

**1062 Fearing God, the Holy Spirit, storing wealth in heaven, and seeking first His kingdom  
- Jesus (17)**

**(Verses refer to those in NASB unless otherwise specified, and by Whirlwind.)**

**First of all, the scriptures tell us to fear God and not be afraid of Satan, and use sparrows and hair as examples to talk about God's mercy and grace. Second, we saw that the Holy Spirit will teach us how to speak, emphasizing that the Holy Spirit should not be blasphemed. The third is to store up treasures in heaven, and not to mix up spiritual and worldly matters. Fourth, faith is not self-confidence. It is based on God's words and promises. God will accomplish everything we need. We use examples to illustrate that we need to seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness. And we must be willing to work together with God. For example, the offerings in the New Testament era only require willingness, and those who love the Lord will give whatever they could afford, actively wanting that God's house will not be short of food, and not limiting themselves to giving one-tenth as in the laws of the Old Testament.**

**1. Do not be afraid of Satan, but fear God**

**"Under these circumstances, after so many thousands of people had gathered together that they were stepping on one another, He began saying to His disciples first of all, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. But there is nothing covered up that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known. Accordingly, whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in the inner rooms will be proclaimed upon the housetops. "I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him! Are not five sparrows sold for two cents? Yet not one of them is forgotten before God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows."(Luke 12:1-7)**

**We have already discussed lights and hidden things, so we will not discuss more. In short, it is to beware of the teachings of the Pharisees. They can say but can't do it, and even if they do it, they do it for others to see, not truly from their hearts. Neither the bad thing nor the good behavior that comes out of life can be hidden. Let's now look at the second paragraph regarding 'I say to you.' I used to think that the one who kills the body is talking about Satan, so be afraid of Satan. But Satan can only kill the body, and can't do anything else like killing the soul. Only God can. Thus, it should be said to fear God. Immediately, it uses the hairs and the sparrow as examples, talking about God's mercy and grace.**

**2. The Holy Spirit will teach us how to speak**

**"And I say to you, everyone who confesses Me before men, the Son of Man will confess him also before the angels of God; but he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God. And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him. When they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not worry about**

how or what you are to speak in your defense, or what you are to say; for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say."(Luke 12:8-12)

The beginning basically says, "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."(John 3:18) In the middle, it is unanimously emphasized, "Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come."(Matthew 12:31-32) Never knowingly blaspheme the Holy Spirit since such a sin cannot be forgiven. The last paragraph makes it clear that the Holy Spirit will teach us how to speak.

### **3. Store up treasures in heaven**

"Someone in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." But He said to him, "Man, who appointed Me a judge or arbitrator over you?" Then He said to them, "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions." And He told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man was very productive. And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?' Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.'" But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.'"(Luke 12:13-21)

There are judges in the world, why should they look for Jesus! Do not mix up spiritual things with worldly things. "For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church?"(1 Corinthians 5:12) "Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? If the world is judged by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts? Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more matters of this life?"(1 Corinthians 6:2-3) Regarding what said to store up treasures in heaven, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."(Matthew 6:19-21) Please note that the reason for not storing up treasures on earth is because we need to keep our minds on the things in heaven. By this way, our lives will be changed and our values too. No one would say that Abraham was not very rich on earth. But he was not laying up treasures on earth. He had the blessing of God. We can't tell others things like the philosophy of success, saying that as long as you believe in Jesus, you will succeed. This is untrue. Only God has absolute authority. We can't lie to people like this!

"Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom. "Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves money belts which do not wear

out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."(Luke 12:32-34) Christians are indeed a small flock in the world. "Sell your possessions and give to charity" is not a literal act, like the Russian literary giant Tolstoy who was considering to distribute his property to the poor. Someone testified that when a sister became a widow, she wanted to dispose of a large amount of wealth in her hands. In prayer, she knew that God did not ask her to do so, so she kept them and use them to support many gospel related activities. In relation to the activities, the wealth she kept did more than it could have done if it had been disposed of at the time! To give another practical example, if we meet a ragged person asking for money on the road, should we give it or not? How do you know if the person needs food or buys alcohol? Someone came up with a feasible method, invited that person to have a meal before making a decision, at least he tried his best. It really depends on how we use our earthly treasures and what our hearts are like. Didn't Abraham have much earthly riches? We are to walk in wisdom, not in keeping the law.

#### 4. Seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness

"And He said to His disciples, "For this reason I say to you, do not worry about your life, as to what you will eat; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap; they have no storeroom nor barn, and yet God feeds them; how much more valuable you are than the birds! And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life's span? If then you cannot do even a very little thing, why do you worry about other matters? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; but I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you? You men of little faith! And do not seek what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not keep worrying. For all these things the nations of the world eagerly seek; but your Father knows that you need these things. But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you."(Luke 12:22-31)

It's not that having food is not important, but we must know that we live not only by food, but more importantly, life. The comparison between the body and clothes also refers to this point. All the examples tell us not to worry, there is no good in worrying! Take lilies as an example. Fake flowers are always inferior to real flowers. Nature is the most beautiful. Even grass that is considered inconspicuous by people still has such decorations, let alone people who are so precious! Really, don't be a person of little faith, but seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Our Heavenly Father is not ignorant of our need for food. Doesn't the Lord's Prayer teach us to ask for our daily bread? But don't worry about it like the Gentiles pray, and give everything to God, knowing that He will provide. Let God sit on the throne and arrange everything, instead of hoping for God to listen to us in prayer, wanting to be God in a way. That is like putting the cart before the horse. We should work together with God instead.

Matthew 6:24-34 basically says the same thing. "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. "For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about

**your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life? And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."**

**It is true that there may be different and uncontrollable difficulties every day. Since they are uncontrollable, what can be changed by worrying? Although it's easier said than done, we can see from the following example that it can actually be done. Faith is not self-confidence, it is based on God's words and promises, and God will accomplish everything we need. Take George Miller as an example. In his biography, written by Bonnie Harrey, when referring to the orphanage he founded, he said that once there was no food left before dinner time, he did not tell his co-workers of the problem, but just prayed for this, and someone donated food in due course. We emphasize that from this example we can also see that it is okay to ask something for the kingdom of God and His righteousness, but don't worry about it after praying. And know that when Jesus was tempted, "But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"(Matthew 4:4) So still have to eat, just not by food alone.**

**The Old Testament says very clearly, "From the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength Because of Your adversaries, To make the enemy and the revengeful cease."(Psalm 8:2) Thus, only the willingly offerings were received. Actually, it was so from the time Moses built the Tabernacle (see Exodus 25:2), so in the New Testament era, you must be to work together with God willingly. For example, the Old Testament stipulated that at least tithes should be given (see Malachi 3:8). If everyone obeyed so willingly in the Old Testament era, God's house would not be short of food. The Old Testament is a shadow, and the New Testament is the reality. When it comes to offerings, in the New Testament era, only the widow who willingly donated two small coins was praised by Jesus (see Mark 12:41-44). Jesus hated the Pharisees the most, who obeyed only the letter of the law. In short, the offering in the New Testament era is only required to be willing. People who love the Lord will do whatever they could afford, and actively want God's house not to be short of food. There are many such people who give more than one-tenth in their offering. The law of tithes in the Old Testament era is not needed to be followed nowadays. So, I don't quite understand why some churches still advocate tithes today.**