

The Many Facets of God's Good Gifts

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[0 : 00] Well, it's good to see those of you who are here. Good job, brave in the snow. It's great to have you here and I trust and be praying that God takes you home safe.

We find ourselves this morning in Luke chapter 20. We're going to be picking this up in verse 41 and it's going to take us to Luke chapter 21 verse 4.

Just to set some context for where we are, we've been spending some time kind of looking through this final week of Jesus' life and ministry. This is the Passion Week. We picked it up on a Friday as Jesus is making his way into Jericho and the interaction that he has with the blind men that are there, the interaction that he has with Zacchaeus and then that group of individuals are making their way up to Jerusalem on a Saturday.

And then on a Sunday, Jesus is making his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. And then we find ourselves on Monday that Jesus is cleansing the temple.

And then on Tuesday and Wednesday, he's teaching. He's made it a point to address these crowds. He's made it a point to extend to them the grace of God through the Word of God.

[1 : 21] But just for a moment, with me marvel at the wonder of God's kindness to continue to make himself accessible to the very people that were going to kill him on Friday.

Here he is extending his very person. He's accessible. He's near. He's available for their questions. He's fielding the criticism of these religious leaders. He's instructing them from the Scriptures.

He's extending himself an invitation, trying to make the truth of the Word of God clear to them so they will hear it. They will receive it and they'll know without a shadow of a doubt who he is.

His identity is clear through these final days of his life. And we find again the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ extending himself again to these individuals again here at the temple.

And we find these many facets this morning of God's grace. Three little stories, three little pieces, snippets of this day. And it doesn't seem apparent at first what is really going on and how these pieces connect together.

[2 : 38] But that God is extending his goodness, his grace to those who are there. And that's what I want to just kind of draw your attention to this morning. The different facets, the different aspects of God's kindness to various individuals that he encounters here on this day here in the temple.

I wonder if maybe you've ever asked yourself the question, How did I miss that? You ever ask yourself the question, How did I miss that? It was so obvious. It was so clear.

And I missed it. How did I miss it? And maybe you were putting together a piece of furniture. Or maybe you were trying to fix your car. Or maybe something that required some instructions and a recipe.

And it just didn't turn out the way it was supposed to turn out. And you look back at the instructions like, What did I miss? How did I miss that? And you look at those instructions and there it was in bold.

And it was numbered. It was clear. And somehow it escaped your attention. Well, I had an experience like that several years ago when I was in my first year at seminary.

[3 : 47] I was in a hermeneutics class. And hermeneutics just basically is a study of interpretation. Interpreting the Bible. And my professor had kind of built up.

There were two assignments. Two main papers that were due. One at the middle and one at the end of the semester. And he built these papers up to be, If you don't do well on this paper, you should not be a pastor.

I go, Wow, this is really important. I got to get this right. I got to work hard. I got to follow the instructions. And so I worked on this for weeks.

I poured my heart and life into this paper. And there were two sections of instructions on how to do this. One at the beginning of the syllabus. And one towards the end of the instructions section.

And so I read those instructions. I followed them to the T. I had the right length. I had the right content. I had the right number of scholarly sources. I used the right number of interpretive elements.

[4 : 52] I had the right format. I turned it in on time. And to my surprise and utter dismay, I got the paper back, D minus. D minus!

What in the world was I missing? So I called the professor. And we talked it through. And come to find out there was a formatting issue.

Everything was intact. All of the things were in place. It was a formatting issue. And because of a formatting issue, I got a D minus. I'm like, well, where were the instructions for that?

And so going back in the day, the early 2000s, the syllabuses did not come out electronically. You got a physical copy of that syllabus. And it was printed by the library.

And I received my syllabus. And come to find out, I was missing a page. A page of my syllabus was missing from the library that printed this for me. And I could not know because it was at the end of a section that went from myrman numerals to enumeration.

[5 : 57] One, two, three, four, five. Now just because the instructions were not captured for me in my copy of the syllabus, I was still responsible for the standards, the expectations of the paper.

And so while it may seem to be impossible for me to meet the expectations because they were hidden from me, it didn't mean that those expectations were still not in place.

And I was still accountable for them. And while it seemed unfair because those instructions were hidden, I was still accountable to meet the expectations that were written.

God, in this final week, is making the instructions clear. God, by His grace, is extending truth.

And throughout His ministry, He's made it so clear, so evident, so obvious. And the testimony of Scripture is that it's a testimony of God giving us everything that we need, as 2 Peter says, for life and godliness.

