

Let's Be Rich Toward God

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[0 : 00] Father in heaven, there is no one like you. There is no one in history, no one in the past, present, or future that is comparable to you.

You are the great creator. You are the great I am. And Lord, this morning, we remember your goodness. You promised you would send your son, Jesus, to save us from our brokenness, from our depravity, and from our sin, and you did.

Thank you that Christ came not after we repented. He didn't come after we confessed our sin. But Jesus, you came before.

You gave your life for us while our backs were still turned away from you. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord.

This morning, we remember Kevin as he is in Taiwan at the City to City intensive training. God, may your spirit fill him to see more clearly your heart for church planting in Hong Kong and elsewhere, and how Watermark fits into that plan.

[1 : 12] We lift up City to City, Asia Pacific to you, asking God that your hand be upon this ministry. We pray for Gunnar Raman and the City to City Asia Pacific leaders.

Please, God, would you inspire them to maximize the spread of the gospel through your vision for church planting. Would you encourage them to persevere when times get tough? Would you remind them that although we are all called to plant and water, it is you, God, who brings the harvest. So, God, may prayer be a core foundation of their work. And we also lift up International Christian Fellowship to you.

Thank you, God, that many students in Hong Kong have come to dedicate their lives to you through ICF. And thank you for the relationships that have been established there. We pray that more students would come to know the love of Christ through ICF.

God, as this is exam time for the students, we pray that your presence will be with them as they study and take these exams.

[2 : 17] May they feel your peace instead of stress. And I pray, God, that the students would know that their future is not tied up in grades, nor A's or B's or C's, nor even career, God, but their future is secure in you.

And I also want to pray specifically for the ICF students who will be returning to their home countries. Simon, Alex, Shearer, Joanna, Annie, Justin, and Wayne.

I pray, God, as they head back to their home countries, would you go before them? May your spirit be with them. Would you provide them with godly, centered relationships?

And finally, God, I pray for the rest of this service. I pray for this sermon on the topic of money. I pray that your truth will be made known.

May your word come through loud and clear. May my word be in the background. And would our hearts be soft and open to receiving and accepting and responding to your word this morning.

[3 : 24] In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen. Can I invite Kwadjo and Lorna up to read today's passage? Good morning.

Good morning. The scripture reading comes from Luke chapter 12. Please follow along in your bulletins on the screen. I think we might be blocking people.

Someone in the crowd said to him, Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.

But he said to him, Man, who has made me a judge or arbitrator over you? And he said to them, Take care and be on your guard against all covetousness.

For one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions. And he told them a parable saying, The land of a rich man produced plentifully.

[4 : 27] And he thought to himself, What shall I do? For I have nowhere to store my crops. And he said, I will do this. I will tear down my barns and build larger ones.

And there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years. Relax, eat, drink, be merry.

But God said to him, Fool, this night your soul is required of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be? Soul is the one who lays up treasure for himself.

And is not rich toward God. This is the word of God. Thanks, Kwadro and Lorna, for reading the passage.

Money and greed are difficult topics to talk about. So difficult, in fact, that both Kevin and Chris have took today off. I'm kidding, of course.

[5 : 33] As we prayed, Kevin is in Taiwan at the City of City conference. And Chris has taken a delegation from Watermark to Turkey. But money and greed are still difficult topics to talk about.

Even within our families, those to whom we're closest, money is oftentimes a very sensitive subject. At work, we openly talk about our career ambitions or where we want to be financially in 10 years. But admitting that we're greedy for money because of the security and pleasure that money provides, who says that, right? And in the Christian church context, I would argue we don't talk about money enough.

We talk about other messy things, other aspects of sin in our lives. But admitting we love money too much or confessing we have a problem with materialism, not very common, at least from my experience.

But Jesus Christ, when he walked this earth, spoke about money a lot. And that is because money has the ability to do a lot of good, but a lot of harm as well.

[6 : 47] 15% of all of the recorded words of Jesus were on the topic of money. As a whole, the Bible mentions money 2,350 times, more than faith and prayer combined.

An astonishing fact when you think about it. And that is why at Watermark, we've dedicated five Sundays to talk about or to see what the Bible talks about on this topic of money.

Because whether we lived in the first century in Israel or in 2019 in Hong Kong, the principle is the same. How we view and treat money is a measure of our true character.

