

Where Is Your Treasure?

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[0 : 0 0] Well, good morning.

Good morning.

Because of those things, it is more important than ever for us to actually read the Bible itself and to hear what Jesus has to say to us about these things.

As you know, at Trinity here, we preach through sections of Scripture. And one of the reasons we do it is because it brings us to these topics that we might feel uncomfortable choosing.

But when we get to them, we now allow God to speak into our lives as God's Word wants to. And so we are doing that this morning. Last week, we did the end of chapter 11 and the beginning of 12 of the book of Luke.

[1 : 3 3] And so we are going to continue on. On the road of discipleship with Jesus. And this is what we're... What does it mean to follow Him? As Jesus is heading towards Jerusalem, heading towards His crucifixion and resurrection, heading towards the accomplishment of the purpose for which He came, the salvation of the world.

He is teaching His disciples, spending this traveling journey, teaching them what does it mean to know Him and to follow Him. And so we're going to talk this morning about our relationship to money and wealth.

I don't know if you watch the Super Bowl. My guess is there will be one of these. I don't know. But the Super Bowl commercials are always a big thing. And there's a commercial that's been out for a while by a company named ING.

And its tagline is, what's your number? And you see a guy walking down the street and he's got this big six or seven digit orange number under his arm. And then there's someone else.

A woman rides by on her bicycle and she's got her number on her back. And there's one where there's a guy clipping his head and he's got a number. And this is a gazillion because he has no idea what his number is.

[2 : 4 5] And his neighbor comes up and says, how are you going to plan for that? And the upshot of the commercial is that for you to plan for your retirement, ING can help you do that well.

And in order to do that, you have to know your number to have enough to retire. And they want to help you to do that. What's your number? Underlying it is a question that we all need to ask ourselves, which is, what are we investing our lives, including our money, in?

What are we investing our lives, including our money, for? ING says your goal should be a successful, comfortable, and financially secure retirement.

What does Jesus have to say about that question? So let's look at this passage together. And hopefully we'll get some answers to that question before we go.

So Luke chapter 12, it's page 818 in your Pew Bible if you're following along. Luke chapter 12, starting in verse 13 and going to verse 34.

- [3 : 58] So let's read this together and then we'll pray and then we'll continue. And he said to them, And he told them a parable saying, The land of a rich man produced plentifully. And he thought to himself, What shall I do? For I have nowhere to store my crops. And he said, I will do this. I will tear down my barns and build larger ones. And there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years. Relax, eat, drink, be merry. But God said to him, Fool, this very night your soul is required of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be? So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich towards God.
- [5 : 27] And he said to his disciples, Therefore, I tell you, Do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what will you put on. For life is more than food and the body is more than clothing. Consider the ravens. They neither sow nor reap. They have neither storehouse nor barn. Yet 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 his span of life? If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you 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 you of little faith? Do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them.
- [6 : 42] Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you. Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with money bags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. So, let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this word. Lord, we thank you that you speak to us so that we might know what it means to know you, and we might know what it means to live in a relationship with you. Lord, I ask this morning for your Holy Spirit to be at work in us as we look into your word together. Lord, may the truth of your word be plain. Will you apply it to our lives?
- [7 : 47] Lord, will you change our hearts, and will you move our limbs to action? Lord, that we might be not only hearers of the word, but doers also. For your glory, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. So, in this passage, Jesus gives us both warnings about how we ought not to relate to our possessions and our money, and then he gives us a new way to live, a different direction to go in how we think about this. So, that's how we're going to look at it. The warnings are in verses 13 through 30. The new way is in 30 to 34. So, we're going to look at this in and work our way through this passage together. So, first, Jesus' warnings to us to avoid greedy and grasping hearts. In the setup of this story, Jesus is publicly teaching, and there's a voice from the crowd.

It's fascinating. This is a completely anonymous guy who says, Hey, Jesus, will you tell my brother that he needs to give me my share? And it's not even clear whether it's his share or whether this guy is just wanting more than he actually deserves.

