

Gospel Generosity 2 - The Story of a Little Man –Luke 19:1-10 – 18 October 2015

Last week we looked at Gospel generosity from the perspective of Zacchaeus. Remember the tax collector? He gave generously because he received generously from Jesus Christ. So there was this generosity that flows from the heart of someone who has received the Gospel. That was the story of a little man.

This morning, in Gospel Generosity - Part Two, we're going to look at the story of a wicked man. Say what is this story about? Well, this story is given by Jesus Christ Himself in Luke 16. Allow me to read these verses for you:

He also said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions. And he called him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.' And the manager said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I'm not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.' So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' He said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly and write fifty.' Then he said to another, 'How much do you owe?' He said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.'

The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings. One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? No servant 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." (Luke 16:1-13 ESV)

So this is a very interesting story. A story of a wicked man. So who is this wicked man? Without a doubt, it is this manager who has been wasting his owner's possessions. He's called to be the steward. He's called to manage his assets, his possessions, his money, but whether he is incompetent or whether he is embezzling the funds, the fact remains - he is wasting his owner's possessions. Wind...or rather the owner got wind of this and said, "What is this I hear about you?" And in typical Donald Trump style, he said to the man, "You are fired!" He gives him some time to turn over the accounts, and so this man now begins to think. "Oh no, I'm going to be sacked. I'm going to lose my job, what is going to happen to me? What shall I do, since my master is going to sack me? I'm going to lose my job. To dig would be too hard for me. I'm a white collar worker, not a blue color one. To beg will be way beneath my kind of a life. I'm a steward after all of a rich man. Now, let me think."

And he came up with this brilliant plan. It was like a eureka moment to him. He said, "I've decided what to do, so that when I am removed from the management, people may receive me into their houses. I'm going to prepare a way out. I'm going to make sure that if I lose my job, there will be people taking care of me." How? Well, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he did this: he said to the first, "How much do you owe my master?" The guy says, "Well, I owe him a hundred measures of oil." "Okay, don't worry, you write down fifty. I give you discount - 50% discount." "Wah!" "Go! Do this very quickly." Paid! So what happens is that he makes an independent decision on his master's expense and gives him a 50% discount. So this debtor becomes happy and this debtor knows that he owes this steward a favour. And in those days, a favour is a lot. 05:21.9

So now he did this one by one. The first guy, he gives a 50% discount. A second guy, he says, "I give you a 20% discount." And one by one, he got himself lots of favours, using his master's expense. You might think that when the master gets to know about this, he will be absolutely livid; he will be absolutely angry. He will scold him, 骂到臭头 (ma dao chou tou) (Mandarin words meaning scold someone very badly) you would think. He would scold him or even sue him in court. He would definitely condemn him, wouldn't you think? But that was not what was written

for us. I think that might happen. I am pretty sure that would happen. But instead of the condemnation, we hear a commendation.

The Bible says, “The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness.” Wow! Strange! Now notice that the master is not here commending this manager for being dishonest or being a cheat. No, no, no, no... Jesus is not teaching us how to cheat, that's not the sermon title today alright? It is not about teaching us to use dishonest methods to earn money, that's not the point. The point is that Jesus is teaching a lesson on wisdom because the word... the commendation is on the man's shrewdness and the word ‘shrewdness’ in the Greek really means wisdom or prudence or intelligence. So Jesus is teaching us a lesson on wisdom. You say, “Wisdom to do what?” Wisdom to prepare for the future.

See, this man sees his future, anticipates it, strategises the best plan and executes his plan because he prepares for the future. You say, “What a strange way to teach a lesson? Why do you use a wicked man to teach a good lesson on wisdom?” Aah, this is the genius of Jesus Christ. This is the brilliance of the story - using a story of contrasts, it highlights the beauty and the power of wisdom. See, it works like this: if a wicked man with a wicked plan could be commended for wisdom, how much more the child of God, who has holy ambitions should be wise and prepare for the future.

This is not the only time Jesus employs this device in storytelling. You recall the story of the widow and the wicked judge, do you? It's also in the book of Luke. The story Jesus gave was like this: the widow had a big request. She went to the wicked judge but the wicked judge is a terrible guy – hard-hearted, absolutely not concerned for the widow's needs. He wouldn't answer, but Jesus said this widow kept on pressing him, kept on pleading with him until he's like so 烦 (fán) (Mandarin word meaning troubled or irritated), you know? Like the... the... the wicked ruler is so... compelled that he had no choice but to answer the widow. And Jesus says, “If a wicked judge would be willing to answer because someone is persistent, how much more your father will answer you when you pray to Him persistently, when you don't give up on prayer.”

