

Psalm 112 "When Money is big and God is Small"

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Date: 06 July 2025

Preacher: Rev. George Sinclair

[0 : 0 0] Hi, my name is George Sinclair. I'm the lead pastor of Church of the Messiah.

! It is wonderful that you would like to check out some of the sermons done by Church of the Messiah, either by myself or some of the others. Listen, just a couple of things. First of all, would you pray for us that we will open God's Word well to His glory and for the good of people like yourself?

The second thing is, if you aren't connected to a church and if you are a Christian, we really, I would really like to encourage you to find a good local church where they believe the Bible, they preach the gospel, and if you have some trouble finding that, send us an email. We will do what we can to help connect you with a good local church wherever you are. And if you're a non-Christian, checking us out, we're really, really, really glad you're doing that. Don't hesitate to send us questions. It helps me actually to know, as I'm preaching, how to deal with the types of things that you're really struggling with. So God bless. Let's just bow our heads in prayer.

Father, we give you thanks and praise that you know each one of us perfectly. Father, you know what we're really like. You know our strengths. You know our weaknesses. You know our sins. You know those things that we're ashamed of. You know, Father, the different dodges we make when it comes to knowing you and following Jesus. You know what we really think about your Word. And you know all these things and still you love us. Father, we don't appreciate that as much as we should.

We ask, Father, that your Holy Spirit would fall with gentle power upon us this morning as we look at a tricky passage of the Bible that talks about a tricky matter of our heart. And we ask that your Holy Spirit would fall, that you would bring us to Jesus, that you would help us to hear your Word as wisdom and beauty and goodness and truth for each one of us. And we ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated.

[2 : 15] So just in case you don't know, we're summer in the Psalms. We're looking at different Psalms. We're not going through each Psalm from, you know, one after another. We're going to look at 10 of sort of 30 Psalms between 91 and 120. But here's the thing. I'm going to talk about money today. And just so you know, I didn't know I was going to talk about money until I looked at the Psalm very carefully. And then I realized the Psalm actually talked about money a fair bit. And that's a bit of a troublesome topic. And so before I go any further in this, I just want to let people know that if you're here and you're outside of the Christian faith, you're trying to figure out, maybe you're on your way out of the Christian faith. Maybe you're trying to figure out whether you want to become a Christian. Maybe you're watching or are present because you're looking for more ammo about why not to be a Christian. Regardless, we're really glad you're here. And so before I say anything else, I want you to know that the rector and warden, I'm the rector, the wardens and I would like it if you're outside of the Christian faith. I mean, I hope you listen to this because there's lots of wisdom in it. I'll explain what the problem is in a moment. But we'd really appreciate it if you don't give us any money. That we'd rather you didn't give us any money because we're not interested in your money. We're interested in you coming to know Jesus. And the money will, you'll figure out the money later on. But here's the thing that we're talking about today. I think if we were to be honest and talk, every single one of us in this room, maybe not everyone, 99% of us would probably like to have just a little bit more money. And maybe not 99% of us would like a little bit more money because some of us would like a lot more money. Not just a little bit money, but like really a big dump of money. And none of us would like to get less money. Maybe one or two of us would, but probably most of us wouldn't like to get less money. But here's the thing about it. So we'd like to get a bit more money. And part of the reason we'd like to get a bit more money is that we'd like to be just more comfortably, I'd like to be more comfortably me. And I think if I had a bit more money, I'd be more comfortably me. I'd be a little bit less stressed about certain things. I'd maybe be a little bit more hopeful. I'd be a little bit more generous. I'd like to have a little bit more money so I could be more genuinely me. But I also would say, you know, but by the way,

I can see some other people. I look around, you know, my friends, you know, my parents, my grandparents, my cousins, my brother, my sister. And I don't want to be like them. I don't want to become obsessed with money. I don't want to become controlled by money. I don't want to end up serving money. I don't want to end up, you know, some people, they get more money and they start to act like they're better than other people. It just changes them in bad ways. So what we would like is we would like to have a little bit more money and we'd like to not have money control us and bend us out of shape. That's like a very common, I don't think it's just a Canadian thing. I bet if I went to Nigeria or Ghana or China, people would all say the same type of thing. That's what we'd like to have that relationship with money. But the problem is that money almost always does form us in unconscious and powerful ways. And I'll illustrate it by telling you a true story. About 20 years or so ago, there was a person who used to go to the church. They don't come here anymore. I think they moved off to a nicer place to live like Victoria or something like that. But they were here and they had been part of a small little high-tech company and one of the founding employees.

