

Gospel Generosity 3 - The Story of a Poor Widow – Luke 21 :1-4 - 1 November 2015

For the past two weeks, we as a church have been touching on a very sensitive subject about giving. I think it's sensitive when it's always, whenever it's about money is always sensitive, but I also think it's particularly sensitive in the light of the City Harvest saga and if you are here with us for the first time, I know you may feel a little bit sensitive. I want to assure you, this is not what we talk about in our church, most of the time, we preach through the Scripture and even when we deal with this subject, it is going to be scriptural. But ever once in a while we do as a church need to be reminded of living generous lives because most importantly our God is a generous God. So this is our third and last sermon on gospel generosity. I like to begin this sermon by means of a little video clip, so please take a look.

Video plays:

When I was a younger Christian, I tend to think that giving is trying to gain God's merit. Over the years when I start learn that from a biblical perspective of giving, it is really part of the worship. Frees me up from a very wrong view of God. When I realized that worship is really knowing God and having God indwelling and satisfying my heart, then giving becomes a very natural process.

Through His Word, I learned that money is not the most important thing. I felt that I had joy. When you are tight fisted about money, this can be a form of idolatry, according to the Bible.

Money is never about money, money is never about money. Money is always about trust. Who do I trust, who do I trust more? Do I trust money, do I trust my ability to provide for myself? Or do I trust God?

A verse in 2Cor 8:7 is very apt for us because it also says that we need to see that we excel in the grace of giving.

When I give, I am not actually giving my money. It is not my money. It is God's money. God chose, for his purposes to put some of that money to me. He gave some of that money to me to see what I will do with it. So what am I going to do with God's money ? Am I going to take God's money and say, It is mine, you can't have any. Of course not, it is God's money.

When you start to give and you realise that God never fails to take care of you. So once you are in to that process, you realise as you gains steps of confidence and trust in God, He never fails to take care of you, of your needs, not of my wants.

That's the sharing from of some of our brethren here, very simple but very biblical view points. Today in gospel generosity sermon three, we continue to look at the grace of giving.

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We began this series 2 weeks ago, when we look at the life of Zacchaeus, a tax collector who grabs money, but after a radical life-changing encounter with Jesus Christ, he became very generous and he was an extravagant giver because he has tasted the extravagant love of God in Jesus Christ, that was the story of a little man, a short man Zacchaeus. Then last week we looked at the story of a wicked man, Jesus gave us a masterful story to give us a lesson on wisdom. Wisdom is the ability to use our wealth to advance the Gospel to prepare for eternity, that is a wise man.

Today, guess what the title, the story of a little woman, no, no, no, none of that. Today we are going to look at a story of a poor widow. So got to be a little bit balanced. We will go to a lady's perspective. But this lady is a very well-known lady. I think she's probably the most well known giver in the entire New Testament. The text before us interestingly all three stories are from the book of Luke, is given to us, in Luke chapter 21.

Jesus looked up and saw the rich
putting their gifts into the offering box,
and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins.
And he said, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow
has put in more than all of them.
For they all contributed out of their abundance,
but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

(Luke 21:1-4 ESV)

Jesus looked up and saw a, saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins and he said, truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them, for they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.

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So we are introduced straight away into or to our main character, the poor widow. The word poor is not strong enough, in the Greek, it is a word that means to be bankrupt, to be destitute, to be very, very, very, very, very poor. That's what it is, she's a destitute lady. Not only that, she has lost her husband. She is a widow and in those days, women are very dependent on men for livelihood and survival. So you've a picture of someone who is destitute and defenseless and desperate. So picture her, gaunt, thin, tattered clothes, dirty, miserable, hair messy, probably, no time to take care of all these peripheral stuff. But this lady in the midst of all the rich men, would come to the courts of the temple and puts in two small copper coins.

How much is that, you say? The Greek word is the word leptar, which literally means a scale or a flake or skin or peel, you get the idea. The idea here is that the coins are very, very thin. It's a very cheap kind of a denominator in their currency then. Exactly how much is it worth, you say. Well, the scholars tell us, each leptar is one out of 64 of a average man's daily wage. OK your mind must says wah lau 1 64 how does that how does that work. Well, suppose a man, earns \$60 a day right, \$60 a day. A leptar will be about one dollar, 1 out of 64 of a average salary, day's salary. So this widow gave two leptar, that is about two dollars. That's all she had, that's her entire fortune. Now that's not a lot of money of course to most people.

