

Giving to Glorify God

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[0 : 00] I would like you to turn in your Bibles this morning to 1 Timothy chapter 6.! By way of solicitation, that means begging, I am going to be preaching at Madison Christian's Chapel.

What day is that? Sometime this coming week. A week from tomorrow.

Okay, I can ask you ahead of time, because it's on my heart. I know at this time the passage that, Lord willing, I will be preaching.

And if there is anything you know about Tim Knoyer, it is that he is a beggar when it comes to prayer. And I look forward to the privilege and the blessing of being able to open the Word of God with those students.

And I am going to be studying and preaching from Ephesians chapter 3. The passage in which the Apostle prays that those dear beloved people in the church of Ephesus would understand how much Christ loves him.

[1 : 21] And that is going to be the passage that I preach. And I am dependent upon your prayer. And I am dependent upon the enabling of the Spirit of God as I open that passage to young men and women that need that encouragement in their lives.

Having said that, I want you to join me now in prayer as we ask for God's help as we open the Scriptures. Our Father God, this morning it is our joy to gather together and to gather in your presence to sing your praises.

As we sing to make a connection between the words of the songs that we have sung to you. And the clear instructions that Scripture give us.

I'm so thankful that as I sing with your people that I am prompted once and again of different passages of Scripture that weave together to remind me of the supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And the blessing I have of salvation. And the need I have of growing in my affection for Him. And so this morning as I open this book, I am thankful that this is not my task alone, but it is one that you have called your people to partner with me in prayer.

[2 : 45] Asking for the work of the Holy Spirit. Both in governing the things that I say. And in the hearts upon which these words fall.

Lord, I confess this morning that we deal with a very difficult topic. One that while we may give lip service to, there will be a great deal of fleshly interference with holy conviction.

I speak for my own soul. As well as for those who are part of this dear fellowship. Children of the living God.

Joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ. Fellow companions in the gospel. And so we confess we need your help that we might be more than forgetful hearers.

But doers of the law. We ask this in your precious name. And for your glory. Amen. Well, last week I began the sermon with a very unusual announcement.

[3 : 57] How many of you remember that? Pastor Saul, do you remember that seminar that we were at where Alistair Begg said, Never underestimate your people's ability to forget the important things you've said.

Well, here it is again. I announced last week at the opening of the service that our fellowship finds ourselves in a rather unusual situation. For which we are very thankful to God.

And God alone. Our fellowship is in a situation where the generosity of you as God's people have put us in a situation together as a fellowship.

That we're going to think in the weeks and months to come of how we are good stewards of a surplus that God has given us. That's a blessing. So I say that at the beginning because in teaching about stewardship, my intention is not to kind of wheedle and cajole and kind of plead with you down on one knee or offer you kind of an idea that, Hey, listen, if you give ten bucks to God, he's going to give you a hundred and manipulate the situation because I'm apoplectic this morning of what's going to happen with our giving.

The truth of the matter is, is I don't know what's going to happen with our giving other than the prompting of the Spirit of God and you as God's people. It really is between you and God. However, it is my responsibility as a preacher of righteousness to hold up the glory of Christ and draw your attention to understand that really behind Christian giving is our view of God.

[5 : 34] And that was what we looked at last week in 2 Corinthians chapter 8 and 9. Now, if you were listening in the prayer, you remember that I made reference to the fact that this morning we are going to touch on what is a very challenging subject for believers.

Did you hear me pray that? How many of you thought to yourself, I know, I know. Or how many of you thought to yourself, I wonder what he's talking about. Well, I want you to turn in your Bibles to 1 Corinthians chapter 6 and we are going to pick up on the lesson that the Apostle Paul had for the church at Corinth or at Ephesus in relationship to the matter of covetousness.

I remember reading a number of years ago something that I have cited on more than one occasion that in all of his years of pastoral ministry, Charles Spurgeon referenced that he had never ever had anyone come into his office or share with him personally that he was struggling with the sin of covetousness.