And their company got bought out by a bigger company. And so this person, we'll call him Bob, he got a nice little lump payment. And I don't know, this is like 20 years ago. It was, I don't know, two, three, four million dollars. 20 years ago, that's a lot of money today and it's even more money 20 years ago. And I heard about it. He wasn't boasting about it or anything. I'd heard about it through the grapevine and I hadn't had coffee or anything with him in a while. So I said, hey, listen, we should have coffee or lunch or something. And it happened to be a Sunday where my wife and all was gone and he said after church, hey, why don't I just take you out for lunch?

I said, sure, let's go out for lunch. So we go down from that building to where he'd parked his car and I come up and I'm actually completely and utterly shocked when I see his car. It is the smallest Honda Civic you could buy. It's over 20 years old and it has rust spots. So I get in the car and I say, like, Bob, like, like what's with the car? And he said, well, you shouldn't be asking me a question like that. Why is it that I should have a more expensive car just because I have money?

Then he said, I like this car. The seat fits me. There's big windows. It's paid for. Gets me from A to B and B to A. Why do we need a better car? Well, why do we all think that? Why would we automatically think that somebody who in like today's dollars has just come into an extra 10, 15 million dollars should be buying something better than a 21-year-old smallest Honda they sell car with rust spots and three or 400,000 kilometers? Like, why do we think that? See, the fact is that money does form us. And in many cases, it's going to form us in a very, very powerful way.

[7 : 48] So, you know, what's going on? So, you know, there's some religions and some forms of spirituality that basically say that, you know, all money is bad. And it's just like fundamentally, the poorer you are, the more holy you are. I mean, you know, those of you who are French Canadian, you know, Québécois, you know, there was a terrible legacy in Quebec of the church teaching people it's good to be poor. It's a virtue to be poor. Don't try to better yourself. Is that like what? Or should you become a fully devoted follower and worshiper of mammon and make as much money? Like, how do you right place money? Understand money in such a way that you know you need it. You know, you know, you have to, it's a good and valid thing to have certain types of desires, like to be able to own a house or, you know, to be able to provide, you know, for yourself and your loved ones. So how do you sort of get all that going on? Well, believe it or not, in a very unlikely phrase, in an unlikely psalm, written somewhere between 2,500 to 3,000 years ago, there is profound and beautiful wisdom about how to right-size money. So if you turn with me in your Bibles, we're going to look at it together. It's Psalm 112. It's the text that Monique read for us. Psalm 112. And so what I'm going to do, I don't know how much of you, how much we were paying attention when the psalm was read.

I'm going to read the psalm because, you see, at first glance, this psalm seems to say exactly the opposite of how I've introduced it. So I just want to make sure, I don't want to try to hide something. I don't want to, I don't want to sort of, I mean, not that I'm very good at dazzling, but if I could dazzle you with things and dazzle you with all things, at the end of the day, it has nothing to do with the text, you know, and then you go back later on and look at the text and say, gosh, that all seems to go against what George Act, no, I want you to help you to read the Bible.

So we'll just go through it first, fairly quickly. And it isn't a text that at first glance doesn't look like it's saying what it, what I say it does. It begins like this, praise the Lord, or original language, hallelujah. And then it said, blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in his commandments. Now, right off the bat, most people are going to say there's some problems with this, like why on earth is it blessed to fear the Lord? Shouldn't religion and spirituality deliver you from fear? Why is it encouraging to fear the Lord? And then it goes on verse two, his offspring will be mighty in the land, the generation of the upright will be blessed.

And you look at that and you pause, like what about people who haven't been able to have children? Like what about people who would love to have been able to have had a child, but they weren't able to find somebody to marry? What about people who struggle with infertility? Like, is that implying that like really like only like God saying you should be blessed in such a way that you're going to have lots of children? And what about, well, you can, I won't go any further, but look at verse three, wealth and riches are in his house and his righteousness endures forever. Well, what on earth does it possibly mean righteousness endures forever? And is it just saying that if you really love Jesus and follow Jesus, he's going to make you rich and wealthy? Like George, that's just not true, is it? Like it can't be true. George, you're not wealthy and rich. I've seen the car you're driving.