[8 : 59] But whatever the request is, this guy is looking for Jesus to give this public intervention about it, about money. And, you know, it's so interesting to think that we wouldn't ever be the kind of grasping person who would put someone on the spot in a public forum to adjudicate for us against someone else in matters of money.

We would like to think that we're generally generous people, that we would actually think that, you know, we wouldn't put someone in this position. If you were here last week, you heard Pastor Greg mention briefly in his sermon as the passage last week talked on generosity.

That our culture has a problem and that our human hearts have a problem with thinking that we're more generous than we think we are. So, as Greg reported, I'm just going to report these again so you can remember them.

70% of millennials say that they're very or somewhat generous in 2016. But the same survey said that 84% of them reported giving away \$50 or less during that same year that they were being very generous.

Another way to think about it is that America is perhaps the wealthiest nation in the world and yet Americans today give away broadly 3% of our income.

[10 : 30] Not only is that not a lot on an absolute standard, but it was less than what people were giving away during the Great Depression when people were in serious need.

I bring these up just to say that in our human hearts, it's easy for us to think that we're going to be okay about money and we don't need to hear a warning about being greedy, but in fact, we often do.

Pastor Orly, it is remarkable how many stories I hear about how many families squabble and fight about inheritances and how much money they get.

That's just an anecdotal observation. Many of you are not there yet. Bob's nodding. He's a lawyer. He gets it. But when you get there, you feel the pull on your heart in ways that you never knew would be there.

And Jesus says, beware, beware of the impulse of your heart to be greedy. And he gives two reasons. And the first one, he tells us in verse 15 and then he gives us a parable to illustrate it.

[11 : 47] The first reason why we ought not to be greedy is because life is not found in things that are temporal and passing. That's what he says at the end of verse 15 and then he goes on and tells this story, this well-known story about a rich man, a rich man whose land has produced for him an abundant crop and he doesn't have the resources to, he doesn't have the buildings to store all of these goods.

And if you're a businessman sitting out there, you might be thinking, what's wrong with that? His business is expanding. He's just increasing his operations so that he can continue to grow.

And at one level, that's right. Because in the sense that there is no condemnation of this man having gotten this wealth in an ill-gotten way.

He didn't do this deceitfully or manipulatively. He simply was prosperous. But you see that as the story goes on, this man's heart in relationship to his possessions was not right.

You see, if you look in verses 17 through 19, the personal pronouns, I, me, and myself, or self, are used 12 times.

[13 : 05] And at the end, you see what his goal is. Soul, you now have all that you need. Eat, drink, and be merry, and relax.

The underlying message of this man's heart was, when you have enough, now you have security. Now you have comfort. Now you have satisfaction.

Now you have peace. It was not in the having of these things, but in the way that he valued them that was his downfall, says one commentator.

And God intervenes at the end of the story and says, Fool, tonight your life is taken from you.

You've gathered all this stuff for what? Because now you have died.

[14 : 04] And who's, who will get all this stuff? It doesn't matter to you, does it? Because you don't get any of it. And you have said, this is what my life is about. So Jesus finishes this parable in verse 21.

So is the one who lays up treasure for himself. That is, that one is a fool who will recognize that the transience of life means that the possessions that they have cannot be the substance, the goal of meaningful investment in their lives.

And Jesus points ahead to what we'll see at the end of this section when he says, and is not rich towards God. Jesus is tipping his hand saying, that's where we're going.

There's a different kind of riches. There's a different kind of investment. There's a different kind of goal for you. Being rich towards God.

Jesus then continues. If the first one is, you ought not to fall prey to greed because when you are greedy, you're setting your hearts on things that will never be able to do what you think it will.

[15 : 18] Your possessions are passing. Your money is fleeting. Your life is eternal. The second one is he says, don't spend your life grasping for material possessions.