And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box.

And he called his disciples to him and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box.

(Mark 12:41,43 ESV)

But this giving is extraordinary, because the Bible tells us Jesus watched the people and he watched her give, and after seeing what she did, he called the disciples to him and said to them, look at this poor widow, there's something remarkable about her. Look at the rich and then look at her. And I think there are precious lessons to learn about giving, about generosity from this poor widow. Let me boil them down to three points for you today.

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1. Giving is a Matter of Faith

Number one, I think this lady teaches me and should teach all of us that giving is a matter of faith.

When you give to God, you've got to give in faith. See, for most of us, this is how we give, I at least this is how I used to give or I hope used to. And it is this, probably start with a mental calculation. How much do I get and how much do I need, for life right, so I'll workout housing loan, car loan, food, children's education, enrichment class, future university fees, factor in clothes, factor in retirement savings, insurance, now you got to be thorough because you don't want to be caught off guard right. So you write out all the expenditure you need in your life, you look at all the income you have, so income minus expenditure, you have a certain some left over. From this leftover, I say now, God, I can give to you. It's time I have all my needs taken care of, this is for you.

So when I have extra, when I am comfortable, then I am ready to give to God. This lady, however, gave in a very different way. I don't think she has anything figured out about tomorrow, she has nothing left. It's not going to be easy, it's uncomfortable for her, but she says, I'll give to God first.

When I read about this lady, I am reminded of another lady. She lived a long time ago. She lived in the city where it was having a drought and famine for a long three years. So she exhausted all her resources, I mean, she's down to her last meal, three years of famine, she's a widow as well. She has lost her husband. She has a son to take care of and both herself and her son, desperate state one meal and here comes along a preacher. Comes to her house and says to her ma'am, whatever you have left, feed me first, the widow says, but Sir, if I give you this food I have nothing left. In fact, my son and I we were saying this will be our last meal, and after this, we will die. No, you give it to me first. But, but how can I, give it to me first. God will provide.

Amazingly, no plans, no idea how, this lady gave of her last meal to the preacher. What's his name. Elijah, this story is given to us in 1Kings 17, 1Kings chapter 17, the widow of Zarephath. She had not anything figured out, but she gave in faith and God supplied all her needs, subsequently. Now, I'm not sure, this lady, this widow in Luke 21, she might have heard and remembered the story of her forefathers, of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath, but I think she like that widow also gave out of faith.

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Hey, Pastor, are you saying it's wrong for me to plan, I mean, is it wrong for me to look at my income, my expenses and make some plans or is it wrong for me to make

sure I've all that I, I need to provide for my family, for our future. No, I'm not saying it is wrong for you to plan, but you must plan with faith. You say how, if I plan and everything is so nicely taken care of, then where is faith or if I should have faith, how can I plan. How do you solve this, how do you plan with faith and have faith with plan, how do you do that, I like to give you some 10 seconds to think, how would you do that. How do you make sure you're not reckless and negligent in your finances, in your giving and still live a life of faith, how I believe Jesus gives me a very good principle, that brings both plan and faith together and it is this.

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,
and all these things will be added to you.

(Matthew 6:33 ESV)

He said, Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added to you. What's the key word there, wah, so smart all of you, how come you know, the key word is the word "first". Nothing wrong to plan but where is God in your plan.

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So often, He's at the very last. We make sure we have everything work out then, God here you are. That's not faith, you plan, but that's not faith. There are some people who say ooh all I need to do is give God and you don't plan for anything for your family, that's wrong. So plan, but make sure you seek first the Kingdom of God.

If I may say, where does your first cut go to, yourself or to the advancement of God's Kingdom and His Righteousness. Now this is not new, you know, because in Proverbs this is same thing,

Honor the LORD with your wealth
and with the firstfruits of all your produce;
then your barns will be filled with plenty,
and your vats will be bursting with wine.

(Proverbs 3:9-10 ESV)

Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of your produce. The firstfruits is the first crop, the best. Usually the first produce is the sweetest and actually, the firstfruits is very risky in a sense, when you give your firstfruits, you give

it away, but how are you to know the subsequent ones will come, maybe there's a flood, maybe there is a typhoon and it may be all gone and you've nothing left for your family, but it doesn't matter, the Scripture says firstfruits, you honour the Lord. Principle of seeking first, priority. You see how do Singaporeans give, I tell you how Singaporeans give,

Honor the LORD with your wealth
and with the firstfruits of all your produce;
then your barns will be filled with plenty,
and your vats will be bursting with wine.