It's a 21-year-old Subaru. Like you don't qualify as rich. Well, verse four, light dawns in the darkness for the upright. He is gracious and merciful and righteous. And that sounds good.

[11 : 16] It is well, verse five, with the man who deals generously and lends, who conducts his affairs with justice. Well, that sounds good too. Verse six, for the righteous will never be moved and he will be remembered forever. Well, that's like a pretty outrageous claim, George. The actual word moved means shaken. So the righteous person, whatever that means, George, was never going to be shaken. They'll be remembered forever. Like that's a pretty outrageous promise. In fact, George, this sounds more like those health and wealth gospel people that are you leading this up all to saying that, by the way, if you just increase your giving to the church, God's going to give you tenfold and bless you? Is this, no, no, it's like what's going on. And then verse seven, he is not afraid of bad news.

His heart is firm, trusting the Lord. His heart is steady. Verse eight, he will not be afraid until he looks in triumph on his adversaries. Well, George, is that saying that if I struggle with some fear, but the real adversaries, like George, if you knew the adversaries I had, you would say that it's unreasonable to not be afraid of them a little bit because I'm really dealing with some very, very tough things. And George, how does this text apply if you're in an underground church in China or Saudi Arabia or Iran? Like, that just doesn't seem realistic or true. Now, just sort of pause here.

One of the things I'm going to bring back later, but one of the things to notice here is that, in fact, actually, the psalm is dealing with very realistic things. It talks about the fact that there is darkness in the world, and sometimes you need to live in very, very dark places in very, very dark times.

And it does say that there really is bad news. And bad news is a good translation, but it could also even better be called catastrophic news. And in fact, there is the, it mentions that there really are adversaries who are, they don't like you, they hate you, they are opposed to you, they fight against you. And it does actually talk about the real world, and we'll get back to that in a moment. But it seems like pretty outrageous. And in verse nine, he is distributed freely, he is given to the poor, his righteousness endures forever. That's the second time it's said, his horn is exalted in honor, full disclosure, his horn is exalted in honor means he's going to be completely and utterly victorious.

And he's going to be not only victorious, but everybody will see his victory. And then it ends with verse 10, the wicked man sees it and is angry, he gnashes his teeth and melts away, the desire of the wicked will perish. Big contrast. So what on earth is going on with this psalm? It doesn't say George, it doesn't seem to say what you're talking about. Is there some type of secret bullet that I just haven't seen? Like, right now when I read it, George, it's actually a bit discouraging, because I'm not wealthy, I'm not powerful, I don't have kids. Am I like a, not even a second class, but a fifth class Christian? Like, what's going on with it? These are all very, very good questions. And one of the things, you know, I told you, I don't want to interpret, I don't want to try to say all these things and then it doesn't apply, it's just like I'm trying to make sure you don't look at the Bible.

[14 : 24] I want to help you read the Bible. And noticing things that are problematic is partly how you learn to read the Bible. Because now you can start to ask wise questions at the text. So what's going on?

So just one little, okay, all of the grammar nerds, you look up for a moment, non-grammar nerds, just don't think about too many other things for a moment. This is what's called an acrostic psalm.

There's 23 lines in the Hebrew, and there's 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet. And the first phrase, the first line, praise the Lord, hallelujah, is sort of just the introduction. And then the next 22 lines, the first line begins with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, the second with the second, and on and on. So it's actually on one hand, a very tightly controlled psalm, showing to be a real unity. But on the other hand, because it's an acrostic, things aren't always in order. It's a little bit like, you know, zigs and zags and things coming at different ideas. But the whole thing holds together as a whole. And verse one is what is the big point. And that is, if you read verse one, praise the Lord, blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in his commandments. That's the big idea. And verses two to nine are sort of throwing rifts on that and helping you to understand what that means in the real world. And what is the real world? In the real world, you need money to live. In the real world, money is a power. In the real world, there are adversaries and problems. In the real world, there are poor people and there's a need for generosity.