And I'm using grasping as a word you see in your text. The word is seek. That's, and I'm translating that grasping because I think this seeking has this all-consuming sort of fixation, obsessive approach to gaining these things when Jesus uses us in this section.

And then he walks through this passage which you probably hear all the echoes of it. It's very similar to part of what Jesus does in Matthew in the Sermon on the Mount. It's a little different and so I want to let the way that Luke records it to speak as it does.

He walks through and he reveals our heart attitudes towards are we those who are grasping? He says, don't be those who are grasping but instead recognize who God is for you.

How does he do that? Well, look with me in verse 21. Don't be anxious about your life, what you will eat, about your body, what you will put on. Now look, here's what I want to say.

[16 : 33] How many of you, when you think about anxiety, think about those particular categories. Do I have enough food? Do I have clothes to wear? Some of you, that's real.

For some of you, that's true and that is a concern that you have today that is real. For many of us, the anxieties that we have don't even touch on these most basic of human needs, do they?

Our anxieties about things that are much less basic to human life. But Jesus says, don't be anxious even about the most basic of things in life.

Now, he's not saying, let's clarify this, we need to make sure we clear the decks a little bit. He's not saying, don't be thoughtfully responsible before God about these things.

There is, throughout Scripture, a clear picture of stewardship and responsibility of working hard and of providing for others. There's all sorts of things that are in there that we need to make sure that we don't neglect when we read a passage like this.

[17 : 41] But the passage here is talking about our heart. Are you consumed with fear today that you won't have what you think you need? Are you dominated and controlled by the uncertainty that is filling your life today because of those things?

Jesus says, look, your life is more than those things. And then he gives an example of the ravens. And the ravens were sort of like seagulls or like common pigeons.

They were flying rats with wings, right? They were the lowest of the low. And what Jesus is saying, he uses these very common, even detested animals to say, if God provides for even them, don't you think he will care for you?

And then he goes on and he's piling on these rhetorical questions. Can you add anything to your life, to your lifespan? Can you live just a little bit longer by being anxious?

And of course, that's ridiculous. Today we know anxiety is one of the reasons why we live shorter lives, right? It causes hypertension, it causes stress, it drives us in extremes to suicide.

[18 : 59] Anxiety is a terrible thing in our lives and we know that. And Jesus is saying, yeah, and well, how good is it? How much profit do you have in being anxious?

He says, if you can't even add one little moment to your life by being anxious, why do you think it's worth being anxious about these other things? And then he turns and he says, consider, consider the flowers of the field, the lilies.

They don't work, they simply are. They do what God designed them to do. They don't toil nor spin, they don't labor, they don't create their own clothing and yet God has clothed them in a splendor that is more majestic than even Solomon.

I was trying to think, is there today an analogy to who Solomon is? I'm sure there probably is in the fashion world but I'm just too ignorant to know it.

But someone who is, you know, Lady Gaga, right, who is displayed in the most amazing and without, golly, that was an off-the-cuff illustration that really went badly, didn't it?

[20 : 15] anyway, the people who have the brightest, the most abundant of the glorious clothing in the world.

God gives to this lily more than the greatest human being has achieved on their own. and they're passing.

The lilies are here today and gone tomorrow. You're living in the image of God. Don't you think God will care for you?

And then as we're working through the passage, verse 30, he says, for all the nations of the world, and when he uses that phrase, he means all the people who don't know the God of the universe, the God of the Bible, the way you do, and all the nations of the world seek after these things.

That is, they grasp and strive and are consumed by getting these things. And your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

[21 : 32] And this is where he turns and he points you to God. He points us to God. He says, don't you know the God who made the universe is a heavenly Father who knows what you need.

Every parent thinks about this. How do I provide for my kids the things that they need? Every parent cares about that. Whether they're able to do what they want to do or not, every parent knows this.

Jesus says, you have a heavenly Father and he knows what you need. He cares about you more than the natural world. Jesus says, an anxious heart is consumed by worry, not consumed by trusting God.

