

Matthew 6:19-34

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[0:00] All right, good evening.

Hopefully y'all can hear me well. So as Nick said, my name is Andrew, and I'm pretty excited to be preaching tonight. So if you've read ahead, or if you looked at the thing you get, it's called a bulletin, or you're familiar with the Sermon on the Mount, you'll know where we've come tonight.

We're going to be in Matthew chapter 6, verses 19 through 34. You might say, though, if you do a quick skim, or you're familiar, that we're going to talk about money. We're going to talk about money, we're going to talk about anxiety, and that's difficult, because those are issues in our culture.

And honestly, our culture doesn't really align with maybe what Scripture would say in this area. Not all the time. But like most of you, this is not something I get naturally. This is not something I do well, and so I struggle here too.

So from a personal perspective, I thought I'd share a little story to bring us in. And this area, this concept of money, what do I do with it, what do I do with my possessions, has actually been one of the more difficult areas of my life.

[1:08] Now, I became a Christian. I grew up in a Christian home, but I would say that I started to follow Christ, really, the end of high school and college. So if you're familiar, those times of year, time of life, you don't have a lot of money, typically.

And so I could justify, once the Lord began to convict me, that I need to start being generous, I need to start giving. I could say I don't have any money, which was partially true, because I just didn't have that much. But then I got an internship, and odds are a little bit different.

I could give a little more. And so what I decided to do was to support some missionary friends of mine. And I decided I'd give them about \$10 a month. So it's like it was three of them. It was about \$30 a month. And I could do that.

I'd done the math. I knew that I had made enough money. I thought comfortable in that. But what would happen is that end of the month would come, time to write the check. And I would go, I can write the check, or I can get a piece of climbing equipment.

I like to be outside, I like to do things. So it was a choice. It was, I can give, or I can get. And what would also happen is I'd forget for a college student. Sometimes I'd forget.

[2:10] So I'd build up two months. I'd build up three months. And now I have \$60 or \$90, right? So a bit more. And the same thing would happen. Except now it was not a carabiner or like \$30. It was a day of skiing.

It was something to do or something I could buy. And I'll fast forward until now. I have a real job. I make real money, right? The desire is still the same. The dollar amounts just more. So now sometimes I'll look and say, that's a pair of skis.

That's a big thing that I can acquire. And occasionally I'll still look at a tax return. And I'll think, look at all the money that I've made. Look at all the things I could buy.

So I say this really to help us, help myself understand that it's not the material object, right? It's not the carabiner. It's not the pair of skis. It's not the thing. It's the affection that we place.

It's the amount or desire that we place on things. And that's really what Jesus is going to address. He's not going to talk about money per se. He's going to talk about the affections and what we do with that.

[3:11] So that's what Jesus is going to address. Let's read our text. So as I said, it's Matthew chapter 6, verses 19 through 34. And sorry, that is on page 811 if you have a pew Bible in front of you.

So he says, The eye is the lamp of the body.

So if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If in the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness.

No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money. Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body what you will put on.

Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air. They neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

[4:30] And which of you, by being anxious, can add a single hour to a span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, 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 of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or what shall we wear?

For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. So let's pray. Father, thank you for this church, and the opportunity to dig into your scriptures.

Would you allow us tonight to see, and hear what the life of a Christian should look like with respect to material things. Would you allow me to clearly and faithfully communicate your scriptures. Amen.

[5:37] So from the text we read, there are really three major imperatives, or three commands, that we're going to use to break up how we proceed through tonight. So the first is found in verses 19 through 24, and it's really dealing with the object of our affections.

The second is going to be found in verses 25 through 34, a little bit longer section, but it's really dealing with the effect that what we place our affections on has. And then third and final, what a Christian must do in light of our living in the world in which we do.

And that's really going to be found specifically in verse 33. So let's look at the first one, the object of our affections. Reading again verses 19 and 20, Jesus says, Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, or thieves break in and steal.

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, or thieves do not break in and steal. Okay, so this first imperative, the first command, it's to build up treasures in heaven.

