



Legacy (Part 2) – The Legacy of Our Hearts

Pastor Jerry Gillis – January 15, 2017

So every year around the new year I find myself in a similar place of disappointment, and let me explain why. So you always get these tributes to celebrities who have died during the previous year at the end of the year or at the beginning of the next year, either way. And on a rare occasion after they're gone you find some things out about their life that are really incredible, that you're like, wow, I didn't know that, that's so cool, you know to have found that out. But in a lot of the cases, after they're gone then all of a sudden there are some articles or there are some writings or whatever on some things about their life that I really would have rather not known. That ever happen to you and you kind, you get disappointed and you're thinking ahh, how was I fooled, I mean, ahh.

Well, the reason that you were fooled is because of something called image management. That's people who are employed to actually conform the narrative of what these public personalities or celebrities are like. I'm not talking about all of them, but some of them. And so you are led to believe certain things from a public persona that aren't actually really true in their private lives and so sometimes after the fact you get to hear about that.

The reason you don't hear about it during is because people that are managing these celebrities make money off of that narrative. They're making money on the good public kind of display of these particular celebrities, but sometimes we just get let down because we realize oh, they were just fronting an image, but it wasn't really true about who they really were.

Now this doesn't just happen with celebrities, by the way, it happens in the life of you know, kind of everyday people like me and you. It happens to us too. We've all heard the story or maybe know of actual stories which I have heard reported on where people maybe in a community, lose someone in their community who was seemingly a fine upstanding, wonderful person, only to find out after they're gone that they were embezzling significant amounts of money from their workplace. Or that they were way, way, way down in the hole of a gambling debt. Or that they had another family in another town that no one actually knew about. It's bad because at that point you kind of think that their legacy is different than what it actually is, and you find that out kind of after the fact.

The bottom line is that we sometimes forget something that I want to be very clear to us today and it's this. It's that you can't fool God with your legacy because He knows your heart. You can't fool him. So like whatever it is that we think that we're doing or image we're portraying or whatever we're fronting, we can't fool God. He already knows all these things. He knows everything about us. He knows and He sees our heart.

You know, the worst kind of this kind of legacy that is disappointing is when it happens with so-called religious people, people who know the lingo, and who know the phrases and who make you think certain things about how spiritual they are or how they do what they do but then you come to find out that you're really let down because they weren't what they seemed. That's the worst kind, right? It's one thing if it's somebody you don't know or whatever, but it's a different thing when somebody claims to be something and then they're just not that. Nobody's expecting perfection from anybody, so I'm not talking about some weird standard that no one can attain, I'm not talking about that. But where you just go, wow, had no idea, this is kind of crazy.

Well, Jesus actually spoke to the religious leaders of His day, because in some ways the religious leaders of His day were just like that. They were built on kind of leaving a public image for everyone of how spiritual they were, how long they prayed, the words that they used, how much they knew, all of those kinds of things. But Jesus could see past all of that. And at the end of Luke chapter 16, Jesus makes a statement to some of these people called the Pharisees, there were a number of kind of religious leaders in that time, the Sadducees were a part of that as well, the Essenes kept to themselves because they lived out in the desert and, you know, ate roaches and whatever else they ate, you know out there, I don't know what was out there. I don't know what their options were but they were out there, and so they didn't really mess with anybody but the Pharisees were kind of known as the standard.

And Jesus in Luke chapter 16, toward the end of a teaching that He does, He says this to them. He says: "The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all of this and they were sneering at Jesus. And Jesus said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but God knows your hearts. What people value highly is detestable in God's sight."

You see, one of the things that I find out and know about Jesus when I read the gospels is that Jesus is constantly concerned about the heart. About the actions and activities of our heart. I'm not just talking about the thing that beats and pushes blood out, I'm talking about what makes us up inside. Who we really are. Jesus is concerned about who we really are. And He constantly is teaching along that line and here, actually when He's talking to the religious leaders it's actually no different all. And Jesus is so concerned about our hearts that He's also concerned about the things that can lead our hearts astray. In this case, for them, it was money. That's what He says to them point blank. The Pharisees who loved money ended up sneering at Jesus when He taught about something.

