

Longing for More

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Date: 12 September 1999

Preacher: Adrian Lane

[0 : 00] This is the morning service at Holy Trinity on the 12th of September 1999 The preacher is Adrian Lane His sermon is entitled Longing for More And is from Luke chapter 12 verses 13 to 34 But I'm also reminded of those long lines of refugees flowing out of Kosovo into Macedonia or Albania Each carrying a little bag or, if they're lucky, cart Stuffed with a few earthly treasures which will soon be nabbed by a soldier or a border official All of us have treasures, don't we?

My father gave me a model ship made by my great-grandfather of a 17th century Dutch trader And it stands in a very fragile glass case about a metre long in my living room My grandmother gave me a gold coin for my 21st But in my various moves I've lost it and it sort of nags at me Well, what's your treasure?

What treasure do you long for? We often judge people by their treasures, don't we? Where'd they get the money for that? Sometimes we consider others important because of their treasures Or maybe we look down on them because they don't have much treasure Sometimes we talk about our treasures Other times we keep them secret Sometimes we're conscious of them Sometimes we're not so conscious And it's interesting, isn't it, how often others know what we treasure When I was away for six months, some friends came and stayed at my house And when I returned, one of their teenage boys told me how much they'd enjoyed playing ball in my living room Oh, but we were very careful with the ship, he said He was teasing me Only joking, but he knew where my treasure was What would you like others to know you treasure?

Let's say it's your funeral And imagine, for instance, a friend or a child of yours Is speaking about you What would they say?

Mum really treasured He really treasured Now here's an interesting question What do you think God treasures?

[2 : 52] What do you think God would have us treasure? It's fascinating what reveals our treasure Maybe we learn about what we treasure when we lose it Or maybe it's through a discussion with a spouse or a parent about spending priorities Maybe it's through an unexpected opportunity And this is what happens to that man in the story that Jesus told, isn't it?

He's a rich man And his fields have produced a bumper crop He's had a windfall Just like us receiving some money maybe from a relative That we didn't know existed Or discovering that because we were an AMP policyholder We became a shareholder And this man's got nowhere to store his crop And so he thinks to himself What will I do?

I know what I'll tear down my current barns and build bigger ones And then I'll be able to sit back and relax and enjoy myself And live off the income Well, what's happened here?

This windfall, this opportunity Has not only given him more treasure, more grain But it's also provided us, hasn't it, with a window into his heart We can tell from what he does with this grain What he really treasures What he longs for What he wants more of If he gets the chance Eating, drinking, enjoying himself It's a bit like if you'd won the lottery Maybe someone bought you a ticket For your birthday or for Christmas And you've won \$20 million How are you going to spend it?

All those dreams you had Which you knew were just dreams Until now Maybe it's a new house in a nice location Maybe it's a car or a boat Maybe a trip to visit a relative Maybe it's just having a stash in the bank So that when you go to the ATM The receipt actually says what you think is in there See how an opportunity Gives us a window Into our hearts Into what we really long for Into what we really treasure Well this bumper crop gave this man In the story a chance A chance to stop work And sit back And so he worked hard He organised the clearing of the old barns He built bigger ones Safe and sturdy ones To keep the grain out of the rain Out of the way of rats and rabbits And now he's got the chance to celebrate

[5 : 49] To sit back and relax But His life is over That very night His life Was demanded of him Not even a day In the sun And now who will get all this wealth That he's stored up for himself Watch out says Jesus Be on your guard Against all kinds of greed This man thought his life Lay in the abundance of possessions And this man was totally self-centred Look at how many times this man says My I have no place to store My crops I'll build bigger barns Where I'll store all my possessions All my goods For myself Does anybody else get a look in? Does God get a look in? You see this man was a fool A rich fool There's something pathetic Especially pathetic about a rich fool Isn't there?

Although he wasn't a rich fool for long Just how did those crops eventuate? This man thinks he's the master of his life This man thinks that he's made these crops This man takes God for granted This man takes God for granted And I'd like to suggest to you That this man's plight is even worse Than what at first appears Just before Jesus tells this story Luke who's writing the history Tells us that Jesus has been urging the crowds Not to fear those who Kill the body And after that can do no more But Jesus says I'll show you whom you should fear Fear him who After the killing of the body Has the power To throw you into hell Yes I do Fear him You see There is a fate Worse than death Much worse And without being macabre friends It's my duty to tell you To remind us all That we're only a heartbeat away From death and judgement And many of us Have had friends who Like the man in the story Have been here heartily one day And gone the next I live just off Royal Parade In Parkville And many people using Royal Parade Are from interstate Or from overseas And they're unfamiliar With the trams And the complicated turns In and out of the service lanes And often when I get out of a tram

[9 : 17] A car zooms past And just misses me And I've seen at least One body lying on that road Dead All of us are only a stop sign A heartbeat Away from Death and judgement And I wouldn't be caring for you If I didn't ask you What does your life Consist of?