So, please be clear, Jesus is not saying God is like the wicked judge, that He is so unwilling, that you got to plead until He feels that you are nagging Him that He gives you the answer. No, it is a story of contrast, that if a wicked judge will answer you, how much more your loving heavenly Father will answer you! So please keep praying! 09:29.0

Back to this story, if a wicked man with a wicked plan could be commended for wisdom, how much more the child of God should live in wisdom, preparing for the future. However, this is not very commonly practiced in the church. You say, "Why? Why do you say that pastor?" Because Jesus says, "The sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light." He says the world prepares for the future better than Christians do. Plain simple language. Aah...why do you say that?

Well I suppose you would agree with me, Singaporeans are very good in preparing for their future, don't you think? Most of you have some kind of plan for your future: retirement plan, endowment fund for your kids' studies, insurance stocks, property... you have made a lot of preparation. You're so well prepared that even if your children will not take care of you, you know you are well-taken care of, right? (A child answered "No" in the congregation) (Laughter in the congregation) No ah? Whoever is the parents you got to make sure you plan better (laughter in the congregation).

You've got to prepare for the future and many people in this world today are experts at it. Christians however are not. "Now pastor, are you saying Christians don't know how to invest?" No, that's not my point. "Are you saying Christians don't know how to plan for their retirement here?" No, no, that's not my point. That's not Jesus' point. I think many Christians know how to invest; many Christians are very savvy financially but that's not his point! Because the time frame, the reference of Jesus is not about the generation now, about the age now, he is talking about the future. How do you know that? Verse 9: "I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings." The world prepares for life now but Christians failed to prepare for the life that is to come, that's Jesus' point! You say, "What's the intent of this parable?" Let's sharpen this, can we? Absolutely! 11:55.5

Jesus' point is saying, "I'm teaching you about being wise." Wisdom is preparing for your future and what is the future for the children of light? Eternity. "Can you be a bit more specific?" Sure! This parable or this story is about wealth, you can see that. And so wisdom... let's expand this, let's refine this - wisdom is using wealth to prepare for eternity. A wise man is shrewd enough to look at his eternal future, looks at opportunities and executes his plan to prepare for that future. That's a wise man.

You say, "What's a fool?" A fool is the opposite! A fool is someone who lives his life - a Christian who lives his life, oblivious and totally negligent in preparing for the future. Now, mind you, this guy can be very rich in this world, but he's a fool if he doesn't prepare for the future. "Wah, pastor, you very rude lah you! Use the word 'fool', very unkind!" No, that's not my word. That's the word of the Lord Jesus Christ. It's a very forceful word.

Remember the story about the rich fool? Again, Jesus spoke about this in Luke and He talks about this rich fool who had so much money he didn't know what to do with it. So what he does - very simple: demolish his barn and build a bigger barn. He says, "This will make me happy. This is what I can do with my money." Jesus says "You are a fool. When you die, tonight when you die, all these things that you have accumulated and build up will go nowhere." Now the force of this argument is absolutely persuasive, don't you think? We all know that we are not going to bring anything with us when we die. No one dies a millionaire. Everybody dies with nothing. You can have lots of money in this world, but when you die, it's all gone. I pictured it like monopoly. You know you play mono... everybody plays monopoly, right? Wah, you win and you got lots of money - monopoly money. You won all your friends' money, but you know what you do with the money? Absolutely nothing. When it's time for a meal, everybody throws the money back and we go and live the real life. I sometimes think that we are all living a monopoly life. Wah, we want to win lots of money here, be richest, have lots of hotels, lots of houses but you know what? When you go to heaven, it's all gone. It's a foolish way to live, if all that we live for, is for the here and now. 14:58.0

I read about morticians, when people die, they will... they will sew a suit for those who do not have a suit and when the morticians do that, they would create suits with no pockets because there's no need for pockets for a dead man, you can't bring anything with you. So Jesus says, "You're a fool." Why? Because you're not rich toward God. Now, you're very good in business; you are very capable to earn money; you're very valued in your circle of expertise; you may be very regarded by people who're your peers but in eternity's perspective, you're a fool, if all you live for is the here and now. You have not the wisdom to prepare for your eternity. That's tragic!