That word sneer is an interesting word by the way. In the original language it means to throw your head back and look down your nose at someone. They did that to Jesus. I do not want that to be on my record. This is on their record, right? They sneered at Jesus. And Jesus said you justify yourself in the sight of people but look, God knows your heart. He knows your heart.

And so Jesus is concerned about our hearts, and here's why. Because He knows that the legacy we leave is going to be built on what our heart longs

for. That's the actual legacy that we're going to leave. It's going to be built on whatever it is our heart longs for, that's what our legacy is going to be. And Jesus wants to make sure that our hearts are positioned for God and for eternity.

Now, the truth is you can't actually talk about the idea of legacy like we're doing in this series, you can't talk about it without actually talking about what Jesus talked about here. Money, stuff, possessions. Do you know when you look up the word legacy in the dictionary, like the Merriam Webster Dictionary, the first entry in terms of definition is one about money. It's the bequeathing of property or money to those that come behind you. Like an inheritance of some kind, right? That's actually the first definition. The second definition is more about you know, kind of the lingering story that we leave behind, which is what we think of often when we think of legacy. But that's not the first kind of defining aspect of the word.

And it's not surprising that we run into Jesus teaching on this in the gospel of Luke, because two-thirds of the chapters that are in the gospel of Luke have to do with Jesus talking about possessions and money. Here's why. Because His concern is the heart. And He knows the things that bring our hearts to places that are not healthy for us and that do not bear witness to eternity. And so, Jesus is teaching His disciples in this chapter, but He knows that the Pharisees are listening. Jesus is smart like that. He knows that they're paying attention, but He's going to teach His disciples with a view toward applying this to the Pharisees. And here's how He starts His

teaching, He starts His teaching with a story like He often does and listen to the story.

Beginning in Luke chapter 16 verse number 1, "Jesus told His disciples: "There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. So he called him in and he asked him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.' "The manager said to himself, 'What shall I do now? My master is talking away my job. I'm not strong enough to dig and I'm ashamed to beg--I know what I'll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.' "So, he called in each one of his master's debtors. And he asked the first one, 'How much do you owe my master:' "Nine hundred gallons of Olive oil,' he replied. "The manager told him, 'Take your bill sit down quickly and make it four hundred and fifty.' Then he cut it in half. "Then he asked the second, 'And how much do you owe?' "'A thousand bushels of wheat,' he replied. "He told him, 'Take your bill and make it eight hundred.' He knocked it off by 20% or whatever he did. And then "The master commended the dishonest manager because he acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light."

This is a super-interesting story if you ask me. It's one that sometimes we don't pay that much attention to or we don't understand very well, because we think okay, I'm sort of confused that what's going on in the story. Well, it starts off this way, there was a rich man, that's how the story begins. And this rich man had people that worked for him, one of which was a manager of his possessions, somebody who is basically his CFO, who

is taking care of all the stuff, right? But he came to find out this manager that was working for him was dishonest. He wasn't caring for this. I don't know if he was skimming off the top, if he was completely ripping off other people, if he was ripping off you know, the rich man, I have no idea. What I find out about in this particular story is that it seems like both the rich man and the manager both really like money a lot. Sometimes we read the parables of Jesus and we force them into being somethings that maybe they're not. So we always try and look for, oh, this must be talking about Jesus or this must be talking about God, you know and we kind of look at it that way. I think in this story these two people neither of which represent Jesus in any way are actually two people who like money a whole lot. Rich man and a manager. The manager is dishonest.

And then the rich man calls him in and he says hey, look. You're going to have to give an account for all of this, I want to know what has happened here. And by the way, you're fired! I'm cutting you loose. But I still want you to still give an account for what you've done but I am cutting you loose. So the guy goes away thinking to himself okay, I've got to give an account for this but at the same time, I'm fired. And I'm going to be out of a job and now I'm probably going to be out of my house because I can't afford to live there, so what am I going to do? And he says to himself I'm too wimpy to dig, that's literally what he says to himself. That's Greek, okay. He says I'm not strong enough to dig and he says I'm too proud to beg. Unlike the Temptations who ain't too proud to beg. And he says, I can't do either one of those, so what am I going to do?