Now, just stop and think. how do we know if we are anxious? How do we know if we are worried? Maybe it's not that hard.

Maybe you're already thinking and the wheels are spinning. But what if you lost X tomorrow? I saw last week there was this fire in the Newark airport terminal.

[22 : 47] 17 cars just burned to ashes. Can you imagine coming back from a trip? I was walking through this. Coming back from a trip, you know, I've got a plan. I've probably got a pretty tight schedule.

I know where I'm going. You come back. You go to the parking lot and there is your car, a hunk of molten metal and plastic. Don't be anxious, Jesus says.

What if you saw a need that you could actually meet? You could loan your van to the youth group for a trip to Monadnock later this year.

You have an old, you have a piece of furniture that you could give to someone who doesn't have a bed. Would you do it?

Would you do it if it was your bed and you had to pull out the old rusty one from the closet and put that back in your bedroom? The fact is that we have, we live in a culture that has become very comfortable with a lot of material possessions.

[24 : 04] Our standard of living is high and our cost of living is high and yet in the eyes of the world we are wealthy. and God wants our hearts to not be consumed with accumulating, gathering, and collecting and keeping these things.

He wants us to be people who are glad givers not tight-fisted graspers. Here's another diagnostic.

What do you spend your time doing? What do you spend your things, what do you spend your time praying about? What do you talk about with your friends? Do you see anxiety filling those spaces in your life?

Anxiety about material things. Jesus says this is a heart orientation towards our physical belongings that is not good.

We are putting our hope in something that cannot deliver to give us life. We are finding our present lives consumed with anxiety and worry about having or not having these things.

[25 : 33] And I know that for some of us here in this room, we've had a lot for a long time and it's easy for us to get comfortable.

I know that for some of you, you've actually lived in a lot of need and you've faced times where you don't know where the next meal comes from or where the roof is over your head or what clothes you will have to wear.

But as I read through this, we can have grasping anxious hearts whether we have a lot or a little. And God instead points us to something else.

He points us as disciples, as followers of Him to a new way in the end of this passage. And He's already pointed towards it twice, being rich towards God and knowing a heavenly Father who knows what we need.

But starting in verse 30, we see Him turn. Verse 31 actually is where we see Him really turn the corner. He says, there is a new way for followers of Jesus to live.

[26 : 41] He says, instead, seek His kingdom, that is God's kingdom, and all these things will be added to you. What does it mean to seek God's kingdom?

Remember, I told you earlier, seeking in this passage is being used for the, what are the things that dominate your attention? What are the things that drive you? What are the things that absorb you?

What are your obsessions? He says, I want you to be obsessed with the kingdom of God. What does that mean? The kingdom of God is the extent of God's effective rule and reign in this world.

Right? God is the sovereign over all things, but His kingdom, when Jesus came, He said, the kingdom of God is near. What He was saying was, God is about to do a new thing to impress His will and to begin to build a kingdom where what God values and what God says is right and wrong and good and bad happen and that God's kingdom is presented as a picture of a place of flourishing and a place of joy and a place of abundance and a place of provision.

A place where God is in the center of the world again. And Jesus says, this is worth our hearts being consumed by.

[28 : 12] The nations seek after these things, but you have something better to seek for. God and His kingdom. This is what you can set your heart on. This is what you can invest your life on.

And you're going to invest your life in something that will not fade and therefore is not disappointing. When He says in verse 34 or verse 33, provide for yourself money bags that don't grow old and with a treasure in heaven that does not fail where no thief approaches and no moth destroys.

He's saying all of your physical belongings and all of your possessions will pass away. But when you invest in God's kingdom, you're investing in things that will last forever.

How do we do this? What does it look like to seek God's kingdom? Well, that's a very broad question, but Jesus has very specific applications here.

Verse 33, sell your possessions and give to the poor. Okay. Now next week, I expect you all to come in having one pair of clothing, one car, one house, and nothing else because that's, no, I don't actually think that's what Jesus is saying.