We could state it negatively, and that would be not building up treasures on earth, but they're basically equivalent. So we, as followers of Christ, are called to use our resources, our money, our time, our energy, in such a way as to build up treasure in heaven as opposed to on earth.

[6:52] So I don't think that I really need to define what building up treasure on earth means. I think that's probably something we get, we understand. But we probably apply that, or we may apply that just to rich people, right?

Rich people being, well, maybe double our income, maybe double what we make. It's not me. I don't want to build up treasures on earth, but the people who have money do. As if, like, the millionaire who wants to make more money has a different attitude than the blue-collar worker who wants to make more money.

I think they're probably equivalent. So the issue is not the amount, it's not the object. It's that desire. So having more money will make my life easier, better, more complete.

Now, I think that there is some truth to that. I think there's some truth to income does make some aspects of life easier. I would not dispute that, but Jesus is addressing the hard issues, addressing what goes on internally here.

And so remember how I mentioned that as a college student, I wanted stuff. I wanted to go skiing, or I wanted Caribbeaners. I wanted things. As opposed to giving to my missionary friends, right?

[8:00] That was small money. That was small things. And now I could want a pair of skis, or go on a vacation, or something, as opposed to giving. It's the same attitude. And I would say as well, that if you look across the U.S., there's a lot of people in debt.

A lot of people have credit card debt. They have house debt. They have car debt. But not all of it, but some of it certainly comes from the, I want to build up material things. And then the problem is that we're not all rich.

If we were rich, we might not have as much debt, but because we want to have all these things, if we don't have the money for it, we end up with debt as the result of, or can be the result of a misplaced object, a misplaced affection.

So Jesus contrasts this attitude, this desire for earthly things, with a higher one, using our resources to make much of his kingdom. Now to explain this, we're given three areas.

And I think two, we probably understand pretty instinctively. So if we look at verse 20 and 21, basically right after his command, he gives us, I think, the first self-explanatory, first self-explanatory explanation.

[9:03] So we all understand, even from a young age, that stuff breaks. Okay? If you don't get that, come into my house, my car will break down sometime, and I'll invite you over. You can help me out.

Okay? Rust will happen. If you live in the north, there's salt on the roads, like a year, and your car starts to rust. That just happens. If you lived in Jesus' time, this would be really, really easy to understand, because there weren't Ziploc bags, there weren't Tupperware, right?

Your food's going to get wet, there's going to get bugs in it, and then it's going to rot, it's going to ruin. So I think we get this, we understand that stuff breaks, stuff wears out.

Jesus doesn't explicitly mention this, but I think it's fair to say that we all have some limited capacity of resources, right? We all have some limited amount of money, a limited amount of time, a limited amount of energy.

And so if we're going to invest it, shouldn't we invest it in things that don't break versus things that break? I think that makes sense. But the final point that Jesus will make here is that really the location of our treasure.

[10:05] It's really the place we put our hopes, our dreams, our ambition. That's where our heart or our affection will be. So if I love my house above all else, if my house burns down and broken, that's kind of the point he's getting across.

The second reason for building up heavenly treasure as opposed to earthly treasure is a bit more complex. If you look at verses 22 and 23, Jesus is discussing vision. How do we see what we focus on?

So he's kind of building off of the prior statement about the location of our treasure and the subsequent falling of our heart. Jesus mentions light and he mentions dark and he mentions sight. To boil it down very simply, his point is this.

What we look at or what we see, what we gaze at, it's really indicative of our heart's desire. And so if that sight picture, if what we see is evil, then all of us is evil.

That's his point. It's not like I can look at evil. I can look in this context. I can love money and I'm only partially affected. He's saying, no, if you look, that represents all of you. That's a gaze into your heart.

[11:10] So the third kind of explanation is another one that I think is obvious. It's found in verse 24. We can't serve two masters. We can't serve two things.

The problem is that for our culture, I think we've tried to do something. We've tried to say on Sundays, that's when I'm a Christian, right? That's when like Christ is king. Maybe the weekend, but it's probably just Sunday.

And then there's this other sphere of life that is every other day. And so I can serve Jesus on Sunday. I can do that. And that's allowable because that's over here. And then I can serve my job, my bank account, other things because they're separate.