So he uses his noggin. He gets smart. He gets shrewd. And he calls together all the people that owe his boss money. And he gets together a couple of them and he says how much do you owe my boss? By the way, knowing that they don't know that he's fired yet. He's good with that, right? He's leveraging that. They don't know he's fired. So he's representing the boss. Hey, how much do you owe my boss? I owe your boss whatever he says, you know, nine hundred gallons of olive oil. He said, okay. Why don't you take your bill on my authority and change it and make it four hundred and fifty. Fifty percent off. The guy's like you are the man. You're the man, like the really, you're the man. I know, I know. Now you, how much do you owe my boss? And he says a thousand bushels of wheat. And he says change it and make it eight hundred. My guess is the guy probably goes, wait a minute. He got fifty percent off, yeah but I don't like you that much. I don't know what he did, right? I have no idea, right? But he gave him a discount.

Why did he do that? Because he knew that when he got fired and he was kicked out of whatever dwelling place he was in, that he had done something for these guys on the boss' authority, even though the boss didn't know and that now they were obligated to him so that he would have a place to stay. They wouldn't have any choice. He'd come knocking on their door. Hey, my boss fired me, remember what I did for you? Can I stay with you, and they'd be like yeah, you gave me fifty percent off. The other guy'd be like he gave me twenty percent off, I don't know man, maybe a sleeping bag or a night or something, you know. Right, but he was basically organizing this.

Now here's what is interesting about the story. The rich man finds out about what the manager did. And do you know what he does? Commends him! What? Do you know why? Because the rich man, he saw himself in this guy. This is probably a tip of the cap from the rich man to the manager saying 'pretty shrewd'. If I were in your same place, I would have done the same thing. Gives him a tip of the cap, end of story.

And then Jesus says, "the people of this world, they're more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than the people of light are." In other words, this guy in this story worked harder and smarter to figure out things that are temporary for his provision than the people of God do when it comes to thinking about eternal destiny. Whew, now that is an impactful story.

And then what Jesus does is He kind of sets it up in some contrast in the text itself, because after He tells them the story, He starts unpacking it with a series of contrasts trying to get at people's hearts. He's talking to His disciples to help them learn what to be able to look for and how to be able to grasp onto truth that's actually going to lead their hearts to God, and He knows the Pharisees are listening, and He knows how much they love stuff and money and possession and power and all of those kinds of things, so He's talking with everybody in mind. And it's almost as if Jesus is saying "What does your heart long for? This or this. This or this. This or this." Now Jesus doesn't actually ask the question what do your hearts long for, but implied in that because of how He finishes with the Pharisees He's trying to get at heart issues.

And so I want to ask the question of the text. What do our hearts long for? And I want to show you the contrast of choices that Jesus gives us in the text itself. Here's the first one. What do your hearts long for? Temporary lodging or eternal dwellings? It's a question you have to answer. It's a question that He posed to His disciples.

In fact, I want you to look in verse number nine Jesus says "I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings." You're going okay, I don't know what that means. It is kind of a curious phrase, isn't it? But Jesus is actually posing it as a contrast. Remember He told the story the manager ended up working himself up and thinking through this posture that would get him and secure him temporary dwellings. He did it in a manipulative way, you know, he was shrewd about it. And he figured out a way to get people obligated to him so that they would have to welcome him in. And here's what Jesus says. That's what the people of the world do, but the people of light should actually make friends using their resources so that they will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

What's he talking about there? Well, let me see if I can give you another picture to help explain it, because this story in Luke chapter 16 that we just read about the rich man and the manager is not the only story in Luke chapter 16. There's another one. And that story also begins the same way. Our story begins there was a rich man, there's another story in Luke 16 that also begins there was a rich man. I want you to see the story, just a few verses further, it begins in verse number 19. It says, "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day.

And at his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longed to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.' "But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.' The rich man answered "Then I beg you father, send Lazarus to my family for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.' But Abraham replied: "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.' "No father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' "Then he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead."

