

# W O R D A T W O R K

Dear Friends:

When I think about the image conjured up by “Converts Or Disciples?”, I wonder what the early Apostles would have considered paramount after spending three and a half years with Jesus. What chief issue occupied their hearts for inculcating into the next generation? What foundational principle would have been most essential to pass on? Would Paul, who had his own divine encounters value the same thing?

According to passages like Second Corinthians 11:12 and 13, Paul’s passion was raising the apostolic standard for ministerial integrity, “But what I do, I will also continue to do, that I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast. For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.” Will our generation restore the pure financial standard protected and propagated by the early church?

Peter expressed the same passion in Second Peter 2:1-3, “But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.” In Acts 8 Peter told Simon his pursuit of gain probably exceeded forgiveness.

Would we expect anything less to be penned by the man who announced the judgments of “Ananias and Sapphira”? How can we birth and restore “Apostolic Authority” to the church without first tilling the soil for a harvest of “Apostolic Integrity”? Will we pay the price to produce power in public?

Converts can go anywhere they please but disciples allow the Lord to lead them where they don’t necessarily want to go! Are we really ready for this journey?

Yours in Him,

Al Houghton

# WORD AT WORK

VOLUME XXIV NUMBER IX  
**Converts or Disciples? III**

WEDNESDAY, September 1

Scripture: First Corinthians 9:1-11

If we, as believers, are to give, based on relationship, those in the ministry are to receive, based on relationship. Paul, in verses 4-6 of First Corinthians 9, says, “Do we have no right (**ex-oo-see-ah**) to eat and drink? Do we have no right (**ex-oo-see-ah**) to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right (**ex-oo-see-ah**) to refrain from working?” Paul is making a point, a point about his relationship with God, that he is conducting himself in such a way, in ministry, as to preserve his divine authority so that he can use it for the Kingdom and help people in the process. When we exhort believers to give out of their relationship, understand that the same principles operate in the ministry concerning the issue of receiving. That includes “when to” “where to” “how to” and the motivation “in what spirit” are we doing it. Here is where discipleship gets really interesting. Can we **disciple** people into the depths of God, in areas we have not gone ourselves? The answer to that should be obvious, to even the most casual observer. There is a greater degree of discipleship required of ministry than there is of the Saints. If we’re going to stand in the pulpit we have to stand there in the spirit of what we are teaching. Maybe that is why the church is in trouble.

THURSDAY, September 2

Scripture: Luke 4:5-8

In Luke 4:5-8 the second temptation of Jesus is described. It says, “Then the devil, taking Him up on the high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, ‘All this authority (**ex-oo-see-ah**) I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.’” Only one area was Jesus ever tempted by the enemy to worship and that temptation was a mammon test. All the kingdoms of the world, the gold, the silver, the cattle – everything was offered to Him as an **ex-oo-see-ah** if He would bow and **worship** at Satan’s feet. But God did not call Him to regain lost authority *that* way. He was going to have to die and pay the ultimate price to regain it. What does that tell us about the connection between authority, mammon and worship? They are directly connected. So in First Corinthians chapter 9, when Paul talks about his **ex-oo-see-ah** authority to partake of the offerings at the altar, and the Holy Spirit leading him to forego or refrain from that for a specific purpose, he is exclaiming the truth of discipleship, and he is living an example to the Corinthians of purity at the altar. How can we release the full measure of God’s divine authority on the Saints when they give and expect them to walk in relationship with the Lord if those of us in the pulpit are not walking in it? The answer is obvious. We can’t! If the church is stunted in its growth in this dimension, it is probably due to historical tradition and the examples it has seen. When we stubbornly cling to tradition we, like the children of Israel, forfeit our generational call and die in the wilderness of unfulfillment.