The problem is that neither of them really is our master, right? Neither of them consumes all of us. And Jesus is crystal clear. You cannot serve two masters.

You can't really correctly or fully serve two masters. And I think that's unnecessary. I don't need to say you can't fully serve or you can't kind of correctly serve because service implies that you're devoted to that person, right?

[12:12] He uses the language of kind of slavery, right? Someone's a master of you. They own you in that sense. And you can't partially be owned. You can't partially serve.

So Jesus wants all of us. He doesn't want 50%. He doesn't want 75%. He doesn't want 99%. He wants 100% or nothing. If you're serving God, there's no room. There's not 1%. There's not 0.1%.

There's not 0.001% for money. It's following Christ or not. That's the line. And the line of distinction he draws. So if we move on to the second point, the second grouping, it's really the effect of the affections we have, the effect of the things that we desire would be another way to put that.

And I would say that incorrect affections will lead to problems. I think they generally do. So I know that I have from time to time desired or been anxious about a job, right?

Anxious about what am I going to do after I graduate? What am I going to do in two years? What am I going to do in three years? What am I going to do in five years? It's always kind of what's going to affect my material security.

[13:17] Am I going to have enough money? Am I going to have a good job? Am I going to be able to do what I want? And one, it's not really useful. Two, it's really common. It's common in our culture. It's so common, I think, even in the church. But Jesus has a bit different perspective on what the natural tension of living in a material culture should be, particularly in the believer's life.

Let's look at verse 25. Jesus says, Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on.

Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? So following that, Jesus is going to make two major points, kind of two major arguments to help us understand this.

The first is really a series of greater than arguments. So, he's going to use flowers, he's going to use birds to say, Aren't you not, are you not greater than those? Are you not more important? Are you not of more value than those things?

And the second is a bit of a broader observation about the nature and character of God, the nature and character of the God that we serve. So I said he points to birds and he points to flowers. If you look at verses 26 and 27, Jesus points to the birds outside.

[14:23] And he explains the means by which they receive their food. So if you haven't noticed, birds will fly around and they'll find a place and those aren't pecking in the ground. I'm not really sure why, I just know that they do. They'll go and they'll look for seeds or nuts or insects, whatever they eat.

I've never seen a bird, to my knowledge, go somewhere and just spin in circles, worrying about where they're going to get food from, what are they going to find. They go and they get a worm, right?

They get it from my garden all the time. I see robins getting worms out of my garden. I'm not happy about that because worms are good for me, but I see them doing it. They don't seem to be fluttering around. So they go, they do, they're looking for food and the Lord provides.

So Jesus says, since we are of more value, shouldn't we have confidence in the Lord to provide food for us in a similar way? Jesus is going to make a similar point again with respect to our needs for clothing.

So he says, let's look at the grass, look at the flowers. I don't know if you've ever walked in a field of wildflowers, or if you've ever kind of gone on a hike and just seen some beautiful scenery.

[15:26] Flowers are incredible. And Jesus actually says, look, they're even more beautiful than Solomon and all the splendor. That's true. But yet, they're temporary.

They have a temporary nature. They have temporary value. And so if you look at Genesis 1, grass, other things, created order is good. Mankind is very good.

So there's this distinction. There's a difference. I think that Jesus could make this point. He could make it for shelter. He could probably use a beehive or he could use, you know, a hollowed out den or something for a squirrel.

But the same point would apply. God provides for the needs of his created order as we observe in nature. Just go look. And we are of more importance. So God's affection towards humans, I think it sizably outweighs his affection towards the birds, the grass, the bees, the trees, the things of this world.

So are we not of much more value? But honestly, I believe all of this leads to the second point. Let's look at verse 32. Jesus says here, for the Gentiles seek after all of these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.

[16:37] So Gentiles seek after food. They seek after clothing. They seek after the things that we need to live. Jesus says God knows that we need them all. God isn't, he's not blind to our needs.

He's not unaware of our physical condition and limitations. That could be because he made us. That could be he kind of gets us because he made us. I think that's logical. It's not as if God's in heaven surprised that we need food.