That is the real world. And so the psalm is going to try to unpack what it means a little bit on one aspect of this opening phrase, blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in his commandments. Or blessed is the woman who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in his commandments. That's the very, very big idea. But now we get back to this really crazy problem of why on earth is it blessed to fear? Who wants to fear more? I can imagine lots of people saying, Lord, Jesus, George, I'm, I am already, I already have too much fear in my life. Why on earth would I want more? And, and, you know, don't you think, George, that true religion and true spirituality would, would, would, it would remove fear? Like, so what's going on? So let's, we're going to spend the longest time on this little bit of a phrase, because if you don't understand it, the rest of the psalm isn't going to very, make very much sense. So first of all is this. Okay, it goes, blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in his commandments. And it uses the word

Lord, and that word there is very important because it's the covenant name for God. And, and so the difference is, it's the difference between, um, if I was to meet, uh, Mark Kearney, I would call, I don't know everything, I'd probably ask some of you folks, uh, who are in diplomatic or government, how do I address him? But I definitely would call him at least Prime Minister Kearney, but his kids call him dad, right?

[17 : 43] I mean, in fact, I'm sure that if one of them called him, you know, Honorable Prime Minister, he'd cuff them on the side of the head figuratively because they're, you know, being a bit rude to him.

And, and so that's, you see, it doesn't, there's other, there's a whole range of different words in the original language for God, and none of the generic words for God are used. It's a covenant word. A covenant means a deep personal relationship involving commitment of one to the other.

And so that's the very first thing. It doesn't say, you know, blessed are those who fear God, who fear the divine, who fear the almighty. It's man, blessed is the man who fears the Lord, now, and who greatly delights in his commandments. Now, it's still a little bit, a bit troublesome, but, um, the, the, the, the, the word here, uh, is blessed, and that's an important word to understand. Blessing is God in his kindness acting for your thriving in either a new creation or an old creation sense or both. So what, what is blessing?

When, in reading the Old Testament, I don't, I don't want to talk about how people talk about in Canada, but when you read it in the Old Testament, our Jewish friends, what would they call the Tanakh, the Torah, when you see the word blessed, it always means that God in his kindness acts for your thriving. And the thriving is either in a new creation sense, which I'll explain in a moment, or an old creation sense or a bit of both. That's always what it means. And all, a new creation sense, and that comes out of, uh, you know, people in the Old Testament, you've got a new heart from God in the Old, in, as soon as the Old Testament, new heart from God, a new spirit within you, and then in the New Testament, it's made clearer. It means you're born again. It means you're God's child by adoption and grace through faith in Christ. And, and in every case, new, new creation blessings mean a greater ability to pray, a greater ability to know God and have intimacy with them, uh, to have the fruit of the Holy Spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, grow in your life, uh, an increasing ability to be more like Jesus. And, and that's what it would mean to be blessed in a new creation sense. And an old creation sense would mean that you're blessed with health, you're blessed with money, you're blessed with, uh, with safety in your streets, uh, you're, you're blessed with deliverance, uh, from, uh, a debt, somebody who, oh, is, is in control of you, or from enemies. And that's what it means. God sends in his kindness a power, throw it, to cause you to thrive, and it means it will either be in a new creation sense, an old creation sense, or both. So every time you read the Old Testament, you see that word, that's what's going on there. And you can look to see specifically some of the types of blessings that it's been giving you. And that instantly is going to help us with the psalm in a very significant way. Because it means that on one hand, you can look at it, and it is in some sense. So what we're going to get to in a moment is there's a profound mystery in the psalm, which I'll get to in, in, in a little bit. But even before this profound mystery, on one hand, it does mean some of these things, but it can also mean, like all creation things, that you are blessed with more money. You know, you are blessed with children. When I tell people that I, I have, you know, nine, nine children, I, and they're usually always surprised. I, I just say, God has blessed us very deeply. I really believe that. And then they say, well, I have two kids. I say, well, every, every child's a blessing. Like, right? Like that's, every child's a blessing.

And, but on the other hand, it can also mean, it can also be blessing in a figurative new creation sense. So for instance, the comment about offspring, it means that, it might mean that for a woman who's never had children, that she can be a spiritual mother to many. In my former church, there, there was Ruth Jo of blessed memory. Ruth Jo, I mean, she, she was blessed with one son and with a couple of grandchildren, but she was a spiritual mother to countless generations of children in that church.

[21 : 59] Always giving little gifts, always making all sorts of supplies for the Sunday school, always remembering children by their name. She had a profound effect. We, in fact, our, our youngest daughter, her middle name is Ruth Jo after her. And in this, in this congregation, and there was another woman of blessed memory in that congregation, Pat Smith, the same type of woman. And some of you might remember Fanny, who used to be a part of this congregation for quite, quite a few years, had spent 35 some odd years in China as a missionary, came back, never married, never had any kids. And she couldn't come to church on Sunday without lots of things to give the kids.