And I have to tell you that as a pastor and actually in the process of talking with an individual, potential candidate, early stages of working those things through so you can do what?

Pray, pray, pray. Anyway, early stages. And in our conversation, dealing with the subject of stewardship and what we're going to be actually talking about this morning.

[7 : 12] And I related that it's a very difficult passage because it touches on something we battle with. We battle in our culture. We, you, me, battle with covetousness.

Let's try it a different way. Contentment. And so I want us to allow Paul's lesson in 1 Timothy chapter 6 to touch our hearts and affect us deeply.

Let me explain kind of a little bit of the background. If you look there in chapter 6 verse 2, the last part, it says, Teach and urge these things. Then in verse 3, if anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing, he has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and depraved of truth, imagining, now we come to a little kicker here, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.

You see, what had happened there in Ephesus is that the church was striving or suffering under individuals who were teaching that actually growing in godliness had a comparative and connected growing in prosperity.

In fact, if you wanted to grow to be wealthy, you just needed to kind of play along and do the spiritual things that went with it. Now, these false teachers were the earlier version of the silk suit Rolex watch jet setters that you can watch on TV today.

[9 : 09] In fact, if you were to stay home sick, I trust that would be the only reason you would do it, but if you would stay home sick, one of the things you could kind of do is tune in to people like Benny Hinn or Joel Osteen or Joyce Meyer or just a host of people.

What is his name? Joseph Prince, another one. They're all over there. It's wonderful. The false teachers of that day were specialists that's suggesting that the key to prosperity actually was learning how to be religious.

You look ahead there in verse 5. It says that these people imagine that godliness is a means. It's the way. It's the way of gain.

And so when Paul summarizes this matter of false teaching, he says it this way. Godliness is the way. It's the means of false teaching. In other words, if you do godly things, you will prosper.

Of course, when you think about what the godly things were that were being recommended back in Paul's day, for all practical purposes, they are really no different or they were no different than they are today.

[10 : 24] The suggestion is this, is that, hey, kind of the superficial issues are the name it, claim it, you know, you can talk to God and tell Him what you need and if you believe, you will receive.

How many of you have heard those words before? If you believe, you will receive. Name it, claim it, and all that kind of stuff. And if you invest in God's work, and by the way, here's how you spell my name, you can be certain that the god of this universe who kind of operates on this law of the harvest, have you ever heard the law of the harvest?

It is common, common, common teaching. In other words, you plant this kind of seed, which is cash in my pocket, and then God's going to open up the doors of heaven and He's just going to flood you with money in proportion to your faith.

Interestingly, and by the way, we always want to make comparison with Scripture, don't we? Don't we? Everybody said yes? You know, I'm thinking to myself, did anybody hear Jesus say when the widow dropped in two mites, cha-ching, it's coming back to her in big time?

How many of you remember that story, the widow and the mite, right? Or let's go another one. I mean, Zacchaeus, remember he climbed out of the tree, and he says, you know, those people that I've cheated, I'm paying them back fourfold, and all that I have, I'm giving to the poor.

[11 : 39] And Jesus says, whoa, wait till you see your tax return. Is that what happened? No. It took some of you a while to figure out that Zacchaeus was a, I know, I know, I was just a little off page with that humor, but let it go.

I try not to tell jokes for very obvious reasons. Okay, so we're looking at 1 Timothy chapter 6, and I'm going to push it together for you so if you lose your way or I get lost, you know where we're supposed to be at the end.

For one, we're going to see Paul address the issue that contentment is critical. I want you to fix that in your mind. Contentment is critical. Secondly, money can be dangerous. And third, a two-fold defense.

Well, I want you to look now, if you will, at how Paul opens up this lesson, there in verse 5, he deals with the fact that godliness, the idea of the false teachers that godliness is a means of gain.

Now then, in verse 6, he says, now there is great gain in godliness with what? Contentment. In other words, godliness with contentment is great gain.