(Proverbs 3:9-10 ESV)

When your barns are, when your barns are filled with plenty, then you give your last fruits correct? You all don't dare to say anything is it? This is how we give, this is how we look at financial stewardship. Oh yah, I need to take, God gives me money, so that I can take care of my family and my needs. It's true, but let me ask you, who gets the first, only when I am full and abundant and plenty, then I give, there's no faith involved then. Your trust is in your money. Real giving is out of faith. Honour the Lord with your firstfruits, then your barns will be filled. Sequence is crucial in a verse like this.

Look at the Macedonian church, they were able to give generously

for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy
and their extreme poverty have overflowed
in a wealth of generosity on their part.

(2 Corinthians 8:2 ESV)

and I mean this is, this is one of the best examples of giving, the whole church going through exceptionally difficult times, they were in extreme poverty, but they had a wealth of generosity. It doesn't make sense, you're so poor, you probably destitute, you don't have enough to live on, but they gave, they didn't make sure everything is comfortable, not not everything is easy, but they gave. I think it's because they believe that

for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy
and their extreme poverty have overflowed
in a wealth of generosity on their part.

And God is able to make all grace abound to you,
so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times,
you may abound in every good work.

(2 Corinthians 8:2, 9:8 ESV)

God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things, at all times, you may abound in every good work.

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They had faith in a God who is always ready to supply. They had faith in the God who is faithful and generous. So I would trust Him, firstfruits, God. What, what, what about my car, what about my children's education, what about my clothes, Honour the Lord, seek first the kingdom of God and all these things shall be added to you. You know that God is putting His Name at stake when He says these things? How slow we are to be willing to lay hold upon those promises.

So real giving is a matter of faith. Let me ask you, point blank, do you give in faith, or do you give in ease, do you give God first or you give God last. Firstfruits, last fruits. Do you ever have to step out of your comfort zone in your giving. Have you experienced God's faithfulness in a way that you could not have planned for? So my friends plan, please be wise, be accountable for stewardship, but at the very same time, put God first, because that is what faith is all about.

2. Giving is a Matter of Forfeiture

You know I could have ended the sermon right here. Giving is a matter of faith, but there's something more I see in this text and I see in this poor widow and that is secondly giving is a matter of forfeiture. Now the word forfeiture means sacrifice, to give up. Giving is a matter of sacrifice. Now I want to say this, giving does not always mean sacrifice, because there are many people who can give without having to give up anything. There is so much, they don't mind losing some. No sacrifice, no pain. But real giving is a matter of sacrifice.

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Look at this lady again. She puts into dollars. Not a lot, there are lots of rich men there, lots of Bill Gates and tycoons walking around and they put in a lot more, I am very sure. But the stunning assessment of Jesus is that this lady puts in more than all

of them, wow. Not that she is more than any one of them, but she's more than all of them added together, wah her \$2 so tua pai (colloquial for so big) \$2, so big ah, yes.

Jesus looked up and saw the rich
putting their gifts into the offering box,
and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins.
And he said, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow
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but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

(Luke 21:1-4 ESV)

Yes, because Jesus said they contributed out of their abundance, but she gave all she had to live on. You know what's the principle behind this. The principle is this, man looks at the amount of silver you give. Now you go to any hospital you go to any charity board, you go to any institution, they have the donors names right, Mister Ng Ah Kow, whatever hundred thousand dollars, where does his name go, right at the top. Mister Lim Ah Kow what does he gives, five dollars, where his name goes at the bottom. So it is ranked according to the amount of silver, very common. But God looks at the amount of sacrifice, that's the difference.

Let me give you a simple question. If A gives hundred dollars and B gives \$1 million, who gave more, B, B if you look at sentence number one,

Man looks at the amount of Silver

But if I were to tell you A had only hundred dollars, to begin with, and B \$1 billion to begin with, who gave more. You get that huh, huh, you see

Man looks at the amount of Silver

God looks at the amount of Sacrifice

In other words, the mathematics of giving, is not just the numerator. It's also the denominator. You know is that right? Fractions you know, one quarter, one by one out of four. So the numerator is important, but it is only as relevant has its denominator. We often look at the portion people give. But what is important to God is the proportion you give, the percentage, is not how much you give, it's how much sacrifice, there is.

George Mueller says, God assesses a man's giving not my how much he gave, but how much he leaves behind.