[7 : 03] All the instructions are there. All the words, all the truths, nothing is hidden from view. It's all available. It's all accessible. The question is, will you read it?

Will you know it? But we also need to realize that just because the truths are shared, just like they were from Christ's ministry, through the teaching of His words and through the evidence of His works, His miracles, it was still hidden from view from these religious leaders, and it was still hidden from view from many of those who were listening and watching Christ as He taught.

You see, even though we have access to truth, we can still miss it. We can still miss it because we need the Spirit to help inform our hearts and to bring the blinders down, as it were, and to reveal in us the truths that only the Spirit can reveal.

Paul says to the church of Corinth in 1 Corinthians 2, verses 13 and 14, he's communicating this when he says, and we impart this in words.

He's speaking about the gospel. Not taught by human wisdom, but taught by the Spirit. Interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him.

[8 : 29] And he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. So even this morning, as we enter our time of looking into the Word of God, the only way for the Word of God to have its impact in our life is for the Spirit to do His work.

His truth, however accessible, however clear, however direct, in order for it to have its way in your heart, you need the Spirit. I'm just going to pray briefly that God will do this for us.

We're going to invite the Holy Spirit to have His way as we work through this passage together. Lord, thank you that you've made your Word clear. Thank you that it's direct and accessible.

But, oh Lord, we understand that even in what seems a very simple task, that we need the help of your Holy Spirit, because natural men cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, their foolishness to us, unless we have the help of your Spirit directing, informing, convicting, and helping us as we seek to know what you say.

So, Father, I pray that you would graciously meet us, even in these moments, as we dive into the Scriptures. I pray that we would not just be hearers of the Word, but doers of it.

[9 : 51] In Jesus' name, amen. We're going to see three different aspects of God's grace through Jesus Christ, these gifts that He is imparting to those listeners here at the temple.

The first is the gift of God's Word. The gift of God's Word. We see that in verses 41 to 44. Notice with me. By the way, we're in Luke chapter 20. If you're using the Pew Bible, it's on page 880.

I trust you're following along with us. It says this. This is Jesus. He said to them, How can they say that the Christ is David's son? For David himself says in the book of Psalms, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.

David thus calls him Lord. So, how is He his son? The question may seem a little out of place. If you're kind of following along with us, and you've been with us along these several weeks, you'll realize that Jesus has been answering some questions.

We saw that last week. He answered some questions of the Pharisees and Sadducees. To the Pharisees who asked Him about the coin. Should we pay taxes to Caesar, right?

[11 : 07] And in Luke chapter 20 verse 25, He says, Give to God the things that are God. Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. And then for those Sadducees who asked Him a question about the resurrection, the thrust or the focus of Jesus' answer is found in verse 38.

He says, It's a question of belonging. It's a question of what are you living for?

It's a question of value and treasure. Where is the direction of your life? What is the focus of your priorities? Where is your life driving to in the present moment? And where will it end up in the future day?

And now this question that Jesus asks about the identity of the Christ, is He the Son of David? It almost seems out of place.

But I think this is what's going on here. Jesus is giving the gift of truth. Jesus is seeking to help pull down the last two obstacles that the scribes and the Pharisees and the Sadducees have about the identity of Jesus.

[12 : 19] He is speaking to these individuals who are the elite thinkers in Jerusalem. He's making them really look silly, as it were, by answering their questions and doing it right in the midst of the people.

So now Jesus is taking the initiative. He's silenced the chief priests. He's silenced the Sadducees. And now He's taking the initiative to ask them a question.

He's speaking to the heart of the issue. What is the core of their inability in believing in Jesus? It was His claim to be God. That's what's at the heart of their problem, their issue that they're struggling with.

You see, this had been their question throughout His public ministry. It really came to a head, and we see it really front and center in John chapter 6, verses 41 and 42.

The Jews grumbled about Him because He said, I am the bread that came down from heaven. They said, is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?

[13 : 25] How does He now say, I have come down from heaven? You can appreciate the struggle. I think all of us who have a theological underpinning, we can recognize that there are some things that Jesus was saying that seem so out of place.

God is eternal after all. God is not born. God has no beginning or end. And if Jesus was born, and Jesus is from Joseph, then how can He be from heaven?