## FRIDAY, September 3

Scripture: First Corinthians 9:11-14

In verses 11-14 Paul says, “If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? If others are partakers of this **ex-oo-see-ah** (right) over you, are we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right (**ex-oo-see-ah**), but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ. Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar? Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.” Why did Paul find himself being an example to the people lest he hinder the gospel? The reason is, all the others were using manipulation and every unbelievable technique possible to extort money under the guise of being led by the Holy Spirit. Paul found himself in the midst of significant financial corruption and he made a choice. It was a costly choice. He didn’t always have every need met. He chose to walk another way. Paul is demonstrating the dimension of discipleship that is required in the Priesthood, not of everybody – since there was only one Paul. But certainly this is a dimension that has to be addressed in the church. Restoration of integrity is not optional if we are asking for restoration of apostolic authority.

## SATURDAY, September 4

Scripture: First Corinthians 9:15-18

Paul said, “But I have used none of these things, nor have I written these things that it should be done so to me; for it would be better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting void. For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship. What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority (**ex-oo-see-ah**) in the gospel.” How is that for **discipleship** in action, obeying the Holy Spirit. He has the authority. He has the power, but he foregoes it to be an example that he may not cause a reproach. Paul understands the dimension of abuse that most of us know is rampant in the church-world today. The spirit of mammon has a blood brother called manipulation. When ministers bow at the altar of manipulation, the divine authority is forfeited and the covenantal blessing on the people becomes a curse. Malachi 2:1,2 says, “‘And now, O priests, this commandment is for you. If you will not hear, And if you will not take it to heart, To give glory to My name,’ Says the LORD of hosts, ‘I will send a curse upon you, And I will curse your blessings. Yes, I have cursed them already, Because you do not take it to heart.’” Keil and Delitzsch state in their Hebrew Commentary that the curse is on their priestly function of proclaiming the covenant over all the people who participate at the altar. God would turn what the disobedient priests proclaimed as a blessing into a curse. Paul understood his priestly calling to purity and walked it out. It is time we began to believe for the full measure of discipleship to come forth in the church-world according to the standard which Paul set. When it comes forth in this realm, we will probably see the manifestations of authority that were in his ministry, as well.

## SUNDAY, September 5

Scripture: First Corinthians 9:15-18 Numbers 18:21-24

We have to ask ourselves, what was Paul afraid of in abusing his authority? The answer comes from Numbers 18:21-24 where God declared He had given the Levites the tithe and they had no inheritance in Israel. The penalty for abusing His authority would be the forfeiting of His anointing that went with the call. Paul was very honoring of the anointing and he knew the fastest way to forfeit it was to step over in the realm of mammon where his actions would be received as worship by Satan. Paul took a stand. He would not go there! Jesus became his foremost example. He would not go where Jesus had not gone. Can we pray and ask God to raise up leadership that **will not** go where Jesus has not gone, in the same spirit that Paul demonstrated? It’s time!

MONDAY, September 6

## **HAPPY LABOR DAY**

Scripture: Mark 10:35-38

In Mark 10:35-38 we find James and John asking for the pinnacle positions in the Kingdom. The problem is, apparently those positions carry a preparational price tag. Initially, Jesus did not discourage them by saying “No”. His response was, ““You do not know what you ask. Can you drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?”” They, of course, not knowing what in the world He was talking about said “Yes.” They signed on and Jesus said, ““Okay, you can have it. You can have the baptism and the cup but the positions are for those to whom they were appointed.”” Oftentimes when it comes to issues of position and power, we ask beyond our ability to prepare. Perhaps that is what we are seeing today. It is time God brought clarity to this issue so that the full measure of His authority can flow in the church unhindered by impurity at the altar.

TUESDAY, September 7

Scripture: Second Kings 5:13-16

In Second Kings 5:13-16 we have a perfect example of the spirit of mammon at work. Verses 13 through 16 say, “And his servants came near and spoke to him, and said, ‘My father, if the prophet had told you to do something great, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, “Wash, and be clean”?’” So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. Then he returned to the man of God, he and all his aids, and came and stood before him; and he said, ‘Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel; now therefore, please take a gift from your servant.’ But he said, ‘As the LORD lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing.’ And he urged him to take it, but he refused.” This story, of course, is about Naaman and Elisha. Naaman is healed but the LORD will not allow Elisha to take the gift. The gift, we find out in just a few verses, is substantial. What is the penalty if we take advantage of God’s people and take from them what we want when God says, “No”!? Perhaps that is the message that has been lost on this generation. How many leaders are locked in that spiritual penalty box?