Now there's a lot to say about this story that I'm not going to say, but let me just leave it at this. Lazarus the beggar dies, and the rich man in the story dies. They both are in this place where across a chasm they can see one another. The rich man calls out, he sees Abraham and he sees Lazarus standing by Abraham and the rich man calls out "Abraham, send my buddy

Lazarus over." And Abraham says, "Your friend Lazarus? You mean the one who was by your gate all of your life begging, with sores that you never paid attention to and that you ignored and didn't help at all? You mean him? And I imagine the rich man is just standing there going uh oh, because what he was hoping for? Listen to this, he was hoping for a friend in Lazarus who could testify on his behalf but he had done nothing with his worldly wealth to gain friends from an eternal perspective.

Now what does that mean for us? Here's what it means. Jesus is trying to help us understand that what He wants us to do is He wants us to take our stuff, our possessions, our money, our worldly wealth and He wants us to do His work with it. He wants us to enhance the Kingdom with it. Because in so doing, there may very well be a welcoming committee when you enter into your eternal dwellings.

Think about it this way. For those that get involved in the ministry of the Chapel and who invest in the ministry of the Chapel like I've been doing for the nearly fifteen years that I've been here in giving financial resources to this ministry, our church has planted or partnered to plant about twenty-five churches. I wonder, everyone of those churches that has reached out and shared the gospel and seen people come to know Christ and fed and clothed and helped, I wonder. For those of us who have participated, if one day, in eternity we may have a welcoming committee from some of the people that those churches that we invest in have reached for the glory of God. And they may be saying thank you, and you're like thank me for what? Oh, I'm from here and I got reached by this church that you helped to plant so that I could hear the gospel, and here I am to say 'thank you'.

Or what about the places in the world that we're involved in, whether that's the Dominican Republic or Haiti or Sierra Leone. Bringing fresh water and education and church plants and hospitals and medical care and all of those kinds of things. What about the people that have been touched by the gospel and have been touched by our investment in all of those things? Could it be that someday we may be welcomed in to our eternal dwellings because we have some friends, because we have made investment in things eternal and not just thought about consuming it all on the temporary.

Or about our investment through the ministry of the Chapel, in our Kingdom Come partnerships and all of those partners that we have. What about all the people that they touch? What about the ministries of the Chapel that we fund through our church? Whether that's to children or to students or to adults or senior adults or singles or whomever. And you may not even know who's being reach and how they were reached but you've been a part of it.

You see, when we start thinking about things eternal, that's when Jesus starts saying our hearts are now getting positioned in the right place. Because what do our hearts long for? Temporary lodging or eternal dwellings.

There's a second thing. I think Jesus would help us to see the contrast of what do we long for? False riches or true riches? Listen to how Jesus says it in verse number 10 and following. Jesus says: "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest

with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?"

You see, here's what Jesus is doing. Jesus is actually contrasting the manager in the story that He told, and He's saying, this manager was not trustworthy. And he wasn't trustworthy in little and he couldn't be trusted with much. But do you know what Jesus then goes on to teach us? That the little He's referring to is worldly wealth. He actually calls it "a little thing". He says "If you've not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth who will trust you with true riches?" In other words, worldly wealth, this is a little thing. And this is actually kind of gives us a reminder that these are false riches, because He's contrasting it with true riches.

Now if I could help us see something, we spend a lot of our time in our lives figuring out how much of false riches we want to keep and how much of our false riches we might be willing to part with. Let's just pretend for a second that I had a whole stack of pirates' booty. I just like saying that. Let's just say, let's just say I had a whole stack right here, right, of treasure, of real live pirate treasure. You know, from good pirates, not bad ones. We've got a huge stack right here. And over here, we have a really huge stack of plastic treasure that we got at Target. How much sense do you think it would make for me to be spending all of my time figuring out how much of this plastic treasure I want to keep for myself, and how much of this I might be willing to give to some friends, when I've got actual treasure right here. People would think are you smoking crayons. What is

happening in your life? Why are you doing that? It would be like having a stack and stack and stacks of Benjamins over here that are legit from the mint, from the Treasury and over here we have Monopoly money. And we spend all of our time over here thinking how much I'm gonna keep. Look at all.. I got money. Just packing it in, right?

