

# The DAILY JESUS NEWS #193

## Jesus Addresses Crucial Issues in Discipleship

### Jesus' Warning to Understand the Times

Luke 12:54-59

54 He said to the crowd: *"When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, 'It's going to rain,' and it does. 55 And when the south wind blows, you say, 'It's going to be hot,' and it is. 56 Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky. How is it that you don't know how to interpret this present time?"*

*57 "Why don't you judge for yourselves what is right? 58 As you are going with your adversary to the magistrate, try hard to be permanently reconciled on the way, or else your adversary may drag you off to the judge, and the judge turn you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. 59 I tell you, there is no way you will get out until you have paid the last penny."*

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = <sup>MT</sup>, Mark = <sup>M</sup>, Luke = <sup>L</sup>, John = <sup>J</sup>, Acts = <sup>A</sup>. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

	CONTEXT DIGEST
Location	Speaking to a Crowd of Thousands, Somewhere in Judea
Timeline	October or November (Months 33, 34)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage VI: Jesus' Later Judean Ministry
	D. Jesus Minister in Judea and Trains His Disciples
	3. Jesus Addresses Crucial Issues in Discipleship
Title	viii. Jesus' Warning to Understand the Times

#### COMMENT:

At the beginning of today's reading Luke referred to "the crowd" again. Luke chose to emphasize the discipleship teachings of Jesus in this long section, to the virtual exclusion of historical details. Occasional, brief narrative comments like the mention of the crowd here remind us that Jesus was still "on the road" with his disciples, moving from town to town in Judea during these months. A crowd of thousands of people often gathered around Jesus during these days.

The many references to Jesus speaking to huge crowds show us that he had a powerful voice that he could project a great distance. Speaking to thousands of people in outdoor settings with only one's natural voice is no easy feat. When we remember that he would usually speak throughout the entire day, every day of the week, it is even more amazing. Jesus' ability to hold the attention of the masses for hours on end demonstrate his magnetism and power as a communicator. Jesus was the greatest Communicator of all time. No wonder his first title in John's gospel is "The Word."

Jesus warned the crowd, and his disciples, too, of the danger of missing out on **"the signs of the times."** He rebuked them for their daily interest in forecasting the weather, which they were able to do with consistent accuracy, to the exclusion of recognizing the many indications that the Kingdom of God had come to their very

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doorstep in Jesus. The coming of God in human flesh that they were eyewitnesses of was the most important development in history!

Furthermore, Jesus was rapidly approaching his death and resurrection--the most crucial events of his life. Everyone should have been giving Jesus their fullest attention and fiercest loyalty. Yet, the world remained oblivious to what was happening in front of their faces. It was more blind hypocrisy.

Tragically, the result of failing to pay attention to the surpassing significance of Jesus' life and ministry was fatal. Instead of being reconciled to God through his Son, people who ignored him were certain to enter into the final judgement without a relationship with Jesus. That meant certain judgement with eternal consequences in hell.

Failing to understand and respond to God's revelation and salvation in Jesus was a serious thing indeed. Jesus lovingly reminded them of this in today's text.

### APPLICATION:

We too often fail to pay attention to the truths of Jesus' life and ministry. Learning of him, on the basis of the Scriptural witness about him, ought to be the highest, unrivaled focus of our lives.

Everything in our life on earth, and our eternal life in heaven depends upon what we know and do about the truth in Jesus. As he said: **"*apart from me you can do nothing.*"**

*Are you giving your fullest attention to the life and teachings of Jesus?*

*What can you do to increase your knowledge and practice of "agreeing with him?" When will you begin?*