And kids flocked to her. And I could go on. But you see, the text now is talking not just necessarily, if you understand what, when it says at the beginning of the text, blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in his commandments, and you understand what blessing means, you start to understand that the text can be read in these two different ways, both validly, because that's what God's blessing does. It's a thriving, in both an old creation sense, or it might only be purely a new creation sense, purely in an old creation sense, or some combination of the two. But George, you might say, who on earth, how could it be blessed to fear the Lord? Like, what on earth does that mean? That, that's sort of crazy talk.

I have to just tell you something. I'm a bit weird. Well, I'm more than a bit weird. You know, there's a really good title of a book called Everybody's Normal Until You Get to Know Them.

And then you realize they're not actually very normal. I grew up in a type of church where the theme song was, if you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. If you're happy, you know, and we have the victory in Jesus. That's the type of church I grew up in, you know. And gosh, if you're a depressed teenager, hearing that type of happy, clappy stuff only makes you more depressed. Just, just, just so you know, if you go on and, and, and, and start a church like that, it's a sure record, sure recipe for fake smiles and inner depression. And, and after I became a Christian when I was in grade 12, I started to read the Bible and I started to notice the Bible kept talking about the fear of the Lord. And in some ways then I've been on this quest for decades to try to understand the fear of the Lord.

And for decades I've been praying that I would grow in the fear of the Lord. Full disclosure, I told you I am not normal. It's a regular part of my prayer that I would grow in, in fearing God.

[24 : 36] So what on earth is going on in this phrase? So as I said, first of all, the Lord is a covenant term. It's not like talking to the prime minister, it's talking to your dad. And here there's, there's four aspects to try to understand what this term is and why it's regularly viewed as a virtue and something that Christians should pursue. The first one is it involves a sense of awe at how profoundly different God is from me, how the Lord is from me. If you think about it for a second, it's an increasing sense that the Lord is the creator and I am the created. The Lord is infinite and I am finite. The Lord is eternal and I am in time. The Lord has no needs. I am one unending need.

And you can go on and on and on. And part of what the fear of the Lord means, it's an ever deeper sense of awe at understanding how profoundly, deeply, thoroughly different God is.

And another sense of it is that it is an ever-growing sense of God's hugeness and his perfection. This idea that all of, all of the universe cannot contain God, that he is the creator of all things.

He establishes and sustains all things. He is completely different than this created order. He is a universe shaping, universe creating, universe shaping, universe holding together God.

God. And, and, and, and, and, and, and, and, and, and, and, and, and the other hand, there's also this increasing awe at his closeness. This idea that God is both completely transcendent, but completely imminent. And just to put those complicated words in a very simple thing, is that God is literally closer to me than my thoughts are to me. He is closer to me than my breathing is to me.

[26 : 41] That is how close he is. And this all goes together with how different he is. And, and, and so when you start to understand that the fear of the Lord, and why does the fear come in? Well, the fear comes in at a concern about boundaries not being violated or confused. And, and why, what I mean is this.

You think about it. It's a very, very common thing in marriage counseling or in family counseling. It's a very, very common thing in movies and television shows where you start, you watch the show and you realize that the mom or the dad is actually violating boundary after boundary with their child. You look at it or you see that the husband is violating boundaries with his wife. He's not realizing sufficiently how his wife is actually really different than him. And that just because something makes him happy won't necessarily make her happy, right? That just because something is, is something that he really desires doesn't necessarily mean that she desires it. And he begins to confuse his desires with her. He makes like her desires are really what his desires are.