Add to that the clear teaching of the Old Testament, that God is one. And in the Shema, this part of the Scripture that was built into the knowledge and the fabric of Judaism, in Deuteronomy chapter 6, 4 and 5.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might. And here Jesus is making Himself to be equal with God.

Jesus is saying He's from heaven. How can it be that God is one and that now Jesus claims to be God, but He's speaking of coming from a Father? John chapter 10, verses 33, kind of brings this to the forefront.

[14 : 45] The Jews answered Him, It is not for a good work that we're going to stone you, but for blasphemy, because you being a man, make yourself God. That, of course, was the problem.

So we've got to appreciate the struggle that these religious thinkers were having. Those who were entrusted with the doctrines of the people and seeking to help, to guide them in correct theology.

And this concept of Jesus coming from heaven, that He was also born, and that He was equal with the Father, it broke every piece of their doctrine.

It made their mind hurt. They couldn't wrap their heads around how this was even possible. So Jesus, with a desire to overcome this obstacle, uses the gift of Scripture.

He uses the Word of God. The very Word, by the way, that they had attached to messianic fulfillment, fulfillment, Jesus is going to use that verse, He's going to apply it to this situation, and He's going to make it so clear to them that they, at this point, never ask Him a question again.

[15 : 57] Because they know the answer. The answer is clear, and yet it just shatters. It shatters everything about their theology. Jesus pulls from Psalm 110, and He deals with both of these theological issues simultaneously.

First, He deals with this issue of monotheism, which of course the Lord is one, and that is not disputed here, but Jesus is trying to help them get their heads around the fact that while God is one, there is this triune nature of God, these persons of God, the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, that they had no concept of.

And yet here it is, in Psalm 110. Here is this truth that is clear. It's unmistakable. And in this Psalm, it begins with, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand.

And this first word for Lord, we're not ready for this slide, by the way. This first word for Lord is the word Yahweh. It's the word that's used throughout the Old Testament to speak of God as the covenant keeper, the God who's preeminent over His people.

And then this Lord, Yahweh, is speaking to a Lord who the word is Adonai. It's the word for master. And here we find both names that are present.

[17 : 22] Both clearly represent God. Because God says to the Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool. This right hand was a hand of power, a hand of authority.

I'm going to make your enemies your footstool, which means I'm going to give you this honor. I'm going to allow you to exercise power, which of course is a right that's only reserved to God and God alone.

This truth would have dismantled their conventional thinking about God. Yes, God was one. But He was one God represented in this way of Yahweh speaking to the Lord.

Somehow, the persons of this Trinity even show up here in Psalm 110.1. And so, because He was this way, He existed from before the foundation of the world.

He possessed the same essence, the exercise, the same power. And we see at least a glimpse of this captured for us in Psalm 110.1.

[18 : 33] So, it deals with their concept of the oneness of God, but also deals with the issue of headship and authority. Inherent in the Jewish mind was that the Father was the head of the family.

And as the head of the family, He was preeminent. He was the ultimate. He was the most important. And so, sons would call their father Lord. Fathers would not call their sons Lord.

And yet, that is exactly what is happening here in our text. This was an issue of succession in the mind of the Jew. That those who came from the head then served the head.

They were the ones who carried on the name of the head and served the purposes of the head. And so, everything traced back to that starting point. We see in the religious leader's question of Jesus six months earlier, the same kind of question that comes up in John 8, verse 53.

Are you greater than our father Abraham who died? Speaking all the way to the beginning of the people, Abraham, which was kind of the preeminent figure of this people, this nation.

[19 : 51] So, who is this Lord in Psalm 110? Well, of course, he is the Christ, the Messiah. And we see the traces of that in the rest of this psalm, particularly in Psalm 110, verse 2, in Psalm 10, verse 5.

It speaks about what the Lord will do. The Lord sends forth from Zion, your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of all your enemies. The Lord is at your right hand. He will shatter kings on the day of his wrath.

This was the fulfillment of the promise that had been given to David about his future son, this Messiah, this Christ figure. And the Pharisees and scribes and chief priests who were all present understood this very truth.

So, they're not providing any pushback, any resistance, because Jesus is speaking in a way that they agree. They know this is speaking of this messianic figure, but they had never conceived of the fact that David is referring to him as my Lord.

He's my Lord as David is writing this psalm. Connection is this, that while the fulfillment of this psalm is messianic, it speaks here of Christ, the Messiah, who is presented both as David's son and as David's Lord.

