

WEEKLY REFLECTION

As we wrap up our investigative journey of the Holy Spirit's work and movement in the Gospel of Luke, we end with Luke 12:8-12, one of the trickiest passages in Scripture. Before unpacking it, let us remind ourselves of what the Holy Spirit has been doing thus far. He gave gifts: to Mary, He gave the baby Jesus (1:35). To Elizabeth and the baby John, He gave joy (1:41-45). The Holy Spirit also reveals, giving revelation to both Zechariah (1:67-79) and Simeon (2:26). He led Jesus into the wilderness for forty days (4:1-2a), and empowered Him to heal (5:17b). After Luke 12, the Holy Spirit is rarely mentioned, but we see in verses 8-12 that as He moves, He moves with a particular purpose: to enable the children of God to live for and acts as witnesses of Him.

The story of God's people as witnesses continues dynamically in the books of Acts. Everywhere they go, the people of God are bearing witness about Him, to the point that even Peter's shadow (Acts 5:15) or handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched Paul were being used by God to heal (19:11-12). But for now, as Jesus speaks about what it means to be a witness of Him, He speaks frankly about the fact that the witnesses of Christ *will* attract attention, and it may not be good (Lk. 12:11).

The question for us in this passage is not whether we have blasphemed the Holy Spirit, but whether we, as followers and children of God, acknowledge Him or not. Jesus tells us that those who deny Him will be denied in turn (v.9), but the good news is that there is redemption (Jn. 21:15-19). The even better news is that He does not ask us to bear witness on our own, for there is a Helper who will empower and teach us to do so. (Lk. 12:12)

QUESTIONS

QUESTION ONE:

What does it mean to acknowledge Christ before men? What would it mean for a reader in Jesus' time to be acknowledging Him, and what were some of the challenges or difficulties they would have faced?

What does it mean for us to be acknowledging Christ before men? Have you had any opportunities to do so, and what was the process like for you?

QUESTION TWO:

Oftentimes, passages that seem difficult or challenging to read in the Scriptures can be informed by reading the text that precedes or follows it.

Try to practice doing so as you answer the question of what it means to blaspheme the Holy Spirit with Luke 11, especially verses 14-23.

Once you have worked through the text, practice doing so again by going through Luke 12:1-7. What encouragement does this bring you as you consider verses 11-12, where Jesus assures us that the Holy Spirit will teach us what to say?

QUESTION THREE:

On Sunday, we posed the question of whom God has placed in your heart to witness to. Who has God placed in your heart, and how might you begin witnessing towards them? How can your group support and keep you accountable in this process?