[12:53] And he immediately, he's already dealt with the issue of this is the way the false teachers talk and think, but let me correct that for you. And the immediate thing he says is, you need to understand this, godliness with contentment is where the gain is.

Put your finger there, if you will, on verse 6, and just mark the fact that great gain in godliness is connected to this issue of contentment. And so I want you to understand this, that spiritual growth, I want everybody to hear this, spiritual growth and contentment go together.

In fact, the two cannot be separated. Now, we should be interested in how we are doing spiritually. Would you agree with that? Are there consequences to not doing well spiritually?

And the answer is, for everyone. For everyone. Now, you may not recognize it, but when you are struggling spiritually, you're not the only one who is affected by it.

Everybody else in the sphere of connection with you begins to suffer as well. When you are not content, when you are not joyful in Christ, when you are not a humble and a contrite spirit, your wife is one who says to you little things like, how come you are so, fill in the blank, or your children find out that they, when you walk in the house after you've been away for work, they kind of scamper for the periphery because they know that, you know, there's something going on in your heart.

[14:22] They don't know the details, but they know to avoid you. How many of you are parents and have said to your children because you saw things playing out, my dad would say things like this, you're cruising for a bruising.

What he was trying to, and I wouldn't say exactly the same thing to my, I think probably I did. You know, kind of, it worked for me. I thought I'd try it on my kids, but it's like, I could tell when my kids were going downhill.

Anybody else's parents know that? So when you're not doing well spiritually, you begin giving off signals. Well, spiritual growth and contentment go together.

Yeah, we like that. That's kind of that superficial little statement, but let me step it up a little bit and have you think with me. What are signs that you're not content? Just sit here.

Reach over and nudge your wife and say something like, if you see me on Pinterest, I got that one, didn't I?

[15:31] Say to your wife, you can say this safely in the car while you're driving. I wouldn't try it later on, but just say, honey, if you see me on Pinterest, you know I'm having a trouble with contentment. Or you could say to your wife, if you see me obsessing about the Cabela's catalog, then you know I'm struggling with contentment.

Or if I'm on Amazon, more than I'm in the Word, do you follow that? It's amazing. I mean, since when did the internet become the chief end of man in relationship to pursuing the matter of self-gratification and contentment?

You know you're in trouble when you are desperately waiting for a kidney foundation to show up to make room for the other things that you've bought or ordered that you're not sure where you're going to put.

And don't think that the hoarder's show is only limited to TV. So, when you spend more time on Craigslist and Amazon and Facebook posting all about things than you do in the Word of God, there is a, what?

A spiritual problem. I was struck last week when I was studying this verse and kind of doing a little bit of personal indictment that in our culture, in America, and let's be a little more practical, in Maranatha, we are righteously troubled when someone tells a dirty joke.

[17:17] I mean, isn't that right? Everybody listen to me. If you post, and I happen to be your Facebook friend and you post something that is off color, one of the things you can expect from me as your shepherd is I'm probably going to, I'm going to send you, this is my soft touch.

Did you get hacked? I mean, I'm making an assumption that you wouldn't post such kind of junk. You follow that? Okay.

And if I don't get a response pretty quickly about, oh yes, I got hacked and I am so sorry and I've changed my password and I'm cleaning all this stuff up, then you're going to get a more personal call from me saying, by the way, we probably need to talk a little bit.

I mean, hey, we're indignant about junk. we're indignant about pornography. Your wife comes down and finds that you are sitting there at 2.30 in the morning looking at something that is absolutely God forsaken and she has a right to be lit up.

We're indignant about immorality, but you know what? Nobody thinks the first thing about the person who spends hours on end kind of trolling through the internet trying to figure out what they'd like to have.

[18:41] And seldom do we actually say to ourselves, I've spent too much time there and I need to trim it out because it's not good for my soul.

Well, what follows in verse 7 and 8 is a reminder that we are just traveling through. This world is not the believer's home.

Let me have a look with you here. It says, for we brought nothing into the world and we cannot take anything out of the world for if we have food and clothing with these we will be content.