He made us. He's not hoping that I'll provide enough for my wife and I. That's not how it works. So our issues, our issues and struggles with anxiety, they really come to the forefront when we forget that he made us.

That he cares for us and he's powerful. He's powerful beyond all compare. So when our focus is on the material things, when our focus is on what am I going to wear? What am I going to eat?

Where does that come from? We run from the right affection towards God, the right concern and passion towards God. And we place our attention and our desire on doing what we believe necessary to survive.

[17:44] So this, Jesus says, is what the Gentiles do. What the rest of the world does. And it's ultimately, I think, the source of the majority of the anxiety in the first place. It exists because we forget or we lose sight of the fact that we have a heavenly father who knows what we need.

So let's do a little experiment. Let's consider for a second that you were the child of Warren Buffett. If you don't know who Warren Buffett is, maybe you know who Bill Gates is. And maybe you like Bill Gates more because that's technology.

Either way, both of those guys are rich. Like super, super, super, super, super rich. They're crazy rich.

I'd heard someone break down how much Bill Gates would have to spend per day. So it was his net worth now, how much he'd have to spend per day, assuming no more money made, to spend all of his money in like 70 years or 50 years or something.

And it was just incredible. I mean, you'd have to buy, I don't know, you'd have to buy like a country a day or something. It was crazy. So if one of those guys was your father, you would never, ever, ever have to worry about money.

[18:54] You'd never have to worry about food. You'd never have to worry about clothing or shelter because those are things that Bill or Warren could provide. You might worry about other things, but you'd never worry about money, right?

That's silly. You would never do that. But the thing is, the gospel tells me and tells us that God is our father. The God who created the universe with his words is our father.

The God who raised dead men back to life is our father. If I really believed that, anxiety and worry wouldn't control my life. I wouldn't be paranoid at work, thinking that someone's out to get my job.

And I wouldn't second guess giving money to support gospel ministry. I wouldn't be concerned with these things. So that said, I think that there are several helpful things to consider.

It really is direct application of these points. The first, and maybe more difficult, is that Jesus is talking about needs with, I think, little consideration towards wants.

[19:57] At least how we would define those in our culture. And we might not even define that correctly in our culture today. The line between what I need and what I want may not exist, right? To some, it's not me.

I have a dumb phone. But some people have an iPhone. And they couldn't possibly live without it. That's probably not a need, but we've classified it that way. And maybe it's not something like technology.

Maybe it's that we need nice clothes, right? They've got to cost so much. They've got to have like a logo or something on them, something fancy.

And maybe it's not, maybe we're okay with just normal clothes, but we want nice food. You know, we can't have just some sort of food. We've got to have like flaming on every night or something. We've got to have something great. So I mention this because I don't want us to think linking, leave thinking that if we love and we follow Jesus, that we'll get this, right?

We'll get a sweet car or a sweet house, sweet food, right? That's not how it works. The reward of following Jesus is that we get Jesus. Our physical needs, as he says, will be provided for.

[21:05] He's not unaware, you know. But we're not guaranteed to be healthy, wealthy, and wise. It doesn't work that way. So please, please don't leave hearing me say that our needs, being some sweet car or some sweet house, would be provided for.

It's not biblical. The second application point I think to consider is what I would call maybe the mechanism of God's provision. So God could, if he chose, and he's done this before, drop manna from heaven to feed us.

Okay, he could do that. He's done it before, but we're not the Israelites in the desert right now, right? So let's not assume that's going to happen. He's given us hands and bodies and brains and things to use.

And so he's, I think in many ways, called us to work using the talents he's given us to earn a living. It's really not earning a living. That's kind of a bad word to use. But he's given us so much, we're called to work, make use of what he's given us.

And that is the means by which he provides for us. He can provide otherwise, but I think Paul would say in second test that those who can work but choose not to don't deserve to eat. So don't be lazy.

[22:15] Work. God's given you. He's going to provide, but that might be through your work. So use your provision. Use your talents. God's provision probably would be that paycheck. But this is also the reason why Christians I don't think can be smug or arrogant or make their work their God.