- [21 : 14] Thus, he's fully God and fully man, a concept which would have broken their theology. It was mind-blowing. It broke the way they viewed God, but because of their hearts were unwilling to be teachable, they could not receive the truth that Jesus was sharing.

Jesus graciously offers them the gift of the Scripture, the very Scriptures they even knew and embraced, and yet they still could not receive it. Aren't we so much like the Pharisees at times?

That God has graciously given us his Word, that his instructions are clear to us. They're not hidden, they're not missing, they're not too sophisticated, they're written in simple language.

He's given us everything that we need for life and godliness, but in order to enjoy this gift of God's Word, there are three things that need to be true. First, we need to be those who are in the Word.

We need to be those who are in the Word, reading the Word, listening to the Word, studying the Word, meditating on the Word, as the psalmist says, day and night. And then you'll be like a tree that's planted by rivers of water.

- [22 : 27] Be those who see the Word of God as David did, more precious than gold. The kind of Word that is sweeter than honey in the honeycomb. We need to be those, first of all, who are in the Word of God and receive this gift of God's grace.

Do you realize that you can have as much of God's grace as you want? Just open up the book. Read the Word. Enjoy the grace that God has given to you. He's entrusted to you.

He's dispensed to you through the Scriptures. But second, we need to be those who ask God for help in understanding the Word. Those who ask the Spirit to do the work of informing our hearts.

1 John 2, verse 27 says, but the anointing that you receive from Him, it abides in you. And you need, not that anyone should teach you, but as His anointing teaches you about everything and is true and is no lie, just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.

This is speaking of the Spirit. The Spirit's work in the heart of every true believer to make His Word clear, to apply it to your life, to take those truths and to sift through them, to make them available to you so that you know what He's saying and you can apply it to your life.

- [23 : 48] And that's the third thing. Not just reading, not just asking for help, but obeying it. We see that in James, chapter 1, verse 22. Be doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

Allow the Word, this gift of God's grace, allow it to not only inform your heart, but allow it to change your life.

This gift of God's grace extended through His Word and here Jesus is, a couple of days away from His crucifixion, continuing to extend this gift of grace through His Word.

And now Jesus will transition from this teaching moment to a warning moment. And that's where we get to the next gift, this gift of God's warning. Not just of His Word, but of His warning.

And God throughout the Scriptures has graciously warned us about the things that He wants to keep us from, those things that are going to hurt us, and He's warned us to stay away from those individuals who will shipwreck our faith.

[24 : 56] That's what He's doing here in verses 20, or chapter 20, verses 45 to 47. It says, in the hearing of all the people, He said to His disciples. So now Jesus is turning His attention to His disciples.

He wants them to recognize that the Word that is coming now is a Word that's going to help inform their understanding. He says this, Beware of the scribes who like to walk around in long robes and love greetings in the marketplace and the best seats in the synagogue and the places of honor at the feasts, who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers.

They will receive the greater condemnation. This warning that God is now giving to future leaders, to His apostles, those who are going to help lay the foundation for this church, this new church age.

And they're going to take the place of these religious leaders who have been entrusted with that responsibility here in the first century, who are unfaithful with the task. And now Jesus is warning His disciples of the kinds of leaders they need to be.

Jesus addresses this telltale sign of ineffective, false leaders. and it narrows in on one thing, their pride. We see their pride throughout each of these six characteristics.

[26 : 24] They're drawing attention to themselves. They love their popularity. They seek the most prominent places. They serve their own purposes regardless of who they hurt in the process.

They flaunt their spirituality through their long prayers. They, in one word, are proud. They only care about themselves. It's a dangerous trap.

This self-affirming trap that Jesus identifies as a clear flag of false teachers. We find these six characteristics here.

They walk around in long robes. These long, flowing robes were part of their fancy, expensive wardrobe. It was meant to kind of set them apart to distinguish themselves.

Kind of like the coat of many colors distinguished Joseph from his brothers. These long, flowing robes that they wore wherever they walked. They're like, oh, there's a rabbi.

[27 : 24] There's so-and-so. There's the Pharisee. There's the religious guy. And these long, flowing robes also had tassels at the bottom.

These tassels were extra long to show their own spirituality, to boast about their closeness and proximity to God. They also love these greetings in the marketplace.

They love to be addressed in public. They love when people notice them. They love to be called the teacher, the rabbi. They also love the best seats in the synagogue.

Those seats that were up close. Those seats that were prominent. Those seats that distinguish them from the rest. They wanted to be the center of attention. This position of distinction.

