

I. Read Luke 12:4-7

A. Jesus' rebuke of the Pharisees, scribes, and lawyers would have been alarming to His disciples and those who cared about His safety. They were *the establishment* in Israel. Consequently, He saw the need to establish the proper perspective toward any danger or threat they might present. What was Jesus' perspective toward the potential threat *the establishment* might pose?

B. In our day it is unpopular to speak of hell and eternal damnation. How did Jesus approach the subject?

Why are so many preachers/teachers reluctant to speak forcefully about hell today?

C. What sort of ideas and philosophies in our day militate against speaking in black and white terms about right and wrong, heaven and hell, etc.?

D. Why do so many shy away from the idea of fearing God?

E. In vss. 6-7, Jesus presents an important teaching on *providence*. Define *providence*.

F. Why does Jesus use sparrows as a basis of comparison to God's care for people? (See Matthew 6:25-26.)

- G. Why do you suppose Jesus begins teaching about God's providence at this point?
- H. How should the proper understanding of God's providence serve as an encouragement for believers?
- I. Does the proper understanding of God's providence preclude the fact that evil and tragedy do occur in the lives of believers? (See Matthew 5:45; Genesis 50:20; Acts 2:22-24; Romans 8:28.)
- J. What spiritual fact of life have those who advocate the idea that Christians should never experience problems either misunderstood or ignored?