Because those talents that made you good at your job, well, God gave them to you. Those are God's provision to you. So you can't make those things out to be more than they are. So with those two things said, let's look at what I believe the correct response to living in a material world will be.

So the third command for us is found in verse 33. It's really a direct, pretty blunt kind of reaction to our conventional manner of living.

So we think, I need to get a job. I need to earn a living. I need to, you know, have a stable life. Stable is dependent on the person. We need to have a stable life, and then I can find Jesus.

Then I can kind of do the faith thing, right? I need to have my life in order, and then I can come and have faith. And that's completely backwards from what Jesus is going to say in verse 33. So let's look there.

[23:24] So Jesus says, but seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. So as opposed to our conventional manner of need to get things in order, need to do this, and then I can kind of put my emphasis, put my effort into the Lord.

Jesus gives us a two-part instruction on what our priorities should be. He says, we're called to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and then all these things will be added to us. It's important to have that in context.

Jesus says, seek first me and all these things, food, shelter, clothing. The things that we need will be provided. But I think we're called to do what might seem like a passive action, to seek, to go look.

And then Christ will come, and he will give us what we need. So I think that's counterculture, to say the least. But let's look at what defines the kingdom of God, and let's look at what defines the righteousness as well.

So step one is, I think, to seek the kingdom of God. That's the first part of the instruction. And in preparing for the sermon, I was reading a book by John Stott, and he said something that I found quite useful.

[24:30] And it's from the book, The Message of the Sermon on the Mount. And I'm just going to read it to you because I think it was as succinct of a point as I could make, and he made it for me. So I'm going to read it. He says that God's kingdom in Jesus Christ, sorry, God's kingdom is Jesus Christ, ruling over his people in total blessing and total demand.

To seek first this kingdom is to desire, as of first importance, the spread of the reign of Jesus Christ. Such a desire will start with ourselves until every single department of our life, home, marriage and family, personal morality, professional life and business ethics, bank balance, tax returns, citizenship, is joyfully and freely submissive to Christ.

So this action, seeking his kingdom, I think it looks like several things. It looks like accepting the responsibility of evangelism for our neighbors, our family, our coworkers, our friends.

It looks like accepting the challenge of providing for missionaries, providing for our pastors, providing for missionaries abroad, here and abroad, I would say. I think on a kind of an application note, I do think a very countercultural thing would be for us as the church, for us not Trinity Baptists, but for us as people, to ask missionaries, how can we support you, to be proactive in supporting them, to be generous beyond not making them come and ask us.

I think that would be very practical. But how beautiful would it be, though, if we, as the people that make up Trinity, you know, ask the missionaries, you can look downstairs, call them up, send them an email and ask, how can I support you?

[26:15] Maybe I can pray for you. Maybe I can support you financially. Maybe I can help you with some need if you're maybe a little more local. But how beautiful would that be? I think that would produce just a great joy in their hearts.

And it would really, I think, enable them to stay on mission, to stay vocationally declaring Christ to the world without them having to spend a lot of time and energy finding supporters, raising money, doing those kind of things.

So seeking the kingdom also, I think, means being really invested in missions. It's not as if it's a, okay, well, Nick is a pastor, so I will give Nick some money and he can do, like, the pastoring thing and I can just, like, give him a check.

I think it means being invested in that. It means being invested in seeing the gospel and the kingdom reach, New Haven, Connecticut, America, and the world. I think it also really does mean that we should be praying for the coming of Christ and really the full unveiling of his kingdom.

So if we break down the second part, Jesus in verse 33 says we should seek his kingdom, we should seek his righteousness. We could have grouped that maybe in all one big broad bucket, seek his kingdom and his righteousness and describe what that looks like.

[27:25] But God's thought broke it up and I thought it was actually a useful thing for me, so I'll present it to you. The second command then is to seek his righteousness. And so understanding is a separate and related item.

And effectively, there are those that aren't within the kingdom of God. There are those who aren't Christians. They live amongst us. They live in different areas. But they exist, right? That's probably not news.