So Jesus or God continues to tell us, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth." Why? Because they will decay. All you ladies who buy... I never say anything you laugh (laughter in the congregation), because it's commonly said, right? All you guys who buy... whatever you love, whatever you thought will give you joy. You know it doesn't give you lasting joy. That \$10,000 bag will "seh goh" (Hokkien word meaning grow mouldy) one, will grow mould, moth and rust will corrupt. Now, I'm not saying you can't buy bags. I'm just saying if that is your treasure on earth, you got to realise it's going to be gone. Whether absolutely or relatively, to you it will be rotting because 10 years later, it's out of fashion. Eee, don't want to be seen with it anymore. So "obiang"! (Hokkien word meaning outlandish). All it takes is time for it to rot. And of course, thieves will break in to steal. You say, "Singapore where got thieves? Where got disaster?" I tell you, the greatest thief that will rob every one of us is death. You can be sure everything you have... that you have accumulated on this earth as treasures on this earth will be gone. That's Jesus' promise to you.

Contrary-wise, if you lay your treasures in heaven, that's where it would never be gone. It is preserved for all eternity. The fool thinks of the earth, the wise men thinks about treasures in heaven. Again Jesus says, "So sell your possessions, give to the needy, provide yourselves with money bags that do not grow old with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail." I mean, these words are as crystal-clear as it comes but the hardest to believe and live out, don't you think? Because all of us today, struggle with this. But a wise man hears a lesson on wisdom and will use his wealth to prepare for eternity. That's His main point.

Say Pastor, how do I use wealth to prepare for it? I get the point. I get the point that I need to do this, but how do I do this? Do I bring the money and burn, like 烧金纸 (shao jin zhi) (Mandarin words meaning burn paper money) like that? God, this is the money I give you, burn! Wah, if you do that, please tell me first! (Laughter in the congregation) I'll help you, I'll help you better. Don't burn it please! How do you prepare for the eternity? You don't burn it, but Jesus tells you one way to do it. He says, "I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails, they may receive you into the eternal dwellings." He says use your money to make friends for eternity. The implication is clear, use your money to send them onwards to heaven; use your money for the advancement of the good news of Jesus Christ into more hearts; use your money in such a way that more and more people will know Jesus and they will be the welcome committee when you arrive in heaven. That's the way. That's the way. 19:32.6

Kent Hughes says, "What is inescapably clear here is that our wealth and possessions are to be used to win eternal friends. We must give generously of our money for the furtherance of the Gospel." I think that should define a large proportion of how we give, isn't it? When you... when your money goes to that soul or goes to those advances of the Gospel, you know this is worthwhile. This is biblical; this is in the center of the will of God.

The Bible also teaches us in regards to the Gospel, you should meet the needs of the poor. We already heard that in Luke 12, but in 1 Timothy, he... Paul also says, "They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life." (1 Timothy 6:18-19 ESV) Tremendous wisdom in the words of Apostle Paul. Absolutely difficult for us to do here in Singapore. The god of money lays hold of many a heart today. But the child of God hears God's voice and say, "There is something there I absolutely need to do so." So this is the wisdom to lay treasures in heaven, in such a manner.

The rabbis have this saying: "The rich help the poor in this world, but the poor help the rich in the world to come." Now, rabbinical sayings are not always biblical sayings. They're rabbis, they... they're just another guy. But I find these things so

profound yet so true. We think we help the poor but actually the poor help the rich in the world that is to come. It's a privilege to give to the poor. It's a privilege to give to the needy, according to the rabbis.

Ambrose, a Bishop in the fourth century says, "The bosoms of the poor, the houses of widows, the mouths of children are the barns which last forever." The rich fool says, "Build bigger barns!" The wise man says, "Feed the poor, give to the widows, those are the barns which last forever."

Jim Elliot, the famous quote: "He's no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." My friends, how's your welcome party like? All of us will have a different kind of welcome party when we arrived. The wise man prepares for his future; the wise man uses his wealth to advance the Gospel. Wisdom is to use wealth to prepare for eternity by advancing the Gospel.

And I say to you, like this wicked servant, number one, you've got to see; you've got to anticipate the future. A wise man is able to look ahead, right? Now we say Lee Kuan Yew is a visionary leader; he's a wise man... and why? Because he looks ahead! Wisdom is the ability to see ahead and so if you are to be wise, look ahead! Your life is not just about 30, 40 years on this earth in Singapore. No! Your real life is the eternity that is to come in the city of heaven! Wisdom sees that clearly and then wisdom seeks out opportunities to advance the Gospel to prepare for the future.