At the end of the day, ladies and gentlemen, Jesus is trying to help us understand something. That worldly wealth, he calls a little thing. It's insignificant. It is not a big deal. It is a little thing. And it's actually false in terms of helping you understand what riches are. He says, that's not it. None of that is going with you anywhere. But there are true riches that can be found when we understand what this is, and we understand how to use it for eternity, we actually find ourselves with true riches.

You see, the reason that Jesus is pointing our minds to what are true riches, is because he's pointing our heart to what's eternal. And Jesus knows what's eternal and what's true because he's from eternity. This isn't something, he's just going, ah, I think this would be a neat teaching. No, Jesus is from eternity, and here's what he knows. He knows what are false riches and what are true riches, and Jesus himself regarded money and stuff and possessions as very insignificant and needing to be leveraged for the sake of the Kingdom, because he understood there were bigger things - true riches.

And that's what he wants for our hearts. The reason that Jesus is teaching us on money so often, particularly in the Gospel of Luke, is because he

doesn't want our hearts to be led astray by things that take them astray. He wants us to realize true riches.

Now what are true riches? I'm not sure one hundred percent. But I'm interested in finding out. But there are a few things I could offer to you.

Treasures in heaven would be one. I don't really fully know what that means when Jesus says that. I don't one hundred percent know what that means. I'm gonna go ahead and tell you. Whenever Jesus is talking about things eternal, there are some things that we just kind of go, I don't know. I'm not one hundred percent sure.

But here's what I know he said. In the sermon on the mount, Jesus said this. Matthew 6. "Don't store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal."

In other words, he's saying, you've got a choice. You can store up for yourselves all of this Monopoly money, and it's going to corrode. Or, you can invest in eternity. And nothing can touch that! And in fact, Jesus says this, he says, don't store up for YOURSELVES treasures on earth, but store up for YOURSELVES treasures in heaven. What? Store up for myself treasures in heaven?

You see, some of us, because we've not understood how to steward, things that are so insignificant like money. We don't know how to use it for the Kingdom purpose. We don't think about eternity with it, but instead we

consume it all. Some of us, if we have put our faith in Jesus, but we've really, really been disobedient in that area of our life, may end up arriving on the other side of eternity, saying where's my big pad, Jesus? And Jesus says, well, I could only work with what you sent ahead as building materials. Here's your sleeping bag.

You see, we've got it all wrong in our heads. Jesus wants to reorient our hearts so that we understand this. He wants something for us - treasures in heaven. True riches.

There's probably some other things that we could put in that true riches bucket, like contentment. Also a true rich. In fact, when Paul was teaching Timothy about this, here's what he said. In 1st Timothy 6, he said, "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs."

Why? Because they think that in the consumption of all of these things, that their satisfaction can be met, and they still find themselves empty. And they're pierced through with many griefs as a result of it, instead of understanding the true riches of contentment in Jesus and what he's provided in using it for eternal purposes.

You know another rich is our eternal reward. I don't even fully understand what all of this means, but I'm interested in finding out. But I do know this. Even people like Moses in the Old Testament had their eye beyond just the now.

In fact, the writer of Hebrews tells us when he starts talking about faith in Hebrews chapter 11, he tells us about Moses. And he gives us this beautiful description that I kind of latched on to. Listen to what he says in Hebrews 11. "By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt." Why? "...because he was looking ahead to his reward." Moses understood having an eye on God, and an eye on eternity being of significantly greater value than all the treasures that Egypt could afford him. That's true riches.

There may be one other. Ownership. That's another one of the true riches. Let me see if I can explain this to you. It's going to take a little Bible jiu-jitsu for you to pick this up. But let me see if I can explain it.

Notice what Jesus said in that last portion of verse 12 in Luke chapter 16. He says, after saying, you can't handle worldly wealth, who's going to trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who's gonna give you property of your own?

Now, obviously he's talking about the manager, right? The manager couldn't be trusted with the rich man's property in the story, right? But

he's also making application to us. If we can't be trusted with someone else's property..

