

## Luke 12:13-34 Bible Study

1. What are the things that people worry most about? What suggestions have you heard (apart from the Bible) as ways to deal with worry?

2. **Read Luke 12:13-15.** On its own, the man's request might seem a fair one to ask a rabbi. But consider it in the context of vv1-12. What can you say of the man's request?

*Jesus is talking about eternal issues and he has his mind firmly in the temporal.*

3. What do you think Jesus meant by "all kinds of greed"? Isn't 'greed' just 'greed'?

*A dictionary definition of greed is simple; eg "an overwhelming desire to have more of something such as money than is actually needed". But greed itself will rise within us in many different situations, with different rationalisations, rarely making itself obvious as 'greed'. Hence the call to "Watch out!" and "Be on your guard" against it.*

4. **Read Luke 12:16-21.** What do the following verses say about 'storing up things'? Is it wrong to save for the future? **Eccles 5:15; Matt 6:19-20; James 5:3**

*The issue is the heart – where is our future? What makes us feel secure? If it is wealth and things stored up, we are fools. There is nothing wrong with saving for the future unless it is out of greed. So James speaks of "hoarding" wealth that we don't really need.*

5. **Read Luke 12:22-34.** The word "life" in v22 is literally "soul" – the inner self or whole being of a person. It appears 5x in this passage, including 2x v19, lit "I'll say to my soul, 'Soul...'" Work through vv13-34 and make a list of the things that describe a "life". How do you respond to this list?

*Not consist in abundant possessions (v15); something 'on loan' from God (v20); meant for more than a few years on this earth (v20), meant for relationship with God (v21, 31); more than food and clothes (v23); not ours to add to (v25); precious, valuable, beautified by God (v24, 27-28); given by and provided for by God (v20, 28)*

6. How does the list you've made in Q5 compare with the description we might make if we examined popular magazines, movies, and even the daily news?

*So often life is reduced to what we consume. Sometimes the preciousness of life creeps into things (news reports of accidents etc) but this will be followed by reports of the disregard of life by various people (eg criminals, terrorists, euthanasia & abortion reports etc). Life without God in the centre is grossly cheapened and robbed of dignity.*

7. Using this passage as a basis, what could you say to a Christian who is worrying about one of the things you mentioned in Q1?

*NB It's likely that our worries are more to do with luxuries than essentials – something 90% of the world will **never** worry about! – Jesus focuses on food and clothing/shelter – perhaps start here – is the person fed and clothed? It's always worth pointing out that worry achieves nothing (26)! Ask "Can God be trusted?" – we must always come back to God since anxiety is a failure to accept that we are in his **good** hands.*

8. How can we "seek" God's kingdom? Think of practical examples. (NB "Seek" translates the same word as "set your heart on" v29 and "run after" v30).

9. How does generosity (v33) help deal with greed and anxiety?