And then they also love these places of honor at the feast. They wanted to be invited and they wanted the best place at the table, which was the spot that was closest to the host. They wanted to be honored.

[28 : 21] It's the right-hand man. But then this. They devour widows' houses. This word for devour is a Greek word. It's an intense Greek word that calls attention to eating or consuming or devouring completely.

They're taking advantage of the weakest individual among them. They're going to do whatever it takes to line their own pockets to serve themselves.

The temple authorities were those who managed the property of widows. Those who were widowed would then entrust their property to these managers and those authorities, those temple authorities would then take advantage by charging exorbitant fees.

Pharisees didn't care. It was a way for them to collect on their position. They felt that they were worthy of such payment. And finally, they make long prayers.

The idea is that the scribes give the appearance of piety, but they're not actually pious. And you remember the parable of the tax collector and the Pharisee who's praying in the temple.

[29 : 40] And what does he do? Well, he's praying in public and he lifts up his arms and he says, thank you that I'm not like that guy over there. He wants to draw attention to how prominent and spiritual he is.

But in all of his efforts to demonstrate his spirituality, it's actually having the opposite effect. And that's what Jesus wants to warn his disciples about. Humility, not pride, needs to be the focus, the center of a person who loves the Lord.

And Jesus has consistently confronted these religious leaders for these various issues. Pride and their self-centeredness should be the flashing signs and neon lights that help us to see the warning signs from God stay away.

Do not listen. These false teachers are the same in every age. Always accompanied by this striving for financial gain that we see in them.

Like your best life now. Send in \$100 and you'll begin the seed of having more for yourself. God will multiply it. God doesn't work that way. But you wouldn't know that from these false teachers who are just interested in their own success, their own prominence.

[31 : 00] How do we protect ourselves from this? Well, one word. The word humility. Paul says in Philippians 2, verses 3 to 7, he helps those who are seeking to grow in Christ's likeness to wear and to embrace the identity of Christ in the example of Christ in this way.

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility. Count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you not look to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is in yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

Embrace the task, the privilege of humility. Serve the people that God has put you in company with. Learn to sacrifice the things that are important to you for the sake of laying it down and showing this Christ-like preference for others.

Work in the way of growing in humility because God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. That picture of God's acceptance, that picture of God's favor, the humility that is accompanied with the presence of God, that's really what we want.

[32 : 32] More than anything is God's presence, this gift, this gift of God's presence. And here, Christ is giving this warning, this warning, which was a gift to these disciples.

And finally, in chapter 21, verses 1-4, we see the gift of God's watchfulness. The gift of God's watchfulness. Chapter 21, verses 1-4, it says, Jesus looked, he looked up, he saw the rich men putting their gifts into the offering box, and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins.

And he said, truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all the others, or all of them, for they all contributed out of their abundance, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she had to live on.

Notice that Jesus looked up. Jesus saw the rich, Jesus saw the poor widow. it doesn't escape his attention. He's alert, he's aware, he's watchful, he's attentive, he sees, he knows, he cares.

There is no detail that's hidden from the grasp or the view of our Savior. In this moment, as Jesus is talking about the activities and the warnings of those religious leaders who devour widows' houses, and in that moment, as Jesus looks up, he's in the midst of teaching, all of a sudden, this widow woman walks in.

[34 : 12] Do you think that's a coincidence? No way. No way. Now she becomes this object lesson of all that Jesus has been teaching up to this point here in the temple.

This warning has been given, and now this object lesson unfolds in that very moment. We find that they're opposite the treasury. We find that from Mark's account in Mark 12, verse 41.

It says, he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. This treasury was in the court of women.

And here in this court, there were 13 trumpet-shaped kind of receptacles where money would be poured in and you could hear this money, kind of like a big funnel as it were, and they would pour in this money and you'd hear the money kind of clanging in and based upon the amount of money they had, essentially that trumpet would sound, right?

And it reminds you a little bit of when Jesus talks about not letting the trumpet sound at what you're doing, your good works that you're doing. And here, that's exactly what's taking place here.

[35 : 25] These massive gold coins, this coinage that's being emptied into these receptacles and then this poor widow woman that's placing just two tiny copper coins into this treasury.

She walks in and Jesus knows she's poor. He says he saw a poor widow. This word for poverty describes someone who is poor but not destitute, at least not yet.