We're called then to, as a result of seeking the Lord, be God's righteousness to them, right? So that looks like being involved in service to our community.

You know, wherever brokenness and injustice is found, for us at Trinity, that might be being involved in night runners. There's lots of other opportunities. That's a very clear one that could be an application directly of the call to be and to seek the righteousness of God here.

But I think ultimately our motivation for standing and taking action there is not to better ourselves, not to make ourselves, you know, got like night runners or something on our resume.

[28:27] It's not that, but it's to be the bringer of Christ's righteousness here and now. So where does this, where do we go? What do we do with this passage?

I think in light of the three commands that Jesus gives us, those being to build up treasures in heaven, or negatively to not build up treasures on earth, the second one to not be anxious, and the third one to seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, I think there's a few points of clear application that we can probably take in order to better prepare ourselves for the life of a Christian with respect to material things.

So the first one would be read your Bible. That's probably obvious in church talking about reading your Bible. I get that. But if we struggle, as I from time to time will do, to understand and fully believe that God is my Father, who cares for me, who's capable of meeting my needs, then I think we need to be realigned, we need to be brought from where we are to in line with what Scripture says.

Maybe we just need to be reminded. Maybe we're a little off course and just need a little reminder. Maybe we just need to be taught from the start about who God is. The best, clearest, most direct way to do that is to read His words He's written for us.

So if we struggle to understand God's power, understand His dominion, maybe we should go to Genesis and see how God makes the world with His words. Maybe we should continue reading the Gospels.

[29:51] Our small group's been going through the Gospel of Luke, and we've seen Jesus' authority and His power being made manifest in miracles. If you doubt His provision, maybe you should read about the Exodus and see God's provision in water from a rock or manna and quail just from nowhere.

So we need to continually seek and know the Lord, and He's given us a book that allows us to do that. Read it. I think the second thing, and it'll probably be a bit more, you might say it's more practical.

So we need to have a budget. We need to have another means to track our finances. Today, our bank account is what we would probably consider our biggest resource in most cases.

And I think a lot of times we're not aware of the vast provision that God's given us. We kind of glaze over it. We think that this just kind of comes with the culture. This kind of comes with the job I do. Reading scriptures will help you with that.

But sometimes you just need to look and go, okay, dollars and cents. What has the Lord provided for us? And a budget is a great way to do that, right? Taxes.

[30:58] You might hate those. I find tax time actually encouraging most of the time, right? Because you get this thing called a W-2. It tells you kind of what you made, right? And then if you fill out a 1040, you can understand how much money you've given, right?

You can see what you're doing with your money. I think that's God's provision through the IRS to help us have a diagnostic test for our souls. So I think you need to have a means to understand, a robust means to understand the provision God's given us, okay?

It's not really our money. It's God's money. He's given it to us. We need to take account of it. So that would be my second application. And the third one's a bit less maybe practical. It's a bit more, a bit further out there.

I would say we need to develop what I would call a questioning attitude. So I say that because we happen to live in a pretty materialistic culture. The values, the car you drive, the clothes you wear, what you do.

And so it's difficult to distinguish between, distinguish between excess maybe. You know, excess in what is necessary. And so I would encourage the development of an attitude towards the use of our resources, time, energy, money, to better align us to the calling that Christ has for us in verse 33.

[32 : 14] So if you see that, seek first his kingdom and his righteousness. So I think when you're faced with a decision, major or minor, you should ask yourself this question, does this, this being having this job, buying this thing, doing this, does this enable me to have more time or more resources to put into the task of advancing God's kingdom?

Or if you put it another way, does this thing, does it increase my ability to serve the Lord? So I'll give you an example to help out with this because that might be a little abstract. In fact, let's say that my wife and I both, our cars just, they just totally stopped working this week.

Like total, maybe we got an accident, maybe the engine just fell out. I don't know. They stopped breaking. They just brake. We don't have any working cars then. I right now have about a 30-minute drive to work.

Okay, so if I have a car, that's about an hour less a day that I have to do ministry, to do things like preparing for a sermon or preparing for a youth group or taking care of my wife, I have less time to do the work God's called me to.