I think some of us are in the bigger barns mode. Do you know what I mean by the bigger barns? Remember the story of the rich man that just had to keep on building bigger barns because he just kept on having more stuff?

I mean, when you decide that renting a storage space in perpetuity is a reasonable means of caring for your stuff, there's a problem.

[19:53] when your kids are saying to themselves when dad and mom are gone, I'm going to go get a roll off and that's the end of it, guess what they're telling you? If it didn't fit in that little three by six plot that they will spend from now until the day of resurrection and they're thinking when mom and dad are gone, I know what's happening with the stuff.

There's a problem that needs to be dealt with. And Paul goes on there in verse 9, he says, in verse 8, he says, hey, we need food and shelter or clothing and with these we will be content.

The characteristic is we are content and godly people. We're happy with what we have. I was looking for the passages, I was sitting down here and I didn't find it. I'm going to count on one of our deacons.

I didn't mention that we have 10 deacons by name here this morning and they're probably going to ding me next month so I'm going to give the deacons an opportunity to find the Shulamite woman. Would you do that? Go ahead and use your phone at this moment and just raise your hand and wave at me later because I love the Shulamite woman.

I really do. When she has an opportunity to receive an extra bonus or a benefit from the prophet, I think it's Elijah, not it's Elisha.

[21:09] Forget it. We'll figure it out. But she says something that is incredibly sweet. She says, I dwell among my people. And what she was saying is the relationships God has blessed me with is all I need.

We're traveling through. We don't need as much as we thought we did. And Paul reminds us that we ought not to get caught up in this religious idea that you can play a spiritual game and actually prosper in the process.

Can I tell you something? And this is kind of off the cuff so got to be careful with it. But ancient religions would take people's favorite pastimes and sins and make them spiritual.

Do you follow that? Case in point, the Canaanite religions made actual sexual misbehavior to be part of their religious behavior.

And by the way, Greek goddesses and gods remember that the temple to Diana in Ephesus, great as Diana, et cetera, or wherever it was, they had a thousand temple prostitutes.

[22:30] It was a religious experience to be involved with a temple prostitute. Now, in our culture, in America, the prosperity gospel makes it religious to be covetous and kind of wrap it with a Bible verse of, hey, God wants you to be incredibly filthy rich and so all you have to do is give to me and he's going to give to you and it works out.

I don't like that stuff in case you didn't know. Let's go to the second part of the text because it's important for us to understand that discontentment is very dangerous.

First Timothy, Paul says this, verse 9, but those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.

discontentment. Discontentment is far more dangerous than we might think and here's Paul who says something pretty pointed. He says, those who desire to be rich fall into temptation.

Let's pick through the thoughts here because they're important. To desire to be rich is more than just a passing thought. The Greek word that is used is one that refers to having a longing for something and kind of reaching out to get it.

[23:56] An illustration of someone who is longing for something and reaching out to get it would be someone who makes a decision on a job based strictly on the income.

Does that make sense? Hey, do you know why I'm here? Do you know why Tim Knoyer is pastor here? Because by divine appointment I was sent here to be your pastor and before I came, before I said yes, I did not know what you would pay me.

I don't think it's wrong for a pastor to ask but just Tim Knoyer struggles and I have to work at being content and so one of the ways in which I protected my little perverse brain was I said, I will not talk about salary until after I've said I do.

Incidentally, my wife married me without talking about salary. My daughter married Todd without talking about salary and my daughter-in-law married my son without talking about salary.

So here I am. Why I'm here? It's because Jesus sent me to try to do my best to love you and teach you. Yeah. So, how do I know that I'm striving?

[25:18] It's when money is the big issue. Well, why would I take this job? Because it pays \$100,000 and this one only pays \$70,000 and I can't believe God would want me to short myself \$30,000. I'm just using numbers.

You know, somebody go home and say, I'd settle for \$70,000. Okay, forget it. We know we're in trouble when our desire for things lead us to plan and willingly count the things that we will value and gain over the cost and risk and harm that comes with the position we may accept.