[29 : 32] As often, Jesus says things in very black and white nature in order for us to feel the impact of what he is saying. The reason why I say that is not just because I don't want to feel the sting of this command, but the reason is because you see it, even in this passage, the man with his barns was not criticized for being a wealthy man.

He's being criticized for making his life be in his wealth. Okay. And we also see it throughout Scripture. Right.

If you look, you know, this is the book of Luke, the gospel according to Luke. Luke then went on and wrote a sequel about how the early church lived out these things.

And part of what you see in the early church is people actually owned things. They had homes that hosted churches. They had belongings that they could give.

Ananias and Sapphira were not condemned for having land that they hadn't sold yet. They were condemned for lying about how they did it. And so, this is, well, it's not, the ideal of God's kingdom isn't communism and everything being owned communally, but what it is is generosity and a freedom and a sense of stewardship that all that we have has come from God and God has given to us not for simply our own sake but for the sake that we may bless others in the name of Christ and build his kingdom by the way that we do that.

[31 : 12] This is what God wants us to think about. He wants us to think about all the things that I have. Am I thinking about how can I bless others with them or am I simply thinking about how can I be more comfortable, more secure, more important, find more meaning in the things that I have?

To invest in God's kingdom in the age of the church is to invest in the gospel ministry of word and deed to proclaim Jesus Christ and to then live out the ethics that Jesus Christ commands us to in the world as we await Jesus coming back.

This is what God's called us to. So I want to get really practical for a few minutes. I want you to think about how you can invest some of the places where, because you might be sitting there thinking, I don't know how to do that.

I don't know where to go. I get lots of stuff in the mail. I don't know how much of that is kingdom oriented. What do I do? I want to give you some places for you to consider where you could ask the Lord, Lord, do you want me to become more generous?

Do you want me to give more in these areas? Before I get into some of the details, I want to say this. The giving that Jesus calls us to here is not merely financial giving.

[32 : 48] I gave some examples earlier. Your homes, your cars, your time, your hospitality. There are lots of other ways that you can invest your possessions of your life and your time in the kingdom.

But I'm going to talk specifically about money today and how you can invest finances. First thing I'm going to say, and this is with a great disclaimer, is you can give to your local church.

Now, having said that, look, the kingdom of God is larger than any local church and I hope that you who have been coming here for a while know that our heart is not simply to build a bigger barn here so that we can have more stuff here for our own comfort and welfare.

Right? I hope that you would remember how often we pray for the flourishing of other churches in the city. How we pray for the gospel ministry here and around the world.

If you're new here, I hope you'll stick around long enough to hopefully find that this is true and if it's not, please come tell me so we can fix that because that would be terrible if that were true.

[33 : 59] But the church, globally and locally, is God's central means of building His kingdom and giving to the church is a good thing. And we are on the brink as a church of investing a lot of money in expanding our base of operations here on this little postage stamp with a building campaign.

You guys know, if you haven't heard it in three weeks, we will have a launch, you will hear all sorts of details, plan to be here on the 24th to be able to hear about all the details of what that looks like.

But our heart is not to build a bigger barn so that people will think we're an impressive church. Our heart is to build a base of a church so that we can continue and expand the ministries that we are doing already of gospel preaching, of gospel ministry to the city.

So if you want to think about giving to our church the building campaign, consider how you might be able to be sacrificially a part of that.

But consider some other options too. Consider the DBF fund that Nick mentioned earlier in our service. Consider the campus ministers in our midst who raise support for their salary and who raise money for their operation costs.

[35 : 26] Consider the poverty of the gospel on university campuses and how few voices there are there and invest in those. Consider investing in Bridges of Hope, the coalition of churches that we're a part of that's seeking to, in Christ's name, do good to the city, that runs a mentoring program and is seeking to launch a prison re-entry program in other ways.