WEDNESDAY, September 8

Scripture: Second Kings 5:20-23

Verses 20-23 say, “But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, ‘Look, my master has spared Naaman this Syrian, while not receiving from his hands what he brought; but as the LORD lives, I will run after him and take something from him.’ So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw him running after him, he got down from the chariot to meet him, and said, ‘Is all well?’ And he said, ‘All is well. My master has sent me, saying, “Indeed, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the mountains of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of garments.”’” If you are making \$12 an hour, a talent of silver is the equivalent of Two Million Three Hundred and Four Thousand dollars – U.S. Not a bad day’s work. That will pay the rent and the budget! A slick Two Million! I wonder what it would cost to take that - when God said, “Don’t take it.”?

THURSDAY, September 9

Scripture: Second Kings 5:23-27

Verse 23 says, “So Naaman said, ‘Please take two talents.’ And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and handed them to two of his servants; and they carried them on ahead of him.” That is Four Million Six Hundred and Eight Thousand dollars. Whoa! Not bad! Plus threads! But what happened to Gazhazi? What was the penalty. Verses 26 and 27 record, “Then he said to him, ‘Did not my heart go with you when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you? Is it time to

receive money and to receive clothing, olive groves and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female servants? Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever.’ And he went out from his presence leprous, as white as snow.” The choices we make affect our children. How much leprosy is dispensed in the meetings we go to because **true discipleship** is not honored? Do we walk in the full measure of God’s authority in the end-times? Why not? What hinders it? We must deal with mammon. We’re going to have to honor the leadership of the Holy Spirit and only do the offerings at His direction. There is no way we can teach the church to walk in the Spirit in this dimension and not do it ourselves.

#### FRIDAY, September 10

Scripture: Second Corinthians 11:7-13

In Second Corinthians 11:7-13 Paul gives us the essence of why he operated the way he did financially. He said, “Did I commit sin in abasing myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you free of charge? I robbed other churches, taking wages from them to minister to you. And when I was present with you, and in need, I was a burden to no one, for what was lacking to me the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied. And in everything I kept myself from being burdensome to you, and so I will keep myself. As the truth of Christ is in me, no one shall stop me from this boasting in the regions of Achaia. Why? Because I do not love you? God knows! But what I do, I will also continue to do, that I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast. For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.” What is the difference between the counterfeit and the true? The counterfeit don’t have to take offerings. The true don’t have to manipulate. They don’t have to “con’ their brothers. They don’t even have to sell. They have the authority. The true have the same legal authority but they don’t choose to abuse. They are the only ones who have the freedom not to manipulate because the others, the counterfeit, use it only because God does not support them. They have not willingly taken his yoke of discipleship. Only the true can forego and survive.

#### SATURDAY, September 11

Scripture: Second Corinthians 12:14-18

Verse 14 says, “Now for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for I do not seek yours, but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.” Any apostolic network that charges the children for the maintenance of the father is laid on a foundation that is exactly opposite of what Paul did. Shouldn’t we expect God to blow judgment on networks that are founded on mammon? Why don’t we see the resources among the true to *give to the children*. Perhaps that will grow to be a dividing line. Perhaps that is one of the ways we will be able to tell, as we move into the last days, the difference between the counterfeit and the true. Paul was committed to making **disciples**. He obviously would not settle for **converts**. How many people stepped up to the level of discipleship that Paul demanded? When you get to the book of Philippians you don’t find very many. Toward the end of his ministry he said, “I only have one person who I can totally trust, who does not seek his own to send to you and that is Timothy.” Where are we in developing this the level of discipleship? Are we moving toward Paul’s example or the world’s? God is waiting.

#### SUNDAY, September 12

Scripture: Matthew 28:18-20

The very first statement Jesus makes in the great commission reflects the victory that He won by refusing to worship Satan. He used His faith on His flesh during the crucifixion and the three days and three nights in the belly of the earth! The first thing He said concerning the victory He had just won was, “‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.’” That authority is passed on to us *but* we have to walk the same way Jesus did. Jesus is our example. We’re being disciplined until Christ is formed in us. We have to keep that God-given authority by walking the same way Jesus did to obtain it and win it back from the enemy in

the first place. Jesus laid down His life for us and we have to be willing to do it for each other. How are we doing in our discipleship? Do we have some growing to do?