It's a very searching thought. So sacrifice, I learn from this lady,

The true measure of giving is sacrifice.

Not the amount sacrifice, how much it costs you, because sacrifice is a picture of the heart, do you see that. You know, the wife is always saying you don't love me one. How you know? You never sacrifice for me, we know love demands a sacrifice. Love leads to sacrifice and God is not looking at the amount, because He's not looking at your money. He's looking at your heart. If you give to IRAS, they don't care about how much you have right, they just want your money. I mean if your tax is \$10,000, they said they just want ten thousand don't care how much millions you have from elsewhere, just give me 10,000. But God is not IRAS. He doesn't need your money, therefore he looks at your heart. He looks at your sacrifice.w

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Real giving folks, demands pain, it will inconvenience you, real giving is going to call for some kind of a sacrifice. David understood that he said, I'm not going to give to God, anything that costs me nothing 2Samuel 24 . Let me give you an example, a pig and a chicken were walking along the streets and they saw a church that says breakfast prayer, available at this church, ham and eggs will be served. You heard this story before. The chicken became very excited, wah, ham and eggs, hey we can serve God, we can give ham and eggs and the pig say sure, for you it's a contribution, for me it's a sacrifice. (Loud laughter in the congregation) who really will give, the pig, because it cost him, koay neng(colloquial for egg), poop, poop poop, tomorrow it can poop again or how about this, another one. A lady found that she had a frozen turkey in her freezer, that has been kept there for the past 23 years. She called up the company and ask hey, do you think this turkey can still be cooked huh and be eaten. The operator says, I think so if it's been below 0° you should be able to eat it, but I think the quality will not be so good, the meat would have deteriorated and it will not be so tasty. Oh yah, yah, I agree with you. That's just what I thought, it is okay, I am going to give it to my church anyway. Isn't that how people think, let me ask you, how do you give today, what do you give today, do you give God your turkey, your eggs or your ham? Do you give God things you don't want any way or the church calls for aah donation drive for something, wah very good, all my rubbish can throw to church aah. Now sometimes we also want your rubbish, it's okay, but if that's all you give,

you have a problem, because you are only giving God your extreme leftovers, things you don't even want, goodness. Sometimes you give eggs it helps people, but it doesn't cost me anything. People are very impressed when I give my eggs, wah this person give a lot of eggs, but to you it's just eggs. There maybe a lady here, nobody knows, you give your ham, you give of yourself. True giving, is sacrifice

Sacrifice is the True Measure of Giving

So I want to ask you, how have you been giving to God? Easy, convenient, or does it really cost you, that you to adjust your life because of God. You can't buy that the Nissan GTR okay, okay, I mean you can't buy that sports car, for the ladies don't know what that was, you can't buy your sports car, now you got to but that lau pok chia (colloquial for old beaten up car), pop, pop, pop and your friends they laugh at that pop, pop, pop, pop, you can't stay at that, that new swanky, new bungalow but you got to stay in a one-room flat, you can't go on that holiday anymore to Europe and to Africa, you, you go to Batam, you can't afford that kind of a lifestyle where you eat out every night, but just got to have simpler meals. Has that kind of consideration, ever come into your stewardship? I think that sacrifice. When was the last time you ever have to make a choice like this. That shows the amount of consideration we have with regards to our worship. When was the last time you gather your kids and said son, dear, we are led of God to give for this, because that's what he wants us to do and we will have to give up on some things. I tell you what your children will respond, yeaah why like that. But when they grow up, they will realize something far deeper, my parents really believe God, they really love God and sacrifice is not an extraordinary thing. It is what we should be about. So many kids grow up with a take it for granted mentality, you know why, because we never learn what it means to be good stewards to sacrifice. It's going to cost you, but I think that's the only way you can give, I think biblically.

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Allow me to share with you, CS Lewis what he said. He says,

CS Lewis

I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. In other words, if our expenditure on comforts, luxuries, amusement, etc., is up to the standard common among those with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little.

If our giving does not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say it is too small. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot because our commitment to giving excludes them.

Well, this lady gave in an extraordinary way, not the amount of silver, but the amount of sacrifice. I think this is very encouraging because there's some of us who don't have much to give you, feel, you're a student, you don't earn much, you're beginning in your career, and you feel like maybe God will despise my giving or maybe people would despise my giving. No God looks at your fraction, your proportion, your percentage, your sacrifice and you're giving, it may be two mites, it maybe two dollars, but it's extremely precious to God because it shows a heart of love, that's what it's all about.

