

Dear Heavenly Father,

### *Praise*

When Jesus healed the woman in the synagogue, “she glorified God” (Luke 13:13). I praise you today as the God who delights to heal. You rejoice to free those who have been bound by Satan’s crippling chains. How wonderful to serve the One who can redeem and restore! Praise the Lord!

### *Today in Your Word*

Today you shared with me another of Jesus’ encounters with the Pharisees. They consistently received his harshest rebukes, for they were the religious leaders of the people, and they were leading them astray. Jesus’ woes to them teach me that: a) if I disregard love for you and justice for others, then my strict adherence to your other commands is vain; b) if I refuse to seek inward cleansing and purity, then my outward washing is useless; c) if I act like a godly person while still clinging to self and sin, then my influence will contaminate others; d) if I reject those who proclaim your truth, then I’m acting like the Jews who killed your prophets; e) if I demand more than your Word requires, then my teaching hinders others; f) if I proclaim my own ideas instead of expounding Scripture, then my preaching has taken away the key to knowledge—your Word. After Jesus denounced the Pharisees, he turned his attention to his disciples and the gathering crowds. His warnings to them show me that: 1) I should beware of any teaching that leads me away from your Word and any person whose outward behavior conceals inward wickedness; 2) I should fear you more than anyone else, for while men may be able to harm my body, you have the authority to cast me into hell; 3) I must publicly declare my allegiance to Christ, for if I deny Jesus before men, he will deny me before your angels; 4) I should use my time and money to labor for your Kingdom, for I can take nothing with me when I die; 5) I should never worry about food and clothing, for if I put your Kingdom first, you will meet my daily needs; 6) I should be vigilant and faithful in my service to you, for I don’t know when you will return and call me to account; 7) I must be willing to choose you over my own family, for many will not accept the truth. When Jesus finished, some people in the crowd told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. The prevailing opinion at the time was that those who suffered a bloody end must have been very wicked. Jesus countered this view by telling them that “unless you repent, you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3). His point was that they shouldn’t justify themselves by comparing themselves to others. All who sin will “perish,” even if they die peacefully in their sleep. This teaches me to measure myself by the standard of your Word, not by other people’s behavior. If my life doesn’t bear fruit, I too will be cut down.

### *Reflection*

Jesus said, “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Luke 12:34). Am I investing in things that will never pass away, or am I consumed by a desire to accumulate wealth and possessions?

### *Request*

Father, help me to be a faithful slave, one who is on the alert and working hard in your service. May I never slacken in my devotion to you, for of those to whom much is given, much will be required.

### *Thanksgiving*

Thank you for the comfort that comes from knowing that you are watching over and protecting me! Why should I worry when the God of the universe has promised to meet my needs?

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

*Suggested Hymn:* “[What If the Master Should Come?](#)” – Barney E. Warren.

*Meditation Verse:* Luke 12:26.