Can I say that slowly so you understand that? Okay, if I get this job, I can have a bigger home and more grass to mow and then I get to buy a mower that actually has me anchored to the seat for seven hours.

I mean, what's the logic of that? Amen. Right. Now, does God want some of you to mow lots of grass? I am not here to tell you one way or the other but I got to tell you you're struggling when your ambition is all reflective about, say it with me, things.

Let me illustrate. When you got caught up in thinking about a toy or a phone or a house or a car and those things lead to a loss of your testimony or your ministry or your free time or your joy, there's something that's wrong.

[26 : 57] I shared with you before and I'll share it again. I've had a lifelong battle with covetousness. Everybody, did you hear me say that? It's been one of those things that Tim Kenoyer has had to work on all his life.

I have to work at it. God helped me enough in dealing with it on a number of different occasions and I'll just tell you the last one.

about a year and a half ago, Judith and I began kind of pondering about one of these days eventually, eventually, eventually we're going to retire. I felt like I should tell you I'm not planning to retire. When we're praying about an associate coming in, it's not because I'm leaving tomorrow, I hope.

But I remember beginning to think about my retirement state and I was thinking, you know what, I'd really like to have 10 acres where I could raise chickens and raise cows and I could live out in the country and I wouldn't have to put up with all the people around you and blah, blah, blah.

I could be out there by myself and I didn't have to deal with, and I began to thinking about myself, so what happens when you have chickens? Well, then you chase those dumb things around. And what happens if you have 10 acres?

[28 : 04] God help me, I don't like to mow that much. And so I began thinking about if I had all these things, cows and chickens, and I did run away as goats too, that's part of being in India, and the goats are right up there next to, you know, the apostles and I thought, I would like to have goats.

They really are, stop. But I remember thinking to myself, so when I spend my time with goats and cows and chickens and grass, there will be no time for people.

And Tim Knoyer began thinking, actually it wasn't me who was thinking, I was thinking, and the Holy Spirit came in and he used that little silver hammer and tapped me on the head, he said, pow. He said, you know what, I did not invest all this energy in dragging you out of the swamp to let you be a self-centered boor in the last couple years you live.

And I said, yes, you're right. I don't know how my story ends, but it's not going to be on a farm. Now, there's nothing wrong with farmers.

I want to be a farmer when I go to heaven, you know, but I'm telling you, God made me to serve people. He saved me to serve people and I want to do it. Discontentment is dangerous.

[29 : 29] Well, let's kind of play forward here and understand that Paul is talking about the fact that discontentment really is harmful to us because covetousness is really a trap. Hey, when you want to catch mice or, help me here, I know that you have experience, when you want to catch mice or even rats, what do you bait the trap with?

Well, some of us do cheese, but the rest of us do peanut butter. And not only do you smear peanut butter liberally on top, but when you're devious, you smooth it on the bottom as well so that when they, and some of these little critters are pretty sharp, they can get the peanut butter on the top, but when they've got to kind of reach over like that, it's like, pow, you know, and they're dead.

And you come out in the morning and their rigor mortis is set in and you can think, yes! And you scamper back in and you tell your wife, I caught five today.

Okay, see, God, God warns us. This business of being discontent just means that Satan is putting peanut butter on things to nail you.

Hey, how many of you remember longer burger baskets? My wife came home the other day, she'd found something that, and you know, to me it's like, I don't care, but she came home, God, you know, I understand that, and she came home and said, honey, I found this, it was like \$3, it used to sell for \$120.

[31:11] Do you understand that? How many of you understand, cabbage patch dolls, precious moments. Am I doing okay? How many of you can relate to some of these things?

I mean, you began to think about building an addition, not because you had more kids, but because you had more junk. Well, you see, covetousness is actually irrational and harmful.

The person who is caught in their discontentment makes the irrational and harmful decisions. That's what the Bible says right here in this verse. Tell you, is it rational to become a hoarder?