Well, giving is a matter of forfeiture.

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3. Giving is a Matter of Focus

Finally giving is a matter of focus. Now we must not know just how much we give or how to give, we must also know why we give. This is extremely important. In fact, if you know why you give, then the first two points are natural to you. So often we don't get this clear. People are very confused about why they give. There were three boys who were arguing amongst themselves, whose father is the greatest. So the first boy says my father is very great. He scribbles a few things on a piece of paper, calls it a song and people give him \$500 for it. The second boy says, my father is even better. He scribbles a few things on a piece of paper calls it the company brief and people give him \$5000 for it. The last boy says my father is the best, he scribbles a few things on a piece of paper, calls it a sermon and it takes 8 people to carry the money away.

People think that giving in church is giving to the pastor, or to the sermon or to the performance, way off, way off, giving is not for a show, or for a sermon of a pastor, no. Focus is very important. You see that, the passage that just precedes the story of the poor widow, is a condemnation against hypocrisy, against the wrong motives. Jesus is saying,

And in the hearing of all the people he said to his disciples,
“Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around
in long robes, and love greetings in the marketplaces

and the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation.”

(Luke 20:45-47 ESV)

Beware of the scribes, these religious leaders who will like to walk around in long robes, *kia lai, kia ker* (colloquial for walking here and there) you know, parade. It's to them is a whole show. It's like a parade, to to love to be seen in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, they love to be in the best seats in the synagogues honor at feasts, but they were actually devour widows houses and for a long, for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation. They were, hypocrites. In fact, if you look at Matthew six, how these religious leaders, these hypocrites give, is that when they come to the offering box. They make sure that they have a whole party that blows the trumpets, literally *pomp, pomp, pa, pomp pa*, Mister Richie Rich is going to give his money now, pay attention how much he gives. Jesus condemns that, they were not giving with the right focus, they were giving for themselves.

So, in the light of such condemnation against hypocrisy, in the very next verse, I see this is a parallel passage

And he called his disciples to him and said to them,
“Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box.

(Mark 12:43 ESV)

also same thing immediately before the widow's giving was this condemnation of hypocrisy and immediately after the condemnation of hypocrisy is the picture of true giving. I think this lady gave with a clear focus. She was not there for the attention of men. I mean, nobody is going to pay attention to her right, but she reminds me that giving is to God alone, no one else. Sure you can give via charities, outreaches, mission fields, local church, but please, don't shortchange yourself ultimately, you must understand and realize your giving to God.

Time stamp in audio 0:32:23.8.

Story is told of this girl who was walking by the street and saw within the windows, a beautiful doll, she loved it very much, but the parents are too poor to be able to afford that doll and so, week after week, month by month, she would walk by the window and just look at it with such yearning for it, months went by and finally, daddy saved enough money just to buy this doll for her. It was her birthday and the present was given to her, she was so excited about it, she says finally I got my favoritest doll I love her very much and she would carry this favoritest doll everywhere she goes. Now one Sunday, she was in church and she heard the pastor speak about the love of Jesus Christ, how God's Son, Jesus came to die on the cross gave up His life in order to give life to those who believe in Him and the pastor tells us, tells the church that it is in such generosity of God that we are to give our best to our Master.

The little girl heard the story, the preaching and was touched. So the very next Sunday when the offering plate are being passed, she took her doll and puts it on the offering plate, the people around chuckle and smiled and laugh, what are you doing, not understanding that this is her treasure. This is her favoritest doll, this is her worship. She got home and for the next few nights, she would cry to sleep, because she really misses her doll, but then she would remind yourself of Jesus and who He is and what He has done and she would be okay.

Well, one night, the doorbell rang and the family greeted the pastor at the door. The pastor came and the pastor, tucked underneath his arm was this doll that she had given. The pastor said to Hi dear, I'm here to give you back your doll The girl was excited for a while, but with those eyes of yearning, she really wanted the doll back but she said, but pastor, you cannot give me back. No, no, no, it's okay, we are fine, you can have your doll back. No pastor, I cannot take it back and you cannot give it back. You say, but why dear? Because pastor, I didn't give the doll to you, I gave it to God.