#### MONDAY, September 13

Scripture: First Corinthians 6:19,20

In First Corinthians 6, verses 19 and 20, we are told, “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” We glorify God by the way we live, by the priorities we set. We prove that we are not our own by allowing the Holy Spirit, who dwells within, to direct and guide us. The degree to which we yield to the Holy Spirit is the dimension to which we are mature in Christ. We’re only as mature as the level at which we yield in any given circumstance or situation. Jesus was fully yielded. Is that our goal? Are we moving in that direction?

#### TUESDAY, September 14

Scripture: Luke 16:13

Luke 16:13 says, “No servant can serve two masters for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” What if I conduct my ministry in such a way as to allow people to serve both? If I limit the word, for fear of offense, I can keep people and possibly keep my budget in tact. What does that do to the people who attend? It certainly does not help them grow to the point of discipleship where they can walk as Jesus did. What is the level of word we are receiving today? Is it enough to bring us into the image and likeness of Christ? If not, we better find a place where it flows.

#### WEDNESDAY, September 15

Scripture: Luke 16:1-6

In Luke 16:1-6 we find Jesus speaking the parable of the unfaithful steward who was wasting his goods. Wasting is a very interesting Greek word. It is **dia-skor-pid-zo**. **Dia-skor-pid-zo** means to dispense at one’s own will wherever you feel like it. Look at the difference. This is a real issue of discipleship. The steward has never grown to appreciate, accept and walk in his master’s will. Consequently he loses that stewardship. How did he operate? Verses 5 and 6 tell us, “So he called every one of his master’s debtors to him, and said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ And he said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ So he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’” There is a perfect picture of how things operate oftentimes in ministry. We make a choice and a decision to limit, for whatever reason, what God requires in our ministry to people. It is much easier to keep a crowd and much easier to build something successful in the natural if we go that way. But if we follow that path, there are two losers. All the people lose because they never grow up and ultimately we lose because our stewardship is eventually forfeited. I would not want to be on either side. I wouldn’t want to be attending such a place and I certainly wouldn’t want to be leading it. How much is required where we go to church? Have we chosen entertainment or growth?

#### THURSDAY, September 16

Scripture: Luke 16:7-9

Luke 16 verses 7 through 9 says, “Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’” So he said, “A hundred measures of wheat.” And he said to him, “Take your bill, and write eighty.” So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light. And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.” Notice this passage and what it presents. The master commended the unjust steward. Why did he do that? The master, was being facetious –

the guy is already getting fired, he is just more adept and cunning in the ways of the world than believers in the ways of light. He is doing an awesome job for the enemy and the problem is believers are caught up in it. And apparently some of them really like it. Notice verse 9, "...make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." That is hell! That is eternity in the wrong place. Jesus already said "...you cannot serve God and mammon." "...make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon..." Why did those ministers preach less than God required? Because it was profitable. They could keep and build a larger congregation and get more money and a more "successful" ministry. What was their end? Their end was destruction. "...everlasting habitations..." sounds like an eternal barbecue with the participating person on the rotisserie. What is the level of **discipleship** where we go to church? "Well done" (as opposed to medium rare) good and faithful servant! The fire of discipleship is our choice.

#### FRIDAY, September 17

Scripture: Acts 4:32-34

Verses 32 through 34 tell us, "Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold." What can we say the level of discipleship was in the early church? It was at the minimum whole-hearted. It would be a mistake to copy the manifestation without parallel historical circumstances. There were other prophetic factors involved, such as a persecution that would drive everybody out of Jerusalem. They were going to lose their property anyway. Titus and the Roman Legions were coming to destroy the whole land. Historical context does make a difference in how we interpret Scripture. But notice the level of discipleship. It was 100% sold out to God! They said it. They proved it. And they qualified to execute judgment on the spirit of mammon. Where, in today's church, are we grooming people to qualify to execute judgment on the spirit of mammon? That is an interesting **discipleship** question. The prophets did not lie. God will execute it with or without us!

