eyes to the emptiness of life without Him
- Help them see their need for forgiveness
- Open the person's heart to God's love and truth

You:

Ask God to:

- Help you live a consistent and attractive Christian life
- Make you authentic and honest as you deal with life's ups and downs
- Open doors for spiritual conversations
- Guide those conversations in pace, frequency, and content
- Expand your knowledge so you will be ready to talk about Jesus
- Use you to help lead this person into a relationship with Christ