This girl got it spot on, our giving is not to the church, primarily it's not to the charity, primarily. It's primarily to God. Don't shortchange yourself because only God is worthy of your faith, only God sent His Son to die for you, only God is worthy of your sacrifice and because of God and because of what He has done through His Son Jesus Christ today giving to God is a joy, it's a honour, it's a privilege. It's a very interesting, Jesus would spend time watching how we give. He knows He's not just looking at your amount of silver, He is looking at the amount of sacrifice, He's looking for the heart of faith, someone who is willing to put God first, He is looking for the heart of forfeiture, someone who was willing to give up some of his wants and comforts for the kingdom's advancement, He's looking for people who are focused on

Him, but Jesus not only knows how we give, Jesus shows us how to give because just two days later, this is Wednesday, two days later, it will be the Passover, and that is where the Son of God as the Lamb of God will go to the cross and give His life.

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This is where Jesus will give up His life, where Jesus in faith, will look to the Father to raise Him up on the last day, when Jesus the Son of God, was sacrificed, all that He has for the sins of the world. And when Jesus will do it because He came to do the will of His Father. True, giving is seen in the Gospel and true Gospel living is seen in generosity. May these three stories be anchored in your life in your mind, in this church, as we seek to live out gospel generosity that brings glory to His Name.

Let's bow for a word of prayer together. Is God speaking to you today, I know it is extremely uncomfortable because it's extremely uncomfortable for me, extremely uncomfortable, because these are searching principles that I need to assess, for my own life, and for yours too. Where is God in your balance ledger and where in all our financing, in all our accounting where does He come in, firstfruits or the very last. You know from that simple exercise we will know where our God is, who our God is and my friends, if that is what we have been doing, let us be quick this morning to repent, to turn from our wickedness, would turn from trusting in money, to trusting in God. And how do I trust God, put Him first honor Him with our firstfruits and ask yourself today, what are you giving up for the advancement of His kingdom, what are you willing to give up, because if you never considered that question, I wonder if you ever given up anything. Sacrifice is not natural to us. Sacrifice is a choice, love is a choice. So right where you are today, I like to ask you to consider to reflect before God and ask Him to guide you, in the way you are going to steward the resources He has placed in your hands, to ask God to help you to be the true worshiper, a true worshiper is not just someone who comes to church services, sings loud, sings loudly and goes home the same, a true worshiper worships God with our all, my life, my time, my money.

Worship, worship is not cheap, worship is costly, because worship is a reflection of how you regard God, who He is to you. You know how much God loves you, not just by what He says but what He sacrificed. He sacrificed His only begotten Son, that's giving, that is giving. Sacrifice is the true measure of giving and God is the ultimate Giver. In a very little way, folks, let us all be followers of God, let us be willing to sacrifice. It may start very simply for you, you may sacrifice a dinner a week, you may sacrifice a movie. It may be a sacrifice of some fine clothes, it may be a sacrifice of

some fine cars. My friends, it's a joy to live simply and to give extravagantly, because you know you worship God. Give of your best to your Master. Survey the cross, when I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of glory died, my riches gain I count, but loss and pour contempt on all my pride, were the whole realm of nature mine, that will be a tribute far too small, love so amazing, so divine demands my soul, my life, my all. This is the acid test of your faith.

For those of you who are here for the first, I tell you the message of the Bible is not you give, no, no, no, that's not the main message at all, it's not you give, you give, you give, no, no, no, let me tell you the main message of the Bible, God gave. God gave His Son, God gave His son, Jesus Christ, God gave His Son, Jesus Christ to die for your sin. He gave His Only Son for you and today, the biggest message of the Bible is the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ His Son. Would you today, repent of your sins and believe in Him because otherwise, you can never have eternal life. You can never earn righteousness, you can never earn forgiveness. We are so rotten and so helpless we can't do it. That's why the great giving God gave His Son, as a Lamb to the slaughter, Jesus went to the cross and took all the wrath that God has towards our sins. Today, if you repent and believe you receive eternal life, you don't have to earn it, you just need to humble yourself before God and accept it, receive it in joy and gratefulness. Jesus paid it all, this is our giving God, that's why we worship.

Father, thank You this morning for Your Word. Bless it to our hearts that we may respond to You in faith and in obedience. For some of us a whole new realm and level of stewardship, for some of us a day of real repentance and faith, a day of new birth. Lord, as a church lead us onwards, we are not here to raise funds, we are not here to have a motivational talk, so that our church fund lack will be met. Lord, that's not primarily why we are here, we are here because we say, help us to be a worshipful people, help us to love You, help us to be a church that will have generosity, because the Gospel fills our hearts. So, do that in this church for Your own Name sake, we pray this now in Jesus Name, Amen.