Let me pause. Everything's God's. The Bible is clear about that, right? Everything is God's. Everything we have He has given to us. Some people like to you know, curl up when I say that. Why do you say that? I worked hard for this. I'm a self-made man or self-made woman. There are no self-made human beings. Just as a heads up. Ask your mom. I'm just saying. There's no self-made human beings. If you've been able to do real well, you say well it's because I put my nose to the grindstone, and I used my mind to do it. Where did you get that mind? Where did you get that energy? Where did you get that health to be able to do it? Everything, directly or indirectly, it's coming from the hand of the Father, who has graced you in that existence, so that you have the power, the Scripture says, to be able to do some of these things. Everything's His.

But do you know what the Scripture also teaches us? Paul teaches us that when we put our faith and trust in Jesus, not only Paul, but others. When we put our faith and trust in Jesus, something extraordinary happens for us. Listen to how he says it in Romans chapter 8. For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship (or daughtership). And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Listen to this. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Alright? Stay here with me for just a second. If we are heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, what does that mean? Well, we know that the Psalmist tells us that God owns it all, right? Psalm 24 says very clearly, the earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world and all who live in it. Think that covers everything, right? It's all God's.

And do you know what, in Psalm chapter 2, when the Psalmist by the Spirit kind of gives us a Messianic psalm where the Father talks to the Son?

Listen to what it says in Psalm chapter 2. I will proclaim the Lord's decree: He said to me, "You are my son; today I have become your father. Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.

Listen very carefully. God owns everything. It's all His. Everything is His. Jesus, because of what he has done, as the faithful Son of God, the Messiah, is the inheritor of all that God has given to him. All of the nations is all of his inheritance. All of the world is all of his inheritance. And when we put our faith in Jesus, the Bible says that just as Jesus is an heir to everything that is God's, that we are joint heirs with Jesus. Which means, we move from being just managers to inheritors.

See, ladies and gentlemen, our stewardship in the now is preparing us for ownership later. But if we can't be trusted with property that's not even our own, how will we ever be entrusted with property that is?

Jesus is brilliant. Smartest human being to ever walk the face of the earth. Son of God, Son of Man. Brilliant. And he's teaching us truly how to live and how to experience the true riches.

But there's one last contrast I want to give to you. And it's this. Does your heart long for Master Money or Master God? Which one? What does your heart long for? Master Money or Master God?

Listen to how Jesus phrased it. Verse number 13. He said, "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

You see, here's what Jesus is making sure of. He's getting to the big picture, big heart of the issue. Because anytime we long for stuff over the Savior, it's called idolatry. It's when we make other things, and put them in the place of God. We are idolaters when that happens. And Jesus wants us to get at the heart issue of our lives, because he does not want us to fall prey to that kind of idolatry which leads us into brokenness and nothingness and emptiness, but instead wants us to understand who he is and how good he is.

Money makes a terrible master. God is a wonderfully gracious master. But we have to choose which one we serve. Now, for some of you, you're going, how do I really know that, Jerry? If you're being honest. Some of you don't want to. You're kind of trying to, trying to put like a shield up in your mental kind of. You've just got a mental shield right now. I just want this to end, please be done, I don't want to leave cause you'll embarrass me, but I just want this to be over. Because that's what the Spirit does sometimes. The Spirit just kind of pierces through to our hearts and starts showing us

things. This isn't about me. This is about what Jesus is saying. I just keep repeating to you what he said.

You see, for us, if we really want to know where our loyalty lies, is it to money, or it is to God? Then I would suggest to you if you ask this question, and you allow the Spirit of God to speak to you, you'll be able to determine where your heart is. It's not an easy thing to do, but you have to ask the right question to get the right answer. Here's the question I would ask you to submit your heart before the Holy Spirit. Simply this. Which one - money or God - am I willing to sacrifice for? Which one - money or God - am I willing to sacrifice for?

I'll be honest with you. I wish I knew more people who claim to know Jesus who were serious about sacrificing whatever it cost to follow him, because I do know a whole lot of people who claim to know Jesus that are willing to sacrifice the world to make more money. I wish it was the opposite.