What's your treasure? What do you Long for? Are you rich Towards God?

You see This man in the story Was not Rich towards God What does Jesus mean When he says Rich towards God? Does he mean Give money to God? To God's work And to God's purposes? Yes he does mean that But it's much deeper than that Isn't it? It's about where our heart is And whether or not We're generous with it This man's treasure was Not just his possessions But self-centred pleasure At ease He put away these goods For himself That's what life was to him But what do you treasure?

Let's come back to that question I asked at the beginning What do you think God treasures?

[10 : 55] His world? His creation? Sure he delights in it And cares for it Although he recognises That it's broken And needs renewing And he will do that At the end of time Creating a whole new Heaven and earth Perfect Without a shadow of suffering But more than that God treasures Holiness And obedience And purity And justice And God treasures Love And mercy And God treasures People You and me And longs for us To be in a faithful Dynamic relationship With him But because God Treasures you and me And because he treasures Obedience And holiness We have a problem Don't we?

Because you and I Aren't pure Aren't obedient Aren't always loving And faithful In our relationships With each other Let alone with God So God gave His Greatest Treasure God gave His son Jesus To leave The splendour And perfection Of heaven And walk This earth As a human being So that we might Learn of God So that we might Learn what God Treasures What God would Have us Treasure God gave His son To be Misunderstood To be Manhandled And to Eventually be Crucified So that the Penalty So that the Penalty Of all our Self-centredness All our Ungodliness All our Lack of love For each other And for God Would be

Paid By the Death Of a Perfect Human Being By the Death Of God Himself On the Cross And that Penalty has Been paid My friends Because the Cross is Empty Because Jesus' Resurrection From the Dead Shows us That the Penalty Is being Paid The Penalty Is Satisfied What does God treasure He treasures Men and Women who Treasure Jesus He treasures Men and Women who Look to Jesus for Forgiveness He treasures Men and Women who Live for Jesus As their Master Rather than Living for Money Indeed he Treasures Men and Women so Much That he Was prepared To die For them So that They might Live Eternally Eternally

Well many Here already Treasure Jesus I know that But today's a Special day When we've Invited Friends And there Sure to be Some here Today Who want to Take the Opportunity to Turn back To God And live And long For God Rather than For other Things Some of You may Need more Time to

Think about It and I Urge you to Take the Opportunities of This week This good News week To ask Your questions And to Find out About what It means to Follow Jesus But don't Keep putting The decision Off Otherwise You'll become Like the man In the story To turn Back to God And live For him Might be Hard For you Or it Might be Easy For you Living for God is Not always Easy But God Promises To help Us You can

Turn back To God Simply by Talking to God In prayer And what I'm going To do Is I'm Going to Pray a Prayer In a Moment Which I'll Invite you To repeat In your head After me If you'd Like to Let me First read That prayer And give you A few Moments to Think about It So that you Know what I'm going To pray Heavenly Father I've Treasured Other things Apart from You Forgive me Thank you For sending Your son Jesus To teach Me about You And to Die for Me So that I can Be totally Forgiven Change My heart And help Me now To live For Jesus Being rich Towards you In Jesus Name Amen Lord you want

[16:02] To pray That prayer Are you Ready to Pray that Prayer Why don't We all Bow our Heads And for Those who Would like To pray That prayer Can pray With me Heavenly Father I've Treasured Other things Apart from You Forgive me Thank you For sending Your son Jesus To teach Me about You And to Die for Me So that I might Be totally Forgiven Change My heart And help Me now To live For Jesus Being rich Towards you In Jesus

Name Amen Amen If you Prayed That prayer And would Like to Find out More How you Can Grow As a Christian Then fill Out that Little pink Form That you Got in The notice Sheet Ticking One of The boxes There Because this Church is Very keen To help You grow In your Relationship With God I've Made Some copies Of that Prayer And I'll Put them At the Back There As we Go Out And if Anyone Would Like to Take That prayer As a Reminder To them Of new Found Life In Christ Then they're Welcome To