A wise man is always looking around to the needs of people around that he can give to. Opportunities he can give for; causes of the Gospel he can contribute to. He sees the security guard and he gives a cake to the security guard so that there can be a relationship built for the Gospel to be shared. He gives to the poor, so that they may have an opportunity to come to know Christ. He advances the work of missionaries of the local church in the preaching of the Gospel because he is always on the lookout. To him who has this wisdom, giving is not a burden nor a chore. He sees it as a delight, he sees this as opportunities. These are not "Aiyoh, ask money again!" No, these are opportunities - opportunities to invest. You know I look at Singaporeans,

super good in investment. When there is a new condo in the property hike days.... when there's a new condo coming up... wah, people queue up to buy condo. Why? Because they see it as an opportunity; they are very quick to seize upon it. But when it comes to wisdom for the future, I'm afraid the children of light are very slow. We are not open; we are not aware; we're not even keen.

You know when the Bible teaches about giving, the Bible tells us to be a cheerful giver? You know what's the meaning of the word 'cheerful'? I think I've said this two, three times in Gospel Light. But somehow nobody remembers. So please remember now. What's the... what's the word for 'cheerful' in 2 Corinthians? Anybody knows? (Response in the congregation) Very good! The word is the word 'hilaros' in the Greek which means hilarious! He is absolutely excited to be able to give! Why? He has such a wisdom to see that opportunity. Not just see it, mind you! Not just look out for it, mind you, but to also seize it. Meaning he grabs hold of it.

The wise man doesn't just live in the realm of good intentions. Oh, I feel so sorry for you. Oh, I wish I could give... when you go to heaven, you say, "How come nothing one? I thought I feel a lot for people." No, no, no, wisdom is not about feeling; wisdom is not just about seeing; wisdom is about doing. Remember how Jesus explained wisdom? A wise man hears these words and builds his house upon the rock. A real wise man is not just talking about theories. In his life, he is always seeing; he's always seeking and he is always seizing. How about you? How about you? 26:24.0

Wisdom. After all, this is why God gives you money. He says... Jesus says, this whole aspect of stewarding, or this whole aspect of having your wealth is a matter of stewardship. It's a matter of being faithful as the manager of God's resource. See, the words are very clear. Faithful, faithful, faithful, faithful and please understand, this is not your money, this is God's money. You don't own these things and when we use these things not for the advancement of the Gospel, but for selfish pleasures alone, now that's criminal breach of trust. Let me be clear, the Bible is very balanced here. It's not saying, you got to live such a terrible life that you only eat "hun tze" (Hokkien words meaning sweet potato) and drink tea. No, no, it... no, no, no, the Bible does say God gives us richly all things to enjoy, there is a balance to that. But you've got to

recognise that even in those pleasures that you have, through the resources God has given to you, it is with grateful thanks, joyous appreciation that you are ultimately a steward, you are a manager and these are not yours. It's God's possessions.

Now people ask, "Pastor, why don't you preach about tithing in Gospel Light? Just enforce this rule: everybody give 10% - church finance will be solved." Indeed it's true, I think so. But number one, I think I can't do that because it's not commanded in the New Testament. I think it is a good base to start, but that's not to be applied blindly and legalistically. In fact, if you really want to be consistent, the Jews gave 23 point something percent every month. And why are we saying 10%? I think it is a good base to start but don't get me wrong, it's a good practice and discipline for your own life, but that's not what the Scripture enforces. Cheerful giving.

Number two, I really think God is not after our 10%. The danger about preaching on tithing as if that will be the end all and be all, is that we can assume we give 10% to God, 90% is mine. Waaah... God, I already gave you 10%, don't come and bug me hah! You have no right to my 90%. Now, wrong understanding. Everything is God's and it's sad when we allow such a figure to give ourselves excuses for indulgent lives. No, there is no place for that. I think the Bible teaches about stewardship, recognising all is God's. Stewardship is what is called for, but it's not easy. It's very difficult. Why? Because Jesus tells us this wealth is unrighteous wealth.