Because Jesus wants us and our hearts to be fully his. He knows that whatever it is that we long for, that's what our legacy is going to be made of, because that's where our hearts find themselves.

And so after saying all of this to the disciples in the presence of the Pharisees, he looks into the Pharisees and says what I read to you earlier in verse 14. The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were [throwing their heads back and looking down their nose] at Jesus. And Jesus said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but God knows your hearts. What people value highly is detestable in God's sight.

So, where's your heart, because I want you and I both to put ourselves in a position to understand this truth - that you can't fool God with your legacy, because He sees your heart and He sees mine. We can't fool Him. It doesn't matter if we try to justify ourselves as semi-civil, semi-spiritual people. And we try to give that look to everybody around us. That doesn't matter. You can't fool God. You can't fool Him. He sees our hearts.

And by the way, you're saying, man that scares me. It's a good thing! Because He Himself is the only way of life! And for Him to call out in our lives places of darkness that bring death to us, is a good thing and a demonstration of His love toward us. Be grateful that God sees everything! Because it is for your good, and my good, because He has destined us to be shaped in the image of His son.

So what do you do if you're in a position where you go, you know what - I'm asking that question in my heart right now about all of this. And I feel like I've not really gotten this settled in my heart. What do I do? What do I do about that? Let me give you two quick things.

The first one is a simple Bible word that Jesus and the Apostle Paul, John, that they give to us. Repent. That's the first word. Repent. What does that mean, Jerry? It means that you're headed this direction, and you turn around, and you're headed this direction. That's what it means. It's a military term. Do an about face. You're headed one way, the wrong way, you turn around, you go the right way. Repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change of behavior.

That's why the Bible says... this isn't about just something that we do theoretically. Repent and do works that give evidence of repentance. In other words, you've got to take action. It's not just, hey I'm gonna say that in my head, and now I've done a religious exercise, and all's good. No, no, no. You have to actually say that, confess that, deal with that, and then say God, give me strength to act in a way consistent with that.

So how do you do that? How do you act? Well, you do what Jesus said? He's what he said in the sermon on the mount, after he said, don't store up treasures, don't store up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy, where thieves break in and steal, but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth, rust, vermin, they can't touch it. And where thieves can't break in and steal.

And then do you know what he says in the next verse? Verse 21 of Matthew 6. He says, for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Listen carefully to this. If you want to find your heart in the right place, lead your heart with your treasure. If you want to find your heart in the right place, then lead it with your treasure. Here's what Jesus said, listen to this. Where your treasure is, that's where your heart's going to go.

You see, our great treasure needs to be Jesus, and the things that Jesus is about. Things of eternity. Where your treasure is, there your heart is going to be. So if you've struggled, here's what you do. You put your treasure where you want your heart to go. Because where your treasure is, that's where your heart's going to be. Lead your heart with your stuff.

Now, you probably realized that we've done some things differently today in our worship flow. And you're going, Jerry, didn't you guys forget something? What was it that you forgot? What was that? I can't remember. The offering, right?

Now, listen carefully. God doesn't actually need your money. He's self-existent. He doesn't need anything at all. He can exist, and did from eternity past all by Himself with no need of anything else. God doesn't need any of this. But he wants your heart. And he knows, Jesus knows, what keeps our heart from him.

So, for some of you, maybe this is your opportunity to act as you've dealt with it in your heart. And I'm going to give you the opportunity today to take a first step. And you can make an investment in eternity.

Now, just in case you're confused, for anybody watching us on TV, on Mars, wherever you watch. Whatever. Just because you give to the church, the pastors and staff don't make more money. There's a bigger offering, you get a bigger cut. That's not how it goes. Nor do we want it to go that way.

I want something for you. I don't need anything from you. I want you to know the true riches of God. But we can't just make that theoretical, ladies and gentlemen. I've been entrusted with resources, and God has called me to invest those in eternal things, things that matter. Yes, you have to take care of your family, yes you have to take care of your responsibilities, yes you need to steward it all, because He owns it all. He doesn't just own the part that you give Him, He owns every bit of it! So you not only have to steward what you give, you have to steward what you keep!