Consider something like the 180 Center. If you don't know the 180 Center, it's over on Grand Avenue. They do a great work doing addiction, treatment, recovery, job training.

They run a lot of different things. If you're looking for a place in the city to give to that's doing great ministry in Christ's name, consider them. Not only consider the needs of the city, consider the needs of the world.

If you haven't been here on a Sunday when Hanum Asad has come and talked about his ministry called Christian Mission to Gaza, and the ministry that he is having to Palestinian Christians and the ministry of the gospel to Gaza, which you can imagine is an incredibly fraught and very difficult ministry.

Not only is he doing ministry there where there are lots of needs because the Christians get it from both sides in that political conflict, but then his base of operations, which is in Jordan, has been ministering to refugees from Syria and from Iraq for quite a while now.

[37 : 03] There are great opportunities to think about giving to his ministry and to the things that they're doing there. And if for whatever reason Hana and his ministry isn't something that you want to give to, there are great organizations.

World Vision does wonderful world relief, particularly in light of natural and human disasters. Compassion International. If you're a family, if you want to engage in an ongoing process of investing in a child somewhere in the world where they will be ministered to by a church and where they will be supported so they can get food and clothing and grow up and get an education, wonderful opportunities.

Personal ministry. What about your everyday life? Are you thinking about how you can be generous in your everyday life?

Now, if you're considering, if you work in downtown New Haven and you are exposed to homelessness, I think I mentioned this before. Greg has written a really great pamphlet that's on the back table that gives some really great wisdom about how to actually be most helpful.

Homelessness in America and panhandling, it's a complicated issue. What God wants for you is to have a generous heart. And then we also want to give you some instruction on how you might do that best to be truly helpful.

[38 : 36] So pick up that flyer as you cultivate that heart. If you aren't on it, consider being a part of the have need email list that Michelle has.

When people in our church have needs and there are things like, I need a bed, I'm moving in a new house, I have nothing. These are the kinds of things that go out on that list.

Consider being on that list so you know the needs so that you can respond to them. Here's a very practical thing. If you don't know how to budget your money in order to be able to take some of your money and give it away because you never know how much you have and how much you spend and how much you need, well maybe that would be a first step.

We as a church leadership would love to help you. At our last congregational meeting, someone stood up and said, I would be willing to help you take steps in learning how to get a handle on your finances so that you can be generous, so that you can give, so that you can be not consumed by these things.

So if you are in that need, please let us know. Write it in a prayer card. Please talk to the staff or the elders. We would love to direct you in that. I actually heard a story of a family in our church that is purposefully eating an extremely inexpensive meal once a week rather than the normal meal that they eat.

[40 : 10] They eat something that will cost like less than \$2. So they can take what they would normally budget for that, take the rest of the money, and give it in a particular way.

If you are a family, maybe you would want to consider something like that. That money could be set aside for a compassion child. It could be set aside for the mentoring program at Bridges of Hope.

You could do all sorts of things with it. These are the ways that we work into our everyday lives, patterns of generosity, patterns of sacrificial living, patterns of thinking what we have is not simply for ourselves, but it is to bless others.

Jesus finishes this passage with a diagnostic that is always striking when we read it properly. Verse 34, for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Humanly, we always want to read this as, well, where your heart is, there will be your treasure also. The things that you love, those are the things you give to. But Jesus is not saying that.

[41 : 14] Jesus is actually saying, use this as a final diagnostic. Where do you spend your stuff? Your money, your time, your resources, your possessions.

Where do you spend those things? Those are the things you value. And allow that to be a diagnostic tool for you to see whether your heart is right towards God.

whether you are actually seeking God's kingdom and sacrificially and generously giving for the work of God's gospel and God's church and the expansion of His kingdom.

Or whether you are consumed by anxiety and find yourself with a grasping heart. Amen. Amen. The reason why we can do this is in verse 32.

It's the very core of this and we could spend lots more time but I just want to say, why can we do this? Because friends, you have a heavenly Father in the heavens who knows your need.