Money is real. It's tangible. It's concrete. How we spend it, how we save it or hoard it, and how we give it away speaks to the very core, the very essence of our lives.

As Christians. So today as we continue this sermon series on money, we will look at the teachings of Jesus Christ. And as we consider this passage from Luke 12, I'll try to make these three points.

[7 : 59] Be on your guard against greed, how the pursuit of money clouds our vision of God. And finally, let's be rich toward God.

It's very quiet in here right now. Let's dive right into it. Be on your guard against greed. Looking at Luke 12, verse 13, the very first verse of this passage.

Someone in the crowd said to Jesus, Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me. So, the context of this passage is Jesus has been teaching about the kingdom of God.

And he taught that in his kingdom, it's this upside down or counterintuitive kingdom whose values and principles are totally opposed to the values of this world. Christ taught that blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are those who mourned, for they will be comforted. He taught that it's not the proud or the self-righteous who will see God and know God.

[9 : 08] No. Jesus taught it's the meek, the lowly, the one who humbles himself and admits his desperate need for God's grace and forgiveness. That is a person who will see God and know God.

Then imagine, all of a sudden, this man elbows his way through the crowd, desperate for Christ to hear what he has to say. He finally gets within earshot and he yells out, Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.

Now, according to the Jewish law regarding inheritance, which you can find in Deuteronomy 21, verse 17, if a father had more than one son, he must give his eldest son a double share of the inheritance over other sons.

And so clearly, this man, this son, didn't think the inheritance laws were fair. But interestingly, instead of addressing this man's request or his demand, instead, Christ uses this opportunity to teach a very valuable lesson on money and greed.

He turns to the whole crowd and in verse 15, Jesus says, Be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.

[10:30] The NIV says, Be on your guard against all kinds of greed. Last year, my wife and I heard about an attempted abduction of a kindergarten student right here in Hong Kong.

And when we heard about this, we immediately started teaching our three-year-old daughter, Kiva, to be extra careful when leaving her school. In particular, not to let any strangers talk to her or certainly not to touch her.

We tried to teach her to be on her guard against strangers. This is kind of what Jesus is saying here. Be on your guard against greed. It's the unseen villain who prowls around waiting to attack. Let's think about a few examples. You did not get a pay raise this year, but your colleague, who you don't think works as hard as you, got one. And NIV starts creeping into your mind.

Be on your guard against greed. Or someone you know just bought an apartment in Hong Kong and you find yourself feeling a little bit resentful because you're still renting. Be on your guard against greed.

[11:41] And so we need to recognize, it doesn't matter where you are on the financial spectrum, whether you live paycheck to paycheck or you have enough money in the bank to retire today, greed is a real danger and temptation for all of us.

It's kind of there. It's like the virus on the computer. It's there, we don't even know it. Now most of us here probably know that do not covet was the tenth commandment that God gave Israel in Exodus 20.

Do not covet your neighbor's house. Do not covet your neighbor's wife or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor. The first nine commandments were instructions about outward actions.

Have no other gods before me. Remember the Sabbath day. Honor your father and mother. Do not murder, lie, steal or commit adultery. These are all outward actions that we can tangibly do or not do.

But what's unique about the tenth commandment of do not covet is that it has to do with the inward motivation. It has to do with the heart.

[12:57] And the Bible says that everything we do, good or bad, comes from this inward motivation. It comes from the heart. Listen to what Jesus said in Luke 6, 45.

A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart. And an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.

Most people, whether you are a follower of Jesus Christ or not, would probably agree that murder, stealing, lying, adultery, or morally wrong. But if you think about it, coveting or greed is a foundation or root of all of these outward actions.

Let's look at a few more examples. You want a promotion at work for higher pay so you can buy the newest gadget or handbag. And so you speak poorly about your colleagues so you look better.

Or, in your heart, do you secretly desire your married colleagues so you'll flirt with this person? Maybe ask this person out for a coffee alone? This may end in physical adultery, but it would have started in the heart.

[14:17] The Apostle Paul gave this instruction in Colossians 3.5. He said, Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature, sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, and greed, which is idolatry.

Greed is idolatry. And like any kind of idolatry, it means this false idol has been elevated to a point in our life which is higher or greater than that of God, our Creator.

