

**EVERY DAY WITH JESUS** (September 28 – October 4)

Savor a segment of the gospel each day so that you may...

*"...grow in the grace and knowledge of our LORD and Savior Jesus Christ." "II Peter 3:18)*

Each day's questions are numbered and their answers are after the prayer of the day.

**September 28 Luke 11:29-32** To understand this reading, it would be good to read the brief book of Jonah. Some 'scholars' treat Jonah as a myth, after all, "A big fish swallowing a man and then spitting him out again, who has heard of such a thing?" But how does this account show that Jonah is not a 'myth' (There are at least 4 reasons)?<sup>1</sup> Jesus discourages 'sign' seekers, even going so far as calling them 'evil' because such are not taking him neither at face nor faith value. Faith walks without sight (2 Cor. 5:7, Heb. 11:1, Rom. 8:23-25).

**Prayer:** Father, give me a child's heart that humbly accepts all your word. Then in that faith let me walk confident that you will never let me fall. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> a) Note that it is the GOD/Man, Jesus, who is speaking – God does not lie. b) Jesus treats Jonah as a historical figure as much as he does Solomon, the queen of the South (Sheba) and the people of Nineveh. c) Jesus speaks of two groups and their repentance as a historical reality, and of their judging those who do not repent. d) In reference to himself, Jesus said, "Behold, something greater than Solomon, . . . than Jonah is here." You do not contrast your reality and greatness with that of a mythological character.

**September 29 Luke 11:33-36** If "we are what we eat"; we should also heed Jesus when he basically states that "we are what we see," i.e. "what we allow our eyes to feed (feast?) on." Many who are proud of their 'enlightened' state are actually living in darkness. Paul graphically describes this group in Romans 1:18-32. Both today's Luke reading and the Roman's reading leave us asking ourselves, "How are my eyes? What do they delight in resting upon and taking in? What do they crave?"

**Prayer:** Lord, my eyes are bad. I evidence that frequently by what they desire to feed themselves upon, and I, sadly, feed them. Apply your Gospel's healing salve to them that the light in me is not the horrible darkness of unbelief, sin and evil. Heal my eyes so I see and desire only the glorious light of the gospel of Christ. Amen.

**September 30 Luke 11:37-54** Jesus was not politically correct – he could not be PC and at the same time the Savior who is "the Way, the Truth and the Life." Therefore the "Woes" he spoke angered many and ruffled their feathers. "How dare you, speak about us in this way?!?" But he spoke to them in this 'incorrect' way for a loving purpose. For, while the leaders' external actions seemed honorable and commendable externally, internally they were rotten for they had forgotten "justice and the love of God." While v. 41 presents a problem in interpretation, the gist of it seems to be, "When you are spiritually all right inside, remembering justice and the love of God, what you do externally will also be sanctified. But when you are spiritually rotten inside, no matter what 'good' you do externally, it is evil." Jesus also pointed out their corruption by showing that even though they built tombs for and to honor long dead prophets, they treated the present day prophets as equally as badly as their fathers had. Ok, now it's time for a self diagnostic: How are my insides? Do I abuse those who faithfully speak God's Word? Do I need to say to self, "Woe is me?" If we do, then let's immediately go to Jesus for the cleansing and healing of soul that he alone can give.

One other critical thing to note here: Jesus cites the Old Testament, as we call it, from A to Z by referencing Abel who was killed in Genesis 4:4 and Zechariah whose death is recorded in the last OT book [in the Hebrew order of OT books], 2 Chronicles 24:20. Such use of the Bible by him speaks of its divine origin and its authority. As the Bible was this to him, it is to be thus to us.