#### SATURDAY, September 18

Scripture: Acts 5:1-4

Verses 1-4 say, "But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostle's feet. But Peter said, 'Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.'" Because mammon is how Satan gains **worship**, that spirit had to be judged. Even the prophets saw judgment on the spirit of mammon. But the question remains, where are people being disciplined to execute that judgment in today's church? Do we know of such places? They might be worth attending.

#### SUNDAY, September 19

Scripture: Isaiah 60:5 Isaiah 61:6,7

Isaiah 60 verse 5 tells us, "Then you shall see and become radiant, And your heart shall swell with joy; Because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, The wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you." And chapter 61:6 and 7 says, "But you shall be named the Priests of the LORD, Men shall call you the Servants of our God. You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, And in their glory you shall boast. Instead of your shame you shall have double honor, And instead of confusion they shall rejoice in their portion. Therefore in their land they shall possess double; Everlasting joy shall be theirs." Isaiah saw a season where judgment was executed on the spirit of mammon. We have to understand this has to be birthed and in order to birth it, we have to

qualify. The early church did. But the prophets also saw and promised that the latter day church would bring in a great harvest and they would enjoy both the former and the latter rain in the same season – translation: God would double what He did with the early church. Where do we go for preparation in this realm? Birthing a double anointing has a price and we have to choose to pay it.

#### MONDAY, September 20

Scripture: James 5:1-3

James 5:1-3 tell us, “Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you! Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days.” Apparently James got a revelation of what Isaiah was talking about and wrote in his epistle. What is our willingness to embrace the cross and submit to God’s preparation so that we can walk in what the prophets and the apostles saw and spoke concerning the season in which we live? Can we embrace it? Will we qualify for it? Will our **discipleship** grow to the level that we can see it and God can trust us with it? That is a choice we have to make. We’ll certainly never get there if somebody doesn’t present it to us. God is looking for a few good churches. We must disciple spiritual Marines. The Holy Spirit seems to be recruiting.

#### TUESDAY, September 21

Scripture: Romans 12:1

Romans 12:1 says, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.” “...reasonable worship...” is a better translation. Notice the level of discipleship Romans says we need to obtain, in order to become a dividing line in the earth allowing God to do what He wants. We have to walk like Jesus did. We are not our own. We are bought with a price. But it is a daily choice that we present our body and in the process become a “...living sacrifice...” because we often have to choose things that we normally would not. Jesus is the gold standard! God had to strengthen Him to finish the race. How much more us?

#### WEDNESDAY, September 22

Scripture: Second Kings 5:16

In Second Kings 5:16 we are told, “But he said, ‘As the LORD lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing.’ And he urged him to take it, but he refused.” This, of course, is Elisha’s statement to Naaman when he is offered 4.6 Million – as an offering for being healed. Walking in the Spirit and saying “No” to what he wouldn’t in the natural gives Elisha the authority to execute judgment. Authority to execute judgment has to be earned by the way we walk. How are we *w-a-l-k-i-n-g*? Would we say “No” to 4.6 million?

#### THURSDAY, September 23

Scripture: Second Kings 5:27

Because Elisha walks in the Spirit, he is given authority to execute judgment, “‘Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever.’ And he went out from his presence leprous, as white as snow.” Did Peter execute judgment? Qualifying for *that* anointing means a level of discipleship where we prove we are not our own. God gave us faith to use on our own flesh to obey Him! If we use it apart from that primary purpose, discipleship suffers.



## FRIDAY, September 24

Scripture: Acts 4:32

In Acts 4:32 we see what sets the stage for this level of anointing. Verse 32 says, “Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.” The willingness to give sets a standard. If we’ll accept it and live by it, walking in the Spirit prepares us for the end-times like nothing else does. **What** are we going to choose to do and **how** are we being **disciplined** to do it? Integrity in private where no eye can see produces power in public where every eye can see.