It's probably pretty clear from her appearance, from what she's wearing, from how she looks, that there's something about her is out of sync with all of the wealthy parade that's gone before.

And this intensifies, this poverty intensifies her condition. This condition that's desperate and it likely showed on her outward appearance. But she gives her last two coins here, we find.

And these two coins were the smallest currency available in the first century. It's called a lepta and it computes to one one hundredth of a denarii.

[36 : 33] And if you remember, a denarii is the wage for one day. So she's giving two of these leptas which is two one hundredths of a day's wage. It's a pittance to say the least.

It's negligible. It's next to nothing. And yet she gives it all. And of course those who are watching would have thought, who cares what she's giving?

It's nothing. But Jesus in his watchfulness notices. He knows. It doesn't escape his attention. And he draws attention to it. This poor widow has put in more than all of them.

And now this word for poverty is this intensive term, very poor, destitute individual. spiritual. They all contributed out of their abundance, Jesus says.

But she, out of her poverty, put in all she had to live on. In other words, literally, in the Greek, she gave her livelihood.

[37 : 34] She gave her life. She put her life in the altar, as it were. What they gave cost them little in comparison.

But the woman gave, not from her abundance, but from her very life. And Jesus, he puts it this way, she gave all of her life. This is what Jesus commends, by the way, to the scribes and chief priests who are challenging him about the, is it right to pay taxes to Caesar, right?

And Jesus will respond, give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's. And what is the thing that belongs to God? Everything. Everything belongs to God.

And she does this. She does this. She gives it all. She gives away her life, as it were, her livelihood. She comes, she honors God. And while we don't know the motivations of her heart, if she was obliged to do this because of the conditions and the legalism that was kind of built into the structure of the temple, and she was being devoured in this moment, and that was the object lesson of widows being devoured by giving the very end, or if in devotion she's giving to the Lord.

We don't know. But one thing we do know is throughout the testimony of Christ's teaching, it is safe to give everything to God. It's safe.

[39 : 11] It's safe to entrust your life to God. It's safe to trust Him with your finances. It's safe to trust Him with your health. It's safe to trust Him with your future.

It's safe to trust Him with your relationships. It's safe to trust Him with that crisis that's happening in your life right now. You can trust God.

It is safe to trust Him. Luke chapter 12, I would just encourage you if you're in Luke chapter 20, turn back just briefly to Luke chapter 12.

This is not going to be a helpful slide for us. If you can just go back to the main points, please. Luke chapter 12. Let me just read for you picking up in verse 22, okay?

It says this, this is Jesus speaking. He says to the disciples, therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life. Does that sound familiar?

[40 : 08] What you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. For life is more than food, and body more than clothing. Consider the ravens.

They neither sow nor reap. They have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet your God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds?

And which of you, by being anxious, can add a single hour to the span of his life? If you then are not able to do what is small, why are you so anxious about the rest?

Consider the lilies, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin. Yet I tell you, even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O little faith?

It's safe to trust the Lord. And it's safe to trust him with everything. And this is an example we see of this widow woman entrusting just a sample of a glimpse of her trusting God with the last two little coins that she had.

[41 : 26] It is an example to us of how safe it is to trust God. We can trust him. How much more are you than those things?

I love how Paul puts it in Romans chapter 8. He says, If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things?

There's a watchful God. We have a God who gives us the gift of care and watchfulness and concern. And the more we grow in faith and the more we trust him with the things that we have, then the more we're going to see the kindness and the favor of God in carrying us, in helping us, in strengthening us, in supporting us.

Even when things may never change, he'll use our lives as a testimony to his goodness. Even when we may feel and look and seem very destitute just like this poor widow.

Nothing was going to change about her circumstances except if she was giving with a heart of faith, she was going to see the power of God in meeting her needs just like Jesus commands in Luke chapter 12.

[42 : 55] You can trust him with your life. May God help us to do that well and to be a testimony to those around us that he is trustworthy because he's a watchful, observant, loving God.

Let's pray. Father, I pray that you'd help us to grow in this. I pray, Lord, that we would embrace the gift of your word, that it would be part of our life day by day, that we would not just be hearers of the word but doers of it.

Lord, help us help us to embrace the gift of your warnings, those warnings that you put in the scripture that help keep us away from the things that would hurt us, harm us.

And Lord, thank you that you're watchful. And Father, I pray that our lives would show a growing commitment and confidence in your care and watchfulness.

I pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Have a great week. Be safe. for driving home.