What's going to be really good for him is what really good for her. And this is a common theme in movies and books. And we do this with people that we can see. And so the problem is that the God who's invisible, we do this all the time in huge ways. In huge ways. We, we begin to sort of somehow think that my glory is God's glory or that God's glory is that, that God who gives me gifts, that somehow that's something that comes from me. And it, and I start to transgress these boundaries. I start to think of God, not start to, I'm, I'm born that way of transgressing boundaries, of, of, of starting to take onto myself what is really God's and, and blurring the distinction between me and God and taming God and making him small. And, and so the fear of the Lord is, is such a good word because on one hand it, it's talking about this, this growth in your ability to realize that you, I, George, I have beginning and ends. And God has something which makes him very, very different than me. And I increasingly become to understand that the, there is a profound difference between me and God, and that difference is good. And I have a horror, not that I do, that you have a horror, you, you start to grow into it of not wanting to transgress that. Just as in the movies and the books I'm describing, the, the, you know, if it's a movie or a book with a happy ending, the, the horror of the husband or the parents to realize how they've been transgressing the boundaries with their kids, and you don't want to get into that, that's where the fear comes from. I'll give you an example, a thought experiment. Imagine for a moment that God did something very profound through you, maybe gave you a word of wisdom, an insight about something, and you tell it to the congregation. And as a result of that, like maybe that's, that, that something remarkable happens, something like many, many people come to faith, or we get a building, which is just completely given to us, and it's all because you had some type of word of knowledge, and you shared it with people. And then two months or two weeks after that, and you have the building, nobody remembers that it was all because of you telling people.

Would you feel unhappy if they forgot you, and are only praising God? Well, okay, be honest, you would be bothered. Don't get all holy, holy, holy on me and say, no, no, no, I don't care if anybody remembers me, I just want, no, no, no, no, no, no, you'd be bothered.

You see, you've transgressed this boundary. The idea came from God, you told it to God's people, the gift comes from God, it's all God, why do I have to be praised?

[30 : 42] Why do I, why might I be depressed for years to come? Why might I even leave the church because they forgot that it was me who gave the idea? You see, that's why we need to have the fear of the Lord. And by the way, the way I'm describing the fear of the Lord, that helps us to understand why it is, in, in the Old Testament, the fear of the Lord is often connected to a longing and yearning for God, because the understanding of the differentness is so there, and, and so the, the fear aspect comes of not wanting to transgress, because you're getting a deeper knowledge of who God is, yet at the same time as you have that deeper knowledge, you yearn for him, because the difference between God and me is a good difference, it's one that I absolutely need to see. So how does this all talk about, how does this all go about with the topic about money? Well, first of all, just a general word of advice, never believe anyone who says their way will make you healthy, wealthy, powerful, and there will be no obstacles or no problems in your life. Never believe them. Doesn't matter if they say they're a Christian pastor, doesn't matter if there's some wealth management guru, the Bible here is very, very, very frank.

There is a world where money exists, there is a need for money, there's things that money can buy, but there's also times of great darkness, great, great adversaries, great enemies, and there is catastrophic news, there really is. And, and so what's going on with this psalm? What the psalm describes is this. I have to watch my time, and this is why it's actually really important. It's why, if you go back, and in a moment we're going to look at the psalm again, here's the thing about the psalm.

Now, if you understand everything it said in light of, blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in his commandments, when the Lord is huge and money is small, you will live a very different life than when money is huge and the Lord is small.

When the Lord is huge and money is small, you will live a very different life than when money is huge and the Lord is small.

That's why the psalm talks about how the bad news, their heart is fixed on the Lord. They understand that even with the bad news, the Lord is big, money is small. It's, it's even then while they, they start to understand that when the Lord is huge and money is small, you don't act in such a, because one of the problems is when money is huge and the Lord is small, you do start to want to either have more and more money to control it. You do get really bent out of shape with bad news.

[33 : 34] You are, you really resent adversaries who want to take any of your money away from you. It's hard to be generous and you, you, you easily slip into injustice and want to be treated separately, especially because money is huge and the Lord is small. But when the Lord is huge and money is small, you will live a very different life.

When you begin to understand that blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in his commandments, you will live a different life. And here's the other aspect of it. It goes with the commandments. When pleasing the Lord and bringing him glory is huge and money is small, you will live very different than when money is huge and pleasing the Lord and bringing him glory is small.

Money is huge, either because you don't have it or you want it. When money is huge, you will live a very, very, very different life. Here's the thing. Here's a profound truth. It's one of the reasons why many poor Christians are vastly more generous than people who are rich. And that is because this, when money is big and God is small, you will never have enough money to be generous.