So why should we be on our guard against greed? What is the big deal? What's the consequence if we have this heart condition? Well, that leads us to the second point, which is that greed and the pursuit of money clouds or obscures our vision of God.

Greed and the pursuit of money clouds or obscures our vision of God. As it relates to coveting or being greedy for money and possessions, we learn it starts in the heart but it manifests itself physically with how we deal with money.

Specifically, how we spend, how we save or hoard and how we give away money. And so Jesus, after warning about greed, tells a parable or a story to illustrate in a concrete way how this heart condition impacts the way we treat money.

[15 : 44] He tells a story about a wealthy farmer whose land produced plentifully. So abundant was his harvest that he had nowhere to store his crops and so he tears down his old barns, he builds newer and bigger barns and he stores all his excess grain in there and this, he thinks, will allow him to relax, eat, drink, and be merry.

Essentially, this farmer wanted to have a cushy retirement with a big bank account. Anyone like that? Okay, you don't have to answer that question. It's okay. It's okay. He thought his life, his security were all tied up in his wealth.

But God said to him, you fool, this very night your soul is required of you and the things you are prepared, whose will they be? So what's wrong with the rich farmer?

Well, first, let's be clear in what Jesus is not saying. Jesus is not saying that it's wrong to work hard for a living. He's not saying that it's wrong to be a successful business person.

We need more honest, successful business people to give their money away to honest ministry so that many will be blessed, the poor, the marginalized, the lost.

[17 : 03] They would all know the love of Christ. But what Jesus is saying is that the rich farmer elevated his personal wealth and his desire to retire rich and eat, drink, and be merry.

He elevated this far above his view of God. in short, his greed, his desire for wealth and security, that was his God.

And we know this because the farmer never acknowledged that God was the one that gave him all that he had. He wasn't thankful. Psalm 24, verse 1 says, the earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it.

It's hard to argue with that one. James 1, 17 says, every good and perfect gift comes from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights.

Also hard to argue with. And second, the farmer never thought about how he could use the blessing he received to bless others.

[18 : 11] He wasn't generous. He hoarded, he hoarded all that stuff to himself. And so God, his creator, the one who generously gave him all that he had, says to him, you fool.

So how does the pursuit of money make us foolish? How does the pursuit of money make us foolish? Well, there are probably many reasons, but the one I'm focusing on and highlighting is because the pursuit of money clouds or distorts or obscures our vision of God.

Going back to what Jesus said in verse 15, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions. Okay? So what is the point of life then?

Maybe your answer is to have a fulfilling career. The point of life is to have meaningful relationships, to fall in love, get married, have children, raise a family. These are all good things.

But throughout the Bible, both the Old and the New Testament, the purpose of every human life is to glorify the name of Almighty God. Life consists in making God's name great, to worship him by finding our deepest and truest delight in him, and by living lives that reflect his goodness, his sacrifice, and his love.

[19 : 36] But we can only do this if we have the correct vision of God as sovereign, as holy, as perfect and righteous, worthy to be praised above all things created on this earth.

And we can only do this if we see God's Son, our Lord Jesus, as our greatest treasure, understanding that although Jesus was rich, he became poor for us, that you and I may know God. I've talked to many Christians over the years, and I think, if we're really honest with ourselves, many of us struggle to see God as real, as tangible.

We read about God in the Bible, we listen to sermons on Sunday morning, but day to day, God is not real, he's not tangible, he's not there in the nitty-gritty everyday moment of life.

Maybe that's why we worry so much. And I think for many of us, this is because the pursuit of money, or the struggles with money, or our desire to make more money, clouds our vision of God.

[21 : 00] Two reasons for this. First, it's distracting. It takes up so much time and effort to pursue money. Whether you're living paycheck to paycheck or you can retire today with the money in your bank, pursuing money takes up so much time in our hearts.

How can we fit the worship of Christ in there? Much more than actual hours spent working, it's the time spent worrying about money or striving to make more money that drains our spirit the most.

And second, the pursuit of money clouds our vision of God because it's deceiving. In a different passage, Jesus talks about how the deceitfulness of riches can choke his word.

Meaning we can hear the good news of the gospel with our ears but it has no relevance in our day-to-day lives because the worries of the world or the lies that wealth would give us happiness blinds us as to the realness and the power of God.