**Prayer:** Lord, with David I cry, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit." (Psa. 51:7-12, ESV) Amen.

**October 1 Luke 12:1-3** There are many horrible infections in the world. There are stories of flesh eating bacteria, and while rare, there are very real occurrences of it. There's H1N1 flu, bird flu, and AIDS. All of which we really need to be concerned about. But none of these is 'serious' in comparison to the infection that Jesus speaks of here. This infection infests, infects, corrupts and ultimately kills one's soul. It is the hypocrisy of saying one is faithful to God, his Word and his teaching – while in reality one is not. While this infection of hypocrisy might be hidden to all, it is not to God and it ultimately will be revealed to all on the last day. Let's each do a self diagnostic now, and where we find that 'yeast' in our lives, confess it and repent of it. In Christ let's deal with this infection, now, before it is too late.

**Prayer:** Lord, through Paul you teach us that “a little leaven leavens the whole lump” of dough. Cleanse out of me the old leaven that I may be a new lump, as in you I really am unleavened. For you, Christ, our Passover lamb, have been sacrificed. Let us therefore celebrate your saving work by which you saved us, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Amen.

**October 2 Luke 12:4-12** We tend to fear a lot of people. Who might some of them be and why?<sup>1</sup> Such fear of people leads to nothing but “you fear continually all day” (Isa. 51:13). For good reason then does Jesus tell us, “Don't fear man; fear God and his Son.” We do this, not just so we are at 'peace' in this world, but, more importantly, in eternity. As Jesus said, “Fear him who after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell.” That is, “Fear God. Fear the one who can spare you from hell.” See what God has to say about all this in Isaiah 51:12-16.

**Prayer:** Father, FDR said, “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.” That is not true. All we need to fear, and worship and love and trust in is you. Help us to be such faith-filled fearers. Such fear is wisdom Amen.

<sup>1</sup>We fear the rich and powerful, people we admire, people who are our bosses, who have influence over and in our lives. We even fear friends. In all these relationships we don't want to be on their 'bad side' as we don't want to lose their good favor, their friendship, or the ability to manipulate them to get what we want (advancement, career, money, power, fame, friendship, etc.)

**October 3 Luke 12:13-21** IRA's, annuities, 401K's, stocks and bonds, savings, real estate, jewels, cars, houses, clothing, yards, sports, 'the good life', camping and other outdoor recreational activities, entertainments, night life, career, family, education - the list is endless. All consume our thoughts, time and energy. But at the end of the day/life, where will they be and what have they done or will they ever do for us?<sup>1</sup> Yet we invest so much time and wealth in them. Over and over again God reminds us that our soul is our glory, not things. So toward whom am I rich? The cost of laying up treasures for self has a price that is all too high

**Prayer:** Lord, your Word says, “Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.” (Prov. 11:4). Let me understand that so I find my fulfillment and rest and life in you alone, for nothing or no one else could ever give me these. In response, let me be rich toward you. Amen.

<sup>1</sup>In recent history God has shown, yet once again, that no matter how “secure” these seem to be, they get us nowhere and are incapable to doing anything for us. None of them created, nor sustained, nor protected us, let alone, give us a relationship with God or save us. At the end of life people who trust in such things will be sadly and horribly and eternally disappointed to find their portfolios are empty.

**October 4 Luke 12:22-34** How pathetic we are! Either we put all our trust in 'our' things, as we saw yesterday, or we despair when we don't have (or think we might not have) enough stuff! What's the cure to this latter ailment? Read this lesson and then look outside. Better yet, go outside, then read and consider these verses. Prayerfully reflect on Jesus words as you look at the trees, flowers, birds, and animals, let alone the universe. Consider them and God's care of them. Then remember and be shaken with amazement – he didn't send his Son to save them, but you! As he so cared for you, know God, as he always and graciously has done, will take care of you.

**Prayer:** Father, give me the sense of a flower or bird, both 'dumb' creatures, who have enough sense simply to trust you will care for their needs. Grant me more sense than they have by letting me marvel at your Son and the love you have shown to me through him. Surely, as you have given us him, won't you freely give us all good things? Indeed you will. Forgive my foolish doubting. Amen.