I have a bike, so I could bike to work. And at the current pace that I ride, that would be like three or four hours, depending on how fast I was going, to get to and from work, right? So with that, three to four hours out of your day, it's probably wise if I have the resources to buy a car, okay?

[33 : 40] Another question comes, what do I buy? There's lots of cars. Should I buy maybe a Lexus? Maybe a Toyota? Maybe an Acura? Maybe a Honda, right?

If you're not familiar, they're kind of the same cars sometimes, right? So if it was me, the questioning attitude might have me say, you know, I'm going to buy the Honda versus the Acura.

I'm going to buy the Toyota versus the Lexus. Now, why is that? Well, frankly, you can probably get the same reliability, and it's the same, to some extent, the same engineering in the car.

And so you're looking at almost sometimes the same car for a lot more money or a lot less money. And so for me, I would say car fits my needs.

If it's big enough, if it has enough seats for what I got to do, I have X amount more money that I can give, I can use in some capacity, that might be giving to support Trinity, that might be supporting missionaries, that might be doing something else.

[34 : 43] But there's a lot of opportunities to use maybe that excess money to advance the kingdom. So I don't think that example is prescriptive. I'm not saying that buying a Lexus is always a bad move.

If it was me, I'd buy a pickup truck. That'd be my personal preference, but it's just that I think the scriptures are going to say that maybe buying a luxury car when a normal car will do is probably more self-serving than necessary, right?

It's probably not a need. It's probably more of a want. And then as such, there's going to be some maybe non-nominal, it's not \$5 difference that if you bought a luxury car, you don't have.

If you bought another car, you do towards advancing the kingdom. I think this example could also be applied in an opportunity that we might think differently about. So let's say you had, you'd done a lot of good work for a while, you had an opportunity to get a promotion at work.

If you got this promotion, though, it's going to give you a significant raise, a lot more money, but it's going to require 20, 30 more hours a week. It's going to take away your time, it's going to take away your energy.

[35 : 47] And that's going to take away from your time and energy to do ministry, right? I think I would again then ask the question, does having my old job, or is having my new job, does that as a total sum, does that better align me, better allow me to advance the kingdom?

So to wrap up, I'll leave you with this. Jesus calls us to live for heavenly treasures first. He provides us with all things necessary so that our life need not be anxiety-filled, and He instructs us to live for His first kingdom.

As such, we should live a different life. There's many men and women on earth who've exhibited this kind of kingdom-focused manner of living, but really none more than Jesus Himself.

So looking at what the Apostle Paul points out about Jesus in 2 Corinthians 8, verse 9, we see, and Paul writes, Jesus put off His claims of material power, wealth, and dominion in order to provide us with the richness of heavenly life.

No better example has existed, will exist, that we can look at to see the single-minded focus that Jesus had on the advancement of the kingdom. I pray if you don't know Him, you'd seek Him. And if you do know Him, continue to seek Him and focus your life on making Him known.

[37 : 14] Let's pray. Father, thank You for Your Word to us tonight from the Gospel of Matthew. I pray You would help us above all else to know and to trust that You are the almighty, powerful creator, and ruler of all, that You are our Father.

Father, You've made us, You know us deeply, and Your scriptures testify that in Christ we and all things are held together. Please help us to see You more clearly and to know You more deeply so that we are able to trust Your provision for our lives.

Father, do you give us the strength and give us the wisdom to see where our attitudes and our affections, our desires towards resources, our self-serving. Please help Trinity and our town help New Haven see our possessions as a free gift from You and strengthen us to stand firmly in that culture, firmly in that knowledge amongst a culture that differs radically.

Thank You for Christ's example. I pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Yes. So we've been doing for the last, I don't know, a while, the evening service, having a question and answer time.

So I don't know how much time we have. Maybe ten minutes? Five minutes. Brief questions. If there's any questions about anything that I said or the text tonight, anything I didn't say clearly or I confused you on, I'd love to try to answer that.

[38 : 35] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

I wonder when that passes the line to be kind of included in planning to be a vitalizer to the wealth. Yeah, so Jonathan just asked a really difficult question that I might defer and punt to a pastor on, but...