[42 : 28] Verse 32 says that it's not just His duty but it is His delight to give you His kingdom. When you are seeking after something, you're not seeking it hoping you might get it.

You are seeking after it when the God of the universe is saying to you, yes, it is my pleasure and my joy to give this thing to you. As you set your heart on it, I will meet you in that and I will give it to you.

And friends, we know this because of the gospel. We know this because when we were still enemies of God, when we were still dead in our sins and trespasses, God loved us and He sent us His Son.

This is the loving heart of our Heavenly Father who at great cost, at infinite cost to Himself, sacrificed up Jesus. Jesus willingly goes to the cross in love so that we might know Him.

if you are ever afraid that God doesn't know your need, if you are ever afraid that God isn't willing to help you, if you are ever afraid that God is unable to solve your situation or to take care of you, look at the cross of Jesus Christ and be reminded that God has done that for you.

[43 : 54] And if God did not spare His Son but gave Him up for us all, how much more will He give you all things?

As the Apostle Paul says in Romans chapter 8. He loves you and He will take care of you.

and He calls you and me as followers of Him to have a generous and sacrificial heart because He is a generous and sacrificial God.

Let's pray. Lord, thank You for this word. Lord, I pray that it would not simply blow through our lives in these few minutes.

But Lord, I pray that this word would reside in our hearts. Lord, that You would allow it to shape us and mold us. Lord, help us to see when we are afraid that You won't care for us.

[45 : 03] Help us to see when we become grasping or when we set our hearts on the things that are passing away. Lord, help us to see Your kingdom.

Remind us of the way that You have met us most importantly by the sending of Your Son. And Lord, we pray that You would change our hearts and that You would change our relationship to our money and our things.

Lord, that we might be truly followers of You and that You might use us, Lord, to build Your kingdom here. Lord, we pray this in Jesus' name.

Amen. Well, friends, as we close, it's a fitting ending for us to come to the Lord's table because what we do when we take the bread and drink the cup is we are reminded of God and His character.

God who has acted in such a way in history so that He might save us. And so, this is what we commemorate.

[46 : 13] This is what we celebrate. As we come to this, we are reminded both of the weightiness of our sin, that it took the death of God's very own Son to be our redemption and to be our Savior, but it is also a place of joy where we see how much God has set His love on us and what He has done for us in Christ.

And in light of what we've talked about this morning, I hope and pray that you will not only take this in as a reminder of salvation for those who put their faith in Christ and of the joy of that, but also that you would allow it to sink in and reflect a little on what we've talked about, about the state of your heart and are you responding to the gospel, being generous and sacrificial people towards others.

So, I'd like to ask you to reflect on that. As always, we invite all who have placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior to partake with us in this.

But if you're here and you're visiting or you're checking out Christianity or this is something new, my hope and prayer is that you would, rather than taking these elements, which is meant to be an expression of faith, you can look at the, there are a couple prayers in the bulletin you could consider praying, but think about what it is that God, what these elements represent and reflect on God's love that He has shown for you and the invitation that this is for you to come and put your faith and trust in Him as you do it.

Those who are serving want to come forward and that would be great. As we will pass this out, what we'll do is we'll pass out the crackers and you can hold on to it and then we'll eat it together and then we'll pass out the cups and do the same.

[48 : 09] Don't you guys want to come over here? The Apostle Paul, as he wrote about this, wrote this, for I received from the Lord what I delivered to you that the Lord Jesus on the night when He was betrayed took bread and when He had given thanks He broke it and said, this is my body which is for you.

Do this in remembrance of me. In the same way also He took the cup after supper saying, this cup is a new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink of it in remembrance of me.

For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. and that's what we're doing this morning. Suzanne, can I ask you to pray for the bread please?

Dear God, thank you for the sacrifice of your son Jesus. Thank you for dying on the cross for our sins. And let us take this time to remember the blood that was shed for us.

Thank you for