

## Reflection Questions: Luke 12:4-7

For the message, “When People are Big & God is Small” given by Pastor John Ferguson at Mercy Hill Church in Bryan/College Station, Texas, on May 2, 2021

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*These reflection questions are designed to help you apply the message from the Scriptures by helping you think through application to your personal life, your church life, and your city's life. You can use these by yourself for reflection, or with your family or small group for discussion. To review the message, go to [MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages](http://MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages).*

### **INTRODUCTION**

**Pray.** Take a moment to pray asking God to guide you in reflecting upon the Scripture text.

**Read the Scripture text:** Luke 12:4-7

**4** “I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do. **5** But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him! **6** Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. **7** Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows.

### **Key Quotes:**

- Ed Welch, “[There is] an epidemic of the soul called, in biblical language, ‘the fear of man...’ Fear of man is such a part of our human fabric that we should check for a pulse if someone denies it.”
- Psalm 33:8, “Let all the earth fear the Lord, let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.”
- Proverbs 14:27, “The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life...”
- CS Lewis, “There are only two kinds of people—those who say, ‘Thy will be done’ to God, or those to whom God in the end says, ‘Thy will be done.’”
- Jesus: “I tell you my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more they can do.”

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### **QUESTIONS**

#### **1. Let’s think about how this text applies to our lives as individuals.**

- Jesus is starting to prepare his disciples for the opposition his movement is going to face. Already the religious leaders are plotting his demise. And Jesus knows that the fear of what others might do to them will come into play eventually. From our passage, what would you say is the key point that Jesus wants his followers to understand?
- Where in your life does the fear of what others might think of or do to you *because you follow Jesus* loom too large in your life? (Think about potential issues at work or school or with family that might arise from being a Christian. Or think about what faithfulness to Jesus’ teaching about sexuality might cost you.)

- The word fear appears over and over in these few short verses. Jesus tells us not to fear what others might do to us; then he tells us to fear God; and then he tells us not to fear because God cares deeply about us. What do you make of this? What questions or thoughts come to mind?

**2. Let's think about how this text applies to us as a community of Jesus' followers.**

- How does this text clarify the kind of community of Jesus' followers that God wants to form at Mercy Hill Church? What role should we have in encouraging each other to have a proper fear or awe of God in our lives, a fear that is "a fountain of life" (Proverbs 14:27)?

**3. Let's think about how this text applies to our city.**

- What kind of community is this text calling us to become for the sake of the world? In other words, how does this text form our missional identity to live out and proclaim the gospel of Jesus? What if we fail to heed the words of Jesus?

**As we wrap up discussion, read Eugene Peterson's paraphrase of this passage:**

- "I'm speaking to you as dear friends. Don't be bluffed into silence or insincerity by the threats of religious bullies. True, they can kill you, but then what can they do? There's nothing they can do to your soul, your core being. Save your fear for God, who holds your entire life—body and soul—in his hands. What's the price of two or three pet canaries? Some loose change, right? But God never overlooks a single one. And he pays even greater attention to you, down to the last detail—even numbering the hairs on your head! So don't be intimidated by all this bully talk. You're worth more than a million canaries."

PRAYER

What are some ways you can turn what you are learning into prayer? List them as bullet points....

- Heavenly Father, I thank you \_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus, I need \_\_\_\_\_
- Holy Spirit, enable me to \_\_\_\_\_