## SATURDAY, September 25

Scripture: Luke 12:49

In Luke 12:49 Jesus said this right after teaching the parable of the faithful steward, “I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!” When the fire falls, who will direct it? Who will announce it? Who will proclaim it? Context always determines meaning. The statement Jesus makes in verse 49 comes after He teaches the parable of the faithful steward in verses 41-48. Those who accept discipleship seriously and understand that walking and yielding to the Holy Spirit on a daily basis prepares us to fulfill what the prophets saw and proclaimed, are those who are on their way toward being ready for that season. Are we being prepared? Are we getting ready?

## SUNDAY, September 26

Scripture: Luke 12:41

As we move back through this passage we begin to see certain things that unlock God’s heart concerning how we are to walk. Verse 41 says, “Then Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all people?’” Jesus is continually building throughout Luke chapter 12, toward a preparation of the apostles to walk and found the early church. Their primary training is unfolding before our very eyes. The way Jesus disciplined them is beginning to emerge. The principles that He set out as their boundaries and their guidelines comes in these passages. How are we doing with the standard Jesus set? Are we embracing it? Are we accepting it? Or are we allowing everybody to do what they want to do Monday through Saturday, as long as they show up on Sunday and give their check? Is discipleship popular? It certainly is necessary.

## MONDAY, September 27

Scripture: Luke 12:13-15

Verses 13 through 15 record, “Then one from the crowd said to Him, ‘Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.’ But He said to him, ‘Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?’ And He said to them, ‘Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.’” If Jesus were to look at our life, if He were to show us our image in His mirror, how tall would we be? How much of His shoes would we fill? How much of what we’re attempting to gain would fall in the category of “...abundance of the things he possesses.”? How much of it would fall in the category of preparation for the eternal to fulfill God’s will in our generation? That’s a good question. I hope we have the right answer when we stand before Jesus.

## TUESDAY, September 28

Scripture: Luke 12:16-21

In verses 16-21 Jesus teaches the parable of the rich man whose ground yielded tremendously so that he had no room to store his crops. Rather than sowing and giving the excess, he said, “I know what I’ll do. I’ll build bigger barns, greater storage and I’ll say to my soul, ‘You’re set for life its time to eat drink and be

merry.” And immediately the judgment falls. He is history! He is in the next world. Jesus teaches how foolish he was. What was Jesus outlining for the Twelve? He was teaching them about discipleship. He was trying to prepare them to qualify to execute judgment on the spirit of mammon. He didn't say anything about it, at this point but the foundation stones are present. That is the unique thing about how God operates. He hardly ever shows us what the preparation is for. It simply becomes a choice of whether or not we choose to do it on a daily basis. But when the day comes, I think Peter was probably pretty glad that he had prepared. Will we be glad we've prepared?

WEDNESDAY, September 29

Scripture: Luke 12:22-28

In verses 22 through 28, Jesus made it clear they didn't have to worry about provision. That was not an issue. God loved them so much He was going to provide. They could not afford to get caught up in the issue of spending their whole life being concerned about provision, because God had a goal for them and that goal demanded walking in the Spirit. It demands making spiritual choices. They would never be able to fulfill God's will if they didn't grow in that dimension. Are we *g-r-o-w-i-n-g* in that dimension? Are we preparing for what is about to break forth? Let's hope somebody is.

THURSDAY, September 30

Scripture: Luke 12:29-34

In Luke 12:29-34 Jesus does a good job of bringing the point home by saying, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” They couldn't break through to the place they needed to be unless their discipleship rose to the level that they could overcome worry and fear about mammon and use their faith for finances. Jesus literally drove them into the covenant. Where is our heart? Where is our faith? Are we allowing the Lord to push us into the place **He** has for us so we'll be prepared to do His will in the last days?

© 2004 Al Houghton\“Word At Work” Ministries, Inc. P O Box 366, Placentia, CA 92871-0366. Reproduction in whole or part is encouraged to share with others. IMPORTANT NOTE: Please keep us informed of your current address as the Post Office only forwards the “Word At Work” by grace through faith.

**Oh how Your mercies  
New every morning  
Are welcomed by  
This grateful heart**

**Thus with thanksgiving  
And joys expectation  
I'll face each new day  
At its start!**

**Jayne Houghton**