The answer is no. Can you all say that? Hoarding is a no, it's not smart. Okay? But the truth of the matter is, as compared to the rest of the world, probably 97% of us, and that's just an arbitrary number, but about 95% of us are hoarders.

We got more than we need. Covetousness drowns people in ruin. I just play on this word and then move on.

[32:25] The word drowned there is not the word that just talks about you just suddenly gone. Any of you that remember old westerns, black and white movies, remember that there was something that was very, very visceral.

It just kind of ate you up to watch somebody drown in sand. Remember? Quick sand. And you know, Kimo Sabe was the one who had to be warned about these kind of things because he was scampering around and step out on that and it was down for the count.

I mean, and how do you die in quicksand? Do you know how it is? Slowly wiggle your way down into oblivion until you are just dead. And so the word that Paul is using is about kind of drowning slowly.

I want you to understand that actually discontentment and covetousness was the first thing that caught Adam and Eve.

Do you follow that? I mean, nothing but a little piece of fruit. I wouldn't fall for that. Go into your computer settings if you can.

[33:37] It's beyond my skill set. And just find out how much time you've spent on Amazon, Pinterest, and various catalogs about things that you have no need for. Well, let's go to the prescription.

Verse 11 through 19, broad flow of the prescription. I want you to understand and break it down into two simple statements. One is run from covetousness. 1 Timothy chapter 6, verse 11, put your finger on it.

It says, but you, but as for you, O man of God, flee these things. For the most part, evangelical Christians today do fairly well at protecting themselves from the moral challenges of our culture.

men will avert their eyes in Walmart. Men will probably not go to Zumbese Bay to protect themselves from the challenge.

We're generally fairly careful in the area of moral purity. And it's interesting that Paul uses this same concept, flee, in dealing with our natural battle with covetousness as he does in dealing with our natural battle with impurity.

[35:12] And my plea with you is that we ought to exercise the same discerning desire to protect ourselves by fleeing the battle of discontentment and covetousness by getting away from the source that is going to cause you problems.

In the old days, we used to get catalogs. And one of the things that Tim Knoyer would do is I would throw away a fair number of the catalogs that I knew if I kept them around the house in my reading room, I would end up thinking that the things they proposed were actually very reasonable expenses.

Do you follow what I'm saying? I just, when they came in, it would go. And I have to remind myself with the internet, you can go anywhere.

You don't have to get a catalog now. Guess what? If you can fantasize it, you can Google it and you can find it. And then you can go on the website and discover. By the time you read up the reviews on these products, you think to yourself, I'm not sure I can live without this.

So my suggestion to you is, hold it. Only if you take the word of God seriously, you ought to decide, well, maybe what I ought to do is kind of put myself on a fast. flee from covetousness.

[36:39] Now, here's a little practical thing. As you're driving home, you can say to your wife or you can say to your husband, and by the way, do it out of your shot at the kids because they have a tendency of remembering these things and bringing them up. You know, it's just like, how am I doing at covetousness?

Do you see any struggle in my life with discontentment? You know, do you follow what I'm saying? And if she's truly honest with you, she'll tell you what she thinks.

Or she may say, well, I don't want to tell him because if I tell him, then guess what he's going to do? Anybody doing the math here? I don't mind him being convicted privately, but I really don't want this bleeding over into my life.

So as we're driving home, we thought, well, that was a little edgy, pastor's sermon. You know, but next week will be in John, and that's a lot safer. Okay? Well, flee from covetousness, run towards godliness.

We find that again in verse 11. It says, flee, and then verse 11, the latter part, pursue godliness, righteousness, faith, love, steadfastness, and gentleness.

[37:46] These are things that you have a conscious responsibility to go after. How do you do that? Your devotional life is one thing.

Your devotional life is really an indication of what you're nurturing because of what you value. When I have people that tell me, well, I just can't find the time to do devotions, I always ask myself privately, so do they brush their teeth?

