

Choose One

Sunday Morning, October 4, 2015

Introduction:

In Luke Chapter 12 and Part of Chapter 13, Jesus speaks of random things. Likewise, let us consider three random things: 1) African Mask, 2) Sun God Wall Hanging, 3) Egyptian Picture

I. Choose One: Mask or Integrity? (African Mask) (Luke 12: 1 – 3)

1 In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first of all, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."

2 For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known.

3 Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops.

Our Good Witness and ...

Our Positive Work in His Kingdom...

Is Only Accomplished With a Pure Heart Before God.

"O, what a tangled web we weave when first we practise to deceive!" *Walter Scott, Late 1700's Scottish Novelist*

We need to decide if we want to be used effectively for God and His Glory. If we do, then we need to keep in pursuit of a clean heart.

II. Choose One: Heaven or Hell? (Sun God) (Luke 12: 4 – 7)

4 "And 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.

5 But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him! (God)

6 "Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God.

7 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Life Example:

According to an article written in May of 2015 by Theologian Dr. Thomas Williams, "statistics show that the situation of Christian persecution in the world is far more dire than most people understand...the breadth and scale of the suffering of Christians "unprecedented." At least 100,000 Christians are killed every year because of their faith, which amounts to 273 per day, or eleven every hour, McAreavey said, without mentioning those who are "being tortured, imprisoned, exiled, threatened, excluded, attacked and discriminated against on a widespread scale."

- ✝ God Gives Grace to Die For Him
- ✝ Death for Christians is something we all pass through, then we enter His presence in Heaven.
- ✝ But for unbelievers death is not the main issue...Eternal separation from God in punishment is! (More Points on back)

- ✝ The Valley of Hinnon/Gehenna is where we get the figurative term "Hell". The Valley of Hinnom is Southwest of Jerusalem, where the city garbage was burned, for it had been polluted by fire worship and human sacrifice during the reign of Ahaz. (II Kings 16:3)
- ✝ In Ancient Times The Sun God, Molech, Was Worshipped There
- ✝ People Choose Hell Rather Than Heaven

Our confidence is in knowing who we are in Christ and that we are dearly loved and valued as His children. Therefore, we need to decide if we will stand courageously for Christ as those saved in Him?

Life Example:

You might recall the campaign to free hundreds of Nigerian school girls kidnapped last year by the Nigerian radical Islamist group Boko Haram.

But what is happening in Nigeria today?

Tragically, many girls remain in captivity. And in addition to the kidnappings of the Chibok girls, hundreds of churches have been burned in Nigeria and thousands have lost their lives in brutal violence.

A recent spike in violence in the Middle Belt region of Nigeria has human rights groups concerned. The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has documented a significant rise in Boko Haram attacks since the start of Ramadan in June. The increase in violence has left more than 300 dead.

(More of Article on Flip side)

Many recent attacks were carried out at houses of worship and religious celebrations; both mosques and churches were targeted. On July 5th, 32 churches were burned, killing five people and a priest. Attacks on three mosques killed 150 people.

In addition to attacking churches, Boko Haram targets mosques where it believes clerics espouse a too moderate form of Islam. It is believed that the attacks in July came in response to an ISIS directive to increase attacks during Ramadan. In March of this year, Boko Haram reportedly pledged their allegiance to ISIS.

III. Choose One: Governing Rulers or The Ruler (Luke 12: 8 – 12) (Egyptian Picture)

8 “Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God.

9 But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.

10 “And anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven.

11 “Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say.

12 For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.”

Be Determined to Stand in Truth Before Government and Authorities When Challenged To Do So

(Life Example and Conclusion next paper)

Life Example:

According an article at World News Daily:

A report by two U.S.-based religious freedom groups says anti-Christian persecution is on the rise in America.

The joint report by Texas-based Liberty Institute and Washington-based Family Research Council says groups like the American Civil Liberties Union aren't the only culprits. The report says government agencies around the U.S. are trying to push Christian expression out the door.

"It is dramatic," says Liberty Institute Founder Kelly Shackleford, of the recent hike in reported incidents of persecution. "I have been doing these types of cases for almost 25 years now. I have never seen the levels of attacks like these and how quickly they are now proliferating."

Shackleford says government, from schools to social programs, is the ringleader.

"There are children being prohibited from writing Merry Christmas to the soldiers, senior citizens being banned from praying over their meals in the Senior Center, the VA banning the mention of God in military funerals, numerous attempts to have veterans memorials torn down if they have any religious symbols such as a cross, and I could go on and on," Shackleford said.

Will we decide to trust God's Word in the face of persecution from our authorities?

Conclusion:

God Challenges Us In Various Ways to
Stand For Him.
Will You Stand?