But all of this, it's leveraged for eternity, because what we're looking for is the true riches. That's what we're looking for. So that, when we get into eternity, there will be people coming up to us saying, hey thanks! Who are you? Oh, I'm so-and-so, you had no idea that your resources were touching my life so that I could hear the Gospel of Jesus. You didn't care just about the temporary, you got involved in the eternal. You didn't care just about the false riches, and consuming them all in yourselves, but you got invested in the treasures in heaven. And you started understanding what the true riches really were.

You see, when we come to those places, ladies and gentlemen, things change. Because what we're doing right now, is we are stewards, managers. And our stewardship is preparation for ownership. This is an opportunity to see whether we are trustworthy managers.

So instead of us throwing our heads back and looking down our noses at this stupid manager in the story, we have to ask, am I him? Because when we do that, when we just look at him, and say how stupid he is, we fall in the same trap as the Pharisees were in. Justifying ourselves by someone else, even if they're not real and just made up in a story. Justifying ourselves instead of saying God knows my legacy because He sees my heart. And He wants all of me, because He wants to give me true riches.

Man, I think one of the great needs that we have in western church, in the United States, in Canada, is that we have not lifted our eyes high enough to eternity to realize what's actually real. What's forever, and what's just temporary. But that idol, those false riches, man they grab on us hard. They

put their talons in our hearts. And do you know the only way, there is only one remedy for taking the talons out of our hearts. Generosity. Letting our treasure leads our hearts, because we say Jesus matters. And we love him about all things.

So, you can make an investment on your way out for the sake of the Kingdom. For those of you who are new, maybe you're a guest, we're not looking for anything from you, you can do whatever you want. I want you to understand something. I still told you the truth about what Jesus said. And He's life. And you want to learn to truly live? Do what He says. And even if you're a guest. I want you to know. You can walk out. Nobody's gonna track you down. We've not implanted something on your shoulder and we're gonna find you later. Nothing weird. You can walk right on out, no problem. Some people give online. That's great. Fantastic. Wonderful. Some of you are going to fake like you give online when you walk out. That's cool too. Hey, Jesus knows. He sees our hearts. It's His call.

Maybe you need some help. You're like, you know what? I want to do this Jerry, but I can't. I'm in a financial mess. I'm in a world wind. Stop by the Information Center. We've got some resources that maybe we could point you to. You can start looking at what God has said about all of these things, and maybe they'll be of help to you. You can contact our Stewardship Ministry, they'd love to walk you through some of that and help you. We want things for you, not just from you.

But if you're here, and you've never entrusted your life to Jesus, I hope that you'll do that, because he's the Way, the Truth and the Life. And the reason

that he talks to us about things like money or idolatry or any of these other things, is because he doesn't want things that are less than God to steal from us the life that we can truly have in Him.

So, thanks for listening. Would you bow your heads with me?

Before we're dismissed, if you're a guest of ours today and you came for the first time, I hope you'll come by outside in the atrium, there's some really bright orange tables out there, some super friendly people that would love to say hello to you. Give you something to take home as our guest today. We really appreciate you being here. And if you are a guest, man, this is what we do. We open the Bible and we teach it. We sing to a God we really love and we really believe, and we like to worship Him. That's who we are. It's what we do. And yes, we invest in things that matter, because we want to see men, women, boys and girls have a repeated opportunity to hear, to see, to respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That's what we do. So you picked a great day to be here.

Father, for those of us who are wrestling with what you've have us to do, I'd pray that your spirit would have sway over our hearts and lives. And that you would teach us what it means to think with an eternal perspective. Jesus, thank you for your teaching to your disciples, and for the correction you gave to the Pharisees. Because I know I've found myself playing both parts before, disciple, and having religious arrogance. Lord, I pray that my heart would be yours, and I pray our hearts would be yours, for Your glory. We trust you to lead us in the way that is life for Your glory

and for the sake of so many people that have yet to hear and to know and to see and to respond to the Gospel. We pray this in Jesus name, amen.

Hey, if you want to talk to somebody about what it means to have a relationship with Jesus, come on by the Fireside Room. Somebody will be in there for you, ok? God bless you, have a great week.