You repeat the question. Yeah, I'll repeat the question. So Jonathan asked, I think, a good question. Our culture seems to say that saving for retirement is something you should do.

You should save a lot for retirement. And, you know, where, maybe, what's the diagnostic test or when do we cross the line between, would you say, maybe trusting your money and trusting the Lord?

Would that be a fair statement? So here's what I would say and then I might punt if it doesn't hit the bill enough.

[39 : 41] I think there's examples in nature of things at store, right? If you've ever had a squirrel that digs, finds stuff and puts stuff in the ground. Sometimes it forgets where it puts it, but, like, you do see some examples of that, but I've never seen a squirrel...

Okay, I kind of have, but I don't think nature takes, like, a massive amount. Like, I've never seen a squirrel take an entire loaf of bread and, like, try to bury it in the ground or something.

So there's something, there might be something to draw from that. You know, again, it's a hard issue, right? Like, if all you're doing is not spending any money so you can save all your money, I think that's the equivalent of spending all your money now on something, right?

It's like, my security's not complete unless I have a... I don't know what the number is. My financial planner's number for retirement, so I have to hit that number or else, and you're not giving your, like, super...

I mean, I think that could be a comparable comparison. I don't know, Nick or Greg, if you have more wisdom and more thoughts to share on that. I'll go with no, but, yeah, I think that's a good question.

[40 : 53] Yeah, I think there's a certain amount of you think of this often seems to be the more moralistic sometimes, and I'm wondering if you took this message, how would you pull out the gospel, how many that can be chasing to, like, that ultimately all your efforts are rags, and that all that you ever did, you could never earn in favor necessarily to...

Yeah. No, no, no, I think it's fair. So the question basically is, if you look, some people would say the Sermon on the Mount is, like, the greatest moral teaching and applies everywhere, and here it's, you know, how do you see the gospel in light of this part, particularly the Sermon on the Mount?

Now, you know, I would say, I would say two things to that. One, Jesus here, and actually what Antoine talked about last week in the Lord's Prayer, like, we're taught that God is our dependence, right?

He is our provider, and in some sense, the work that we do, let's say, so I'm an engineer, right?

If I want to work and work and work and work and work and work and work, part of that is so I save myself, right? Part of that is so I make myself secure, and I think God's saying, look, you already are secure.

[42 : 15] In me, you're secure. I will provide for your needs. So I think in one way, that's it. The, kind of the second thing I would say is that it's related maybe, but we, we tend to think, again, that we've got to come all together.

Like, I've got to come with enough money, enough time. You know, I've got to balance, like, I don't know, balance money or balance affection for those things and the Lord and Jesus says no.

Like, it's, it's either me, well, it's me plus nothing or, or, or not anything. So that, that might be a little bit loose, but that would be my answer to that, that question.

we've got time for one more. Yeah, turn around. How do you have this, this, this passage to build inside of, like, you have absolutely nothing?

You know, like, your home, you know, stuff. Yeah, that was a, that was a good question. Everyone said, what do you do with, what do you do with this passage if you've got nothing?

[43 : 26] Right? If you've got no dollars, no cents, nothing to your name. So I think the same, so as I said at the beginning, kind of in the intro, it's, Jesus is not concerned with the dollar amount, right?

To, to the rich young ruler, he will say, get rid of everything because that guy loves his money. Like, that's his thing. That's what he desires above all else. But, but outside of that, Jesus is, his warnings, his warnings about money are everywhere.

But they're generally not like, hey, if you're, if you're rich, it's more difficult because the, having money can sometimes just do this thing with your heart. Not good things, right? But the question's not, do you have money?

It's what do you desire? Right? And so again, I think for most of us, the means of God's provision for us is probably our jobs, right?

That's, that's, that might be the case. In your questions, I think it's, if we don't have a job, God's provision comes in other ways. It's going to differ.

[44 : 31] And even though, for those who have a job, right, provision is going to be different from time to time. So I'd say it's really, it's a question of the affections, not a question of, you know, how much is in your wallet. All right, Nick.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.