You will never have enough money to be generous. When I just make that extra \$5,000 a year, then I can be generous. I just need to make that extra \$10,000. I just need this promotion. I just need to get my mortgage paid off. Okay, now my mortgage is paid off. I need to get my car paid off. Okay, I just need to get the right amount of money in my RRSPs. And I know a man years ago in my previous church, and he had like four or five million dollars of assets. He still worried whether he could retire, whether he had enough money to retire. I'm not making this up. And so it's, you know, and obviously we can be generous. I think 89 or 90 percent of Canadians say they're generous, but the fact is I think it's only 17 percent of Canadians give enough money to claim charitable givings on their income tax, and you only have to give \$200 to do that. You'll never have enough money to be generous. It's always on the other just past the horizon. But when pleasing the Lord and bringing him glory is huge and money is small, you will live very different than when money is huge and pleasing the Lord and bringing him glory is small. Now, I mean, I'm just going to keep going. I think I have to keep going. So here's the first thing about the text, and then we'll get to understand how it is that you enter into this, this, this, this, have this fear of the Lord becomes more real to you. The way to understand Psalm 112 is that it's not directly about you.

It is only potentially indirectly about you. There is only one person who has ever lived who has lived Psalm 112, and that is Jesus.

[36 : 40] Especially if you understand how I describe the fear of the Lord, you know, just listen to it again in light of that. Blessed is the man, verse 1, who fears the Lord. God, the Son of God, always never confused himself and God the Father or the Holy Spirit.

They understood the difference between that. He greatly delights, Jesus greatly delights in the Lord and the Father's commandments. The offspring of Jesus will be mighty in the land, and the generation of the upright will be blessed. All of those who become his children by adoption and grace will be blessed. Wealth and riches are in his house. He owns the entire universe. Only his righteousness endures forever. Light dawns in the darkness because he came into this darkness world, into this dark world, and light dawned on him. He always knew his way. He is full of grace, full of mercy, mercy, always righteous. He is the man who always deals generously and lends. He is the one who always conducted his affairs with justice. He is the one who's righteous, who was righteous and was never shaken. He is the one who will be remembered forever. He was not afraid of bad news. His heart was always firm. He always trusted in the Lord. His heart was always steady. He was not afraid. He did triumph over all of his adversaries. He has distributed freely. He has given to the poor.

His righteousness endures forever. And he did win the victory. It's describing Jesus. And it's indirectly describing me and you when we are in Christ.

So years ago, there was a very wealthy man who came to the church, and his name was Tom. And I think I've told this story before, but I'm going to tell it again because it's a good story. And there used to be a restaurant in Ottawa called High's, which was very expensive, one of the most expensive restaurants in Ottawa. And it was where you could go and see cabinet ministers. And you could go see upper level bureaucrats and the rich in the city and the movers and the shakers and the mayor.

And of course, anybody could go in if you had enough money. And he took me there for lunch. And the first time he took me there for lunch, he said to me, George, I've taken people like you to lunch for places like this before. And I want to tell you right now that if you look at the prices and you're going to be shocked, and you order the cheapest thing in the menu, as soon as you've ordered, I will tell the waitress to ignore your order and bring you the most expensive item on the menu. And then I will order you some appetizers and some dessert. And trust me, I can afford it. So after we'd been there a couple of times for these meals, I said to him one day, he was a very religious man. I don't know if he'd become a Christian. If he didn't become a Christian through our church, he came to assurance through our church. And I talked to him one day about the meal. And I said, Tom, if I went off and told everybody that I'd have a free meal, you and I both know that's not correct. That \$250 meal wasn't free.

[39 : 36] Somebody had to pay. Somebody had to pay. And if you think about it for a second, how on earth can any human being think that they can ever pay the way to heaven? That they can pay the rent or ownership in heaven? That they can pay enough to be born again. In every one of these cases, somebody has to pay. I shared with him a very, very powerful verse that communicates that. It's in 2 Corinthians chapter 8, verse 9.

And it describes what it is that God has done for us in Christ. It goes like this, for you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you, by his poverty, might become rich. I'll read it again. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you, by his poverty, might become rich. See, here's the wonderful thing. You read this text about being righteous and justice and all that, and you realize you can't live it, you don't live it. And you call out to Christ, and he literally, who is the richest that there could be, became the poorest that there could be, so that I might be rich when I put my faith and trust in him. And when I put my faith and trust in him, I enter into union with him. And that means that this psalm begins to describe me in the already not yet. That I begin to learn through grace and trust in Christ that he is my

Savior and Lord. I ask him to come in. I ask him to make me born again. And he does all of these things. And I begin to learn to live in a world where he is big and money is small. And pleasing him and bringing him glory is big and money is small. And the story that grips my heart is that he became poor so that I might become rich. And that is how I begin to look at the world.