A number of years ago, Watermark hosted an executive at one of the world's largest technology companies. This man was a Christian but he's also wildly successful in his career.

[22 : 17] He gave a small group talk and out of the many words of wisdom that I heard, one thing I'll never forget is this man said that as his career progressed, as he got very successful, the main temptation he faced was this idea that it was him himself that drove his success.

You see, success in any sense, doing well on your exams, getting a good bonus, getting a promotion, success in any sense can lead us to believe that it's our hard work, it's our great decision-making abilities, it's our great network of relationships that drives everything.

We work hard, we deserve it. That's a lie. That is money obscuring or blocking our vision of God. Think about it this way.

Think about stargazing. Think about stargazing in Hong Kong, right? Hard, yes. In Hong Kong, at night, you look up at the sky, you would struggle to see even one star.

There's so many bright lights out there, you can't see anything. But it doesn't mean the stars aren't there. The stars are always up there in all their God-created beauty.

[23 : 40] But we can't see them in most places in Hong Kong because of the distraction of the man-made light. Now imagine you're on the plains of Mongolia. No 10-tower apartment complexes, no skyscrapers in Central, no man-made light, nothing to obscure or block your vision of the stars.

Look up at the sky at night, you'd see hundreds, if not thousands, of stars. We need God to remove that which blocks or obscures our vision of Him.

Because in Hong Kong, perhaps more than in any other city in the world, we are constantly blinded as to the realness of God because, let's be honest, the God here is money.

All over Hong Kong, billboards are telling me that money will make me happy, safe and secure. The slogan of Hong Kong, the unofficial slogan of Hong Kong is, you have to have a property.

If you do, you'll be happy. This culture is telling me, have a good career, have a property, be happy, be your own God.

[24 : 59] Sorry, I lost my place now. I'm getting too passionate about this. But that worldview leads to death. Because you'll never be truly satisfied because we all know that if you're fortunate enough to have a one-bedroom apartment, pretty soon you want a two-bedroom apartment and then you want a three-bedroom apartment and then you want a bigger three-bedroom apartment and so on and so forth because earthly possessions will never quench our intrinsic thirst for something that is not from this earth.

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Or, as in today's passage, literal death will come knocking at your door when you least expect it.

And all the stuff that we store up in barns will be, will turn into dust pretty quickly. Developed cities like Hong Kong are getting more and more materialistic, not less.

More than ever, we need Almighty God to cut out all these material distractions which leads to death and open our eyes to see God again in all His beauty and majesty.

And if people like you and I, people who are clouded by our wealth and our pursuit of money, if we really want to see God, not just hear about Him, not just read about Him, but truly know God deep in our hearts, then we need to be rich toward God.

[26 : 40] Jesus ends this parable by saying, so is the one who lays up treasure for himself, i.e., the rich fool and is not rich toward God.

So what does it mean to be rich toward God? Well, first, every single aspect of our lives should be dedicated to God. Our careers, our families, our children, our money and possessions.

And this is because we realize that we only have anything in this world because God has been so incredibly generous to us. John Piper says it like this, being rich toward God, therefore, is the heart being drawn toward God as our riches.

Rich toward God means we are drawn or pulled, excuse me, rich toward God means counting God greater riches than anything on this earth. It means using earthly riches to show how much you value God.

So, instead of being drawn in the direction of money and possessions and the security and comfort that money provides, being rich toward God means we are drawn or pulled toward God, dedicating

our lives, giving our lives, including our money as worship to Him because God is our greatest treasure and our highest value.

[28 : 07] value. So, what does this look like? Well, as it relates to money, being rich toward God means we regularly give financially back to God what He has first given us as worship.

Being rich toward God means we regularly give financially back to God what He has first given us as worship. we don't just talk about giving back to God.

We don't just pray about it. We don't just do it once in a while when it's convenient or when we remember. We regularly give back to God what He has first given us as worship.

Now, I don't know about you, but this idea about being rich toward God has been very challenging to me my whole life. See, I grew up believing that money equaled security.

And so, as a teenager, as a college student, fresh grad, I worked hard because I thought that having a good career would give me money and money would give me security.

[29 : 24] The 2008 financial crisis had a big impact on me. I was living in New York at the time and I lost my high-paying job in New York and I also lost a decent amount of my savings during the crisis.