I've actually asked that question on occasion. I've had some people say, well, not every day, and it's like, ah! You know, it's like, I can't deal with that. But I've learned not to ask that question.

I think it. But here's the deal. If you can't find the time to be with God, no wonder you're awash in the battle with covetousness.

Well, let's kind of work our way through now. We come back just for a minute or two with the last part of Paul's advice. Remember, he says, pursue godly things. And so now what he does in verse 17 to 19 is he gives us kind of a little illustration of what to do since we're rich.

[38:57] How many of you feel rich? I mean, really, honestly rich? Remember a couple years ago when there was all that hoopla about the 1%? Do you remember the 1%? The 1% are the people in America who make, I think as I was doing research, about \$500,000.

\$500,000 puts you in the 1%. And the attitude of some is that, you know, since the 1% owes a whole lot more to the rest of us. Well, everybody, here's good news.

In comparison to the rest of the world, anybody here who only gets a single Social Security check is actually in the world 1%. How many of you understood what I just said?

It was kind of a story problem, kind of strung together, and I know that I went off page a little bit, but here's the deal. Annual salary in the world, average, is \$1,200.

And I Googled it. I checked it out from a very reliable, whatever you read on the computer or on the Internet, it's entirely true, right? You know that story. But what I Googled was, okay, so what's the average Social Security payment?

[40 : 06] It said about \$1,200 per person per month. Now, the person on Social Security with no other benefits coming in makes 12 times what the average person makes in the world.

Are we the rich people? And the answer is, you bet. You bet. And so to those who are rich, Paul says this, we are not to be haughty or trust in what we have.

When you think to yourself, I'm good, is there a number to that or a relationship to that? We are not to be haughty or trust in what we have.

Secondly, we are to be rich in good works and generous. Generosity is one of the things that protects the soul from the natural pull of the gravitational weight of covetousness.

And so there is a sense in which, going back to what we found there in 2 Corinthians, our giving and our attitude towards things should just shout out, thank you, Jesus.

[41 : 28] I am, above all other things, thankful for the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you know why? Because there was a time in my life where I was an absolute slave to sin and I stood justly condemned before a holy God.

I had no certainty of my eternal destiny. And I had every reason to be afraid that when the day of judgment came, that Tim Knoyer would stand condemned before God for his sin.

And I remember coming to the place of being broken for that sin and crying out and saying, Jesus, will you save me? And so let me tell you this morning, as I talk about the subject of generosity and giving and dealing with the natural tug of covetousness, I want to tell you that if you're here and you don't know Christ, it's not about your wallet, it's about your heart.

And if you're here and you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ, and as you walk out this door, you would step into eternity, you would face God who would judge you for your sin.

And there's no need to have that happen. Because what Jesus did when he came to this earth, he lived our life, he died for our sins, and he offers salvation to whosoever will.

[42 : 47] And so what you do is you confess, I am a sinner who stands justly condemned before a holy God. And I know I'm a sinner, and I need salvation, and I want Jesus to be my Savior.

And do you know what he'll do? He'll save you. He'll forgive you for all of your sins, and he's going to make you a different person. Guess what one of the proofs of that difference will be? If he gets your heart, he gets your wallet.

Let's close in prayer. Our Father, we're thankful for the clarity with which Scripture brings us to the point of saying yes or no to God.

And the most important thing that we have to deal with this morning is do we know the Lord Jesus Christ personally as our Savior? And Lord, if there are those here today that do not know him, it would be my plea, and it has been my prayer.

And I know others are praying with me right now that today would be the day of salvation, the hour of conviction. I would plead with you that you do not let individuals who do not know Christ go out of this place without a conscious and deliberate decision.

[44:01] Yes, I need Christ to save me for my sins, or no, I refuse his free and kind and generous offer. And for believers, Lord, it has been my prayer that you would work among us to help us to grow in our quiet contentment, our joyful liberality, and our thankfulness of being part of what you're doing around the world.

We ask this in your precious name. Amen. Let's stand together as John leads us in our closing song. And as we are singing, if the...