Just very briefly, in closing, in terms of applying it to us, you see, the text is saying that God will bless us in Christ to be free and to bless. He blesses us to be free and to bless.

It means he blesses us to be free from having money control us and instead to see how to bless. We know that it's completely and utterly valid to work, to be able to maybe own a house or a condo someday, to provide for your loved ones, maybe provide for children, or if you've been blessed with that, or provide for maybe, you know, parents who need some money. But it also means that you're blessed to be able to not only make money, but to provide for the church, for the furtherance of the gospel, for the poor. And it means that you start to have a very, very different way. And so it's not as if the Bible is calling you to complete and utter poverty. To put it in very, very gross terms, you don't need to have the most expensive Mercedes Maybach G-Class \$500,000 SUV.

[43 : 04] If God has blessed you with that money, maybe you just buy a Crosstrek. Because you'd rather see that money blessing others and bringing God glory.

You know, it's one of the things is the council is, you know, we believe that God is calling us to, on the first week of classes at Ottawa U, to stand out and to give to the students and the graduate students and to the staff and the faculty and hand out free New Testaments. It's going to cost about \$4,000. And I'd really like you to pray into that. And you see, hearing all of that thing, you think to yourself, well, you know what, I could give \$600 for that or \$500 for that. And, you know, if I just think about how, you know, maybe for the next month, rather than every time I go to a coffee shop, that rather than buying, like, the most expensive, you know, latte, I just buy a short coffee. And I'll just do with a little bit less, but I'm still having a coffee. It's still really tasty. And I'd rather see that money go to further the Lord's work.

That's the change that starts to happen when God is big, money is small, pleasing God is big, money is small. And you see that when, and how you get into this relationship with this God is this profound act of generosity on God's part, the true blessing of God to make you his child by adoption and grace. And that begins to be the story by which you live. And then those, those, the way you view the world and the way of your possessions starts to change. That's our prayer. So brothers and sisters, friends, I hope if you get nothing else from this sermon, that you would desire to pray 112 verse 1, blessed is a man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in his commandments. And if by the way, the Lord puts it on your heart to contribute to the Bibles, you know, you can send some money, makes, but only send money, you know, with a memo at light and to go towards that. If you understand that if any money comes extra than what we need, it will just go into the general accounts. But, but please pray for this, this project. Not all of us have extra money, but all of us can pray.

Let's bow. Let's invite you to stand. Just before I, I say the closing prayer, um, I just really want to understand, make you to understand, I hope that you understand, um, today could be the day your life changes.

Like there's no one so far from God, no one so consumed with fears, no one so consumed with idolatries of power or money that Christ didn't die for you. There is no one here who is so poor that Christ didn't die for you. There's no one here so rich that Christ didn't die for you. And his bigness and his hugeness is not something to oppress you, but to save you and to know that you can have this profound assurance that when you call out to Christ and say, Jesus, would you be my savior and you would be my Lord? He will not turn you away. He will hear your cry and he will come to you and he will bless you with new birth. He will bless you by adopting you as his child. And he will bless you by the, the teaching of the word by being part of a Christian community, by the leading of the Holy Spirit to grow within you more and more and more and more to understand that the real world, the world that you actually live in, even a world with problems and with enemies and with troubles is the real world where God is absolutely big and absolutely loving. And he wants you to be his child by adoption and grace. And there is no better time than now than to ask him, Lord Jesus, please be my savior. And thank you that you will never let me go. Let's just bow our heads in prayer.

[47 : 11] Father, you know that all of us need to grow in our knowledge, Father, of you and a knowledge of just how big you are. Father, we are always slipping into thinking that you are small and our troubles are big and people are big and institutions are big. Father, we ask that your Holy Spirit would bring this word of scripture deep into our hearts and grow in us a fear of you, knowing that you are big and everything else is small and that your love is big, your goodness is big, your, your grace is big.

And that, Father, you desire us to know you and to enter into you and live in union with Christ, that we might be blessed in Christ. We might be, we might be blessed with freedom.

freedom. We might be blessed to work. We might be blessed to bless. And we ask all these things in the name of Jesus, your son and our savior and all God's people said, amen.