You say, "Why is it unrighteous? Money is not wrong." Absolutely! Money by itself is not evil, absolutely. Having money is not the problem; loving money is the problem. So why is it unrighteous? Well, unrighteous I suppose in this sense: that money has a strange way of beguiling the human heart. You got to be very aware that there are temptations and lures and deceitfulness that comes with money. Jesus Himself said in Matthew 13, be careful of the deceitfulness of riches because it can choked up your life. So if you are to be a faithful steward, don't underestimate the lure of money. I've often found that people who are richest have the greatest struggles, because the lure of money is a powerful one. So actually the Bible teaches those who are rich, to share that it may be an antidote to this toxin - potential toxin to your soul.

It was Richard Foster who says, "We cannot safely use mammon..." This is the Aramaic word for riches. "We cannot safely use mammon until we are absolutely clear that we are dealing, not just with mammon, but with unrighteous mammon." The steward of resources has to understand that this money in his hands, is potentially deceitful, alluring and tempting.

DL Moody says, "I can tell more about a man's spirituality from his checkbook than I can from his prayer book."

Your faithfulness is about your heart and so, if you're faithful in little you will be faithful in much, if you're faithful in... if you're dishonest in little you will be dishonest in much. You know, in the eyes of God - money, how does he... how does he classify money? Wah... money is very big deal. I tell you something about what He says, "Money is very little." Wah! You don't know, I've got ten billion dollars! Very little. The true riches are yet to be seen. Do you realise that? And He says to us, "If you want to have true riches," I think it refers to either spiritual influence here and now or the true riches in heaven that is to come. "then be faithful in the money He has given to you." It's a test! If you embezzled the money for your own pleasures only, then you have failed the test! But be faithful to this test of stewardship. You know, I think we are at a very critical juncture for our church. If we long for spiritual influence, if we really want to shine the light of the Gospel, particularly in Punggol, Northeast part of Singapore, I think the test is with regards to our stewardship today. I don't think God is going to bless us with the opportunity to reach the lost, if we are a stingy, self-centered church. Think about it. If we are to be an influence for Jesus Christ, the true riches, then it begins with stewardship.

My friends, our master has given us great resources. Will you be faithful? This is ultimately a matter of the heart. Now, I know that in our church right now, this issue of the shortage of funds is a clear and present concern, but from the beginning of embarking on this mini-series to now, my concern has always been not so much about the dollar sign, but about your heart. Because that's how Jesus defined the problem. The money is there, it's all in our pockets. But the issue is always about here (pointing to the heart).

He says, “No man or no servant 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 mammon.” (Luke 16:13 ESV). The key word I think, in this sentence is the word ‘and’. You cannot serve God and money. So often we think we can serve God here and then a little bit of money. Jesus says, “Absolutely, you cannot do that!” He draws the line in the sand and he calls you to make a choice. Stewardship is about faithfulness and this is about your devotion to your master. It's about here (referring to heart). You can choose today to use money to serve God. Now, money is one of the ways we worship and serve God. You can cert... you can choose to use money to serve God, or you can choose to use God to serve money. But you can't have both.

You can come to church today wanting to get rich or you can come to church today wanting to worship and say, “Lord, I will be your steward, your faithful manager.” It's a choice. A matter of the heart. Wisdom sees through all that. It's not embroiled with all those entanglements. Wisdom foresees the future, as a certain reality because of the Gospel. A wise man sees the rising of Jesus Christ and knows that there is a glorious eternity to follow and he will prepare for it. A wise man looks out for opportunities all around him and he actualises these opportunities, seizing upon them. He sees that this is part of his faithful stewardship to God, he sees this as his expression of devotion to his master. This is truly a wise man. 36:12.2

This is Diana, one of our missionaries in China from Philippines. She was there to teach English to the Chinese students and through teaching English, build relationships and subsequently earned the right to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them. Diana comes not from a well-to-do family, she has to go to work in order to support her family back home. But she is a very generous person. I mean I don't know her that well, but from our brethren in this church who know her, she's an absolutely cheerful lady; very, very hospitable; loves to cook; invites people to her house; feeds them well; gives love offerings to those who are poor - the students around her. One of our best missionaries. Two, three weeks ago, one morning she was found to lie motionless on her bed. Apparently, she has suffered from a severe asthmatic attack and has passed away. What she left behind is not much, materially but tributes began to pour in. People began to express their sense of grief and loss

over someone who has really touched their lives. They published a little booklet that was distributed in her funeral and in preparation for funeral and within that booklet, I browse through that and... and there were people who just commented regularly about this aspect about Diana's life. "She... she used her life to serve people." - Christiana. Kara says, "You served people and loved people." "You're hospitable, you always invited people to your home to eat the food you cooked." "You were approachable, warm-hearted, especially generous." "I still remember you will say, 'Whatever we have is from our Father, we don't actually own anything. Everything we have is from Him. So we have to share with other people and show them the love from God.'" "You're always considerate for others. You put yourself in the last place. It is more blessed to give than take, you did so." 38:40.3

