

# God-Dependence

## Summary

While reading the Gospel of Luke chapters 8-14 this week, we see how Jesus is preparing his disciples for their leadership role in the church and continuing his ministry post-resurrection, while setting his sights on a path to Jerusalem. Our focus this week is on Luke 10:1-12, the appointing of the seventy-two disciples and Luke 12:22-34, the answer for anxiety.

What we hope to draw out of these passages is related to how God-dependent we need to be in order to be successful in our relationship with God and in our ability to achieve his Great Commission as stated in Matthew 28:19-20. We can start by asking a question that all twelve disciples, the seventy-two disciples and many other Christians since, have had to ask themselves: *What am I willing to do or give up in order to mature as a disciple of Jesus Christ?*

## Instructions for the Seventy-Two

The instructions Jesus gave the seventy-two disciples were simple, although scholars debate over exactly what they could/could not take with them, the intent of his commands are the same: Become God-dependent, give up everything you have and look forward only. They understood they would become impoverished, virtual beggars and completely helpless from an earthly perspective which forced them to be completely dependent on God's care. How does giving up everything make their job easier for the task at hand? Contrast this against today, we live in a materialistic and social media driven world. Let's rephrase our initial question: What are the impacts of not giving up earthly possessions to follow Christ and accomplish his Great Commission?

## Answer to Anxiety

We don't have to wait long to get an answer to the last question above. Starting in Luke 12:22-34, the message starts with: We must quit placing our faith in our possessions and start to trust God for our needs. Our obsession with material things controls many of our lives and we have to be honest with ourselves by asking a follow-up question to the one above. How much are we contributing to our own anxiety by fixating on amassing worldly possessions, or distracting ourselves with the latest technology? Jesus is clear in telling us that we should not worry (12:25-30.) He tells us worrying will not change the outcome, so why put yourself through it. So now we see that anxiety or worrying about these things is a symptom of a deeper issue and if we remove the root cause, the symptom goes away. Unfortunately for many, we only treat the symptom.

## Conclusion

We started by asking ourselves: *What am I willing to do or give up in order to mature as a disciple of Jesus Christ?* This was related to how the seventy-two disciples were instructed to begin their ministry. We then asked ourselves: *What are the impacts of not giving up earthly possessions to follow Christ and accomplish his Great Commission?* We find that if our earthly

possessions become our primary focus or idol, it creates anxiety that we are ultimately responsible for. We also know from our reading this week, a more common passage used in this context is another truth, Luke 12:34: "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

How do we know if we are idolizing or too focused on our earthly possession and not more God-dependent? We can ask ourselves this question: *Are we currently living "with" or "for" the things that God has blessed us with?* Meaning could we eliminate the things we possess and be perfectly fine or does the thought of losing those possessions frighten us? Let's say you suddenly had to downgrade your 2020 BMW 5 or 7 series sedan (insert your fancy car here) to driving a 2010 or older model sedan or truck. Would you be concerned with what people might think? Will people think you've lost your job? What will your neighbors think? Will people think it was repossessed? All these thoughts are normal thoughts that most of us have but they are anxious thoughts and all because of a material possession. This is only one example of the many many things we could easily insert in place of the BMW and add-in your own idol or possession. The question then becomes, are we ok if it is gone tomorrow?

As we shed the things holding us back or that create anxiety, our God-dependency grows. We then begin to live a life with a greater sense of peace and joy that God intends for us. We also become more capable of living up to what it means to be his disciple. What would a greater God-dependency look like in your life? What actions are you thinking about taking that could lead you to become more dependent on God? What do you need to give up or do right now in order to make this happen? Will you repeat it again tomorrow?