The cover of this book was simply 一粒麦子 (yi li mai zi), which is a kernel of corn or a corn of wheat in the King James. Great verse in John 12: "... except a corn of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it abides alone. But if it dies, it brings forth much fruit." (John 12:24) Here is a lady who is generous, who dies to herself daily in order to bless others with Gospel generosity. A funeral was conducted sometime back and I was told 450 people attended the funeral from all parts of China. There were even people who came all the way from the United States to the China to be at that funeral meeting. Several of our people are also going for the funeral that is coming up next. I thought to myself, but what is this 450 compared to what she will have up there? I think her welcome party will be one blast because here is a wise lady who knew how to prepare for eternity by advancing the Gospel with her wealth, with her life, with her service. Would you be wise this morning? Let's bow for a word of prayer together.

Money, money, money, strange thing it is. Wonderful servant, terrible master. Who is mastering your life? Who are you a slave to? A wise man wakes up to his former bondage and slavery of wealth and says, "I'm free to serve Jesus Christ. I'm now a steward and all these money is not going to be my master, it's going to my tool by which I can worship my God. Let me invest myself in the advancement of the Gospel; let me give to the poor." The echoes of Diana, the cry of the wise throughout the ages.

My friends, you long for greater influence in your life. It might begin with a decision you make today, about your stewardship. I want to say to you, I'm not here and this

church we are not about getting you to give so that needs are met and we have an easy life, no. There is a need for sure, but far more than that it's about your heart. I tell you something, God doesn't need your money. We are not here to beg for money. God is not begging you for money. But my question and God's question is: who do you serve today? It's about your heart. It's about your heart! Knowing Jesus gave His life for you and knowing the riches in glory He has predestined for you, how can we not be faithful today? I might have touched a raw nerve today, some of you may be upset. But I can totally understand why because this is such a fortress. This is such a stronghold – money! It touches that sensitive spot because somehow you know this is truth and truth hurts.

I'm deeply appreciative of those who have considered deeply last week - the sermon, the message and I pray God is doing something for your heart and ultimately for your soul and ultimately for your eternity. What a privilege today we can be used by God for the advancement of the Gospel and one day when we look back, we know it's absolutely worth it! He's no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose. Lay not up treasures on earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up treasures in heaven. Let us be the wise children of light.

May God bless your heart as you make your decisions, your choices, your prayers before Him today. I pray Gospel Light will step up in stewardship. God has given us an unbelievable dream, to steward the Gospel to thousands of people. This is critical you see! We will not have that stewardship if we still hold tight our fists. My friends, let me clarify, I'm not here to say, give to Gospel Light, give to Gospel Light, no, no, no please, I'm not asking you to give to God. God doesn't need your money in that light, like as if we have to beg for it. But I'm saying give, if you know of a missionary out there, give. If you know of wonderful causes outside this church, give, by all means. This is not about Gospel Light; this is about God; it's about you; it's about the Kingdom of Heaven. But would you be responsible to seek Him and to obey Him, today?

For those of you who are here with us for the first time, I say to you, prepare for your future. Say, how? You know your future you're going to meet with the judge one day.

This judge is none other than the Holy God of Israel. This judge is holy, is righteous; His standard is absolute perfection and His wrath upon sin is fierce. Your future will be the day you meet up with Him. What is your plea on that day? I have prepared my future. My future is in the hands of Jesus Christ, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I believe in Him. I've repented of my sins. I'm believing Jesus every day and following Jesus every day and He is my plea. Would you do that as well today because there is no other plea? Come unto me, Jesus says. Look upon him, be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth. I pray today will be the day of your salvation, the day you are absolutely prepared, for eternity. 46:11.9

Father, thank You for this Word. We ask that You will help Gospel Light, all of us not to be hearers only, but to be doers. I pray Your Truth, would ring out loud and clear as we contemplate and as we meditate upon these things in the week to come. I pray for true biblical Gospel, motivated generosity that will arise in our hearts. That we would then make an impact and that the world may see - You are the generous Giver. We thank You, we pray all this in Jesus' Name. Amen.