And this made me realize that life does not consist in the abundance of possessions. And over the years as I've invested my own money, I began to realize I was only doing so for myself.

before I invested I never prayed and I never asked God how can he use the profits to bless others. I realized I realized how greedy I was.

Generosity was never in my vocabulary up until a few years ago. when my wife and I first got married she told me that it's tradition in her family for all the married couples to give presents to all the children in the family and Celeste has a very big family.

So I was like there were so many kids we had to give presents to every single one of them and two months later we had to give life seed to all of them as well. We got into a massive fight over this.

[30 : 55] I realized then how much this idea of giving being generous it bothered me. I had been attending Watermark for a number of years but my giving to God it it wasn't it wasn't regular it wasn't sacrificial it certainly wasn't worship.

See what I'm trying to say is I've been the rich fool most of my life. Most of my life as a Christian I've been pursuing my own gain trying to build up stuff in barns for myself and I have never truly been rich toward God.

That Christmas when I gave those presents to the kids who are now part of my family it was God slowly starting to change my heart.

As I gave those Lego toys to them or the Marvel toys to them I could see the joy on their faces and I also received joy. As I finally confessed my sin my sin of greed my sin of this lack of generosity I began to see Christ in a new way.

As I realized how truly messed up I was how truly sinful I was I was more desperate than ever for the grace of God and as I received that grace Christ became more beautiful and wonderful to me than ever before.

[32 : 45] and then I started giving regularly to God through this church body at Watermark. I was convicted that I needed to give a meaningful sacrificial amount of my monthly income back to God as worship.

And then after I started giving to other ministries families and individuals who through prayer I thought God wanted to bless through me.

See I wasn't blessing them it was God blessing them through me. I was just I'm just this conduit I'm just this middleman of sorts.

But you know even today man I still struggle and I still wrestle with this idea of giving to God. Every time I write a check to Watermark or I give money and I think about my monthly expenses with three kids and all that stuff man it's painful.

Does anybody know what I'm talking about? Anybody? Anybody? You know one of the beautiful things about being part of a church body is that all of us come from different walks of life.

[34 : 01] But this topic of money and greed touches every single one of us. For some of us here giving to God is a regular activity in your life.

My challenge to you is let's not do that religiously. You know we worship God through sung worship right? But if we sing songs with our mouths but our mind is on the football game or on dim sum afterwards that's not worship.

We worship God with our heart soul mind and strength and so my challenge to you is the next time you write a check do so prayerfully and worshipfully praying that God would multiply those resources a hundred times for his kingdom so that many would know the love of Christ.

For others here perhaps giving to God isn't something you're used to doing or maybe you don't think you can give to God because of your financial circumstances.

some of you I imagine are thinking even right now don't you know Oscar that my salary in Hong Kong hasn't changed in ten years but property prices are up two to three times?

[35 : 21] Or don't you know Oscar that I have to give a huge percentage of my monthly income to my parents and I have no money for myself left over? I can't give. I need to save.

I'm not hoarding, I'm being prudent. I can relate to that. My wife and I had our second and third child seven months ago and man when I was crunching those numbers on diapers, formula, potentially school, tuition, man I just stopped.

I had a headache. But you know in spite of our financial struggles, in spite of our financial uncertainties, I want to encourage us to follow God's kingdom principles, this upside down counterintuitive kingdom principles.

I want to encourage us to be rich toward God. As I close, let me highlight three reasons why. First and foremost, because Christ, Jesus Christ, has made us incredibly rich.

rich, but it's only because Christ became poor so that you and I through his poverty might become rich. Before the world began, before any human was ever born, before money and banking existed, Jesus Christ decided to come to this earth and live a very poor life.

[36 : 48] He lived 33 years financially poor, he served thousands of people, he worked hard, but he never started up anything in barns for himself. and then he died for us.

And on that cross, when he died, he died poor, in spirit and in finances. Through the poverty of Christ, you and I have become rich.

Do we see ourselves as rich? Do we? If I were to guess, I would say most people would say no. Lee Ka-Shing is rich, Jeff Bezos is very rich, but you and I, we're not rich.

But if you are running water and a roof over your head, you are among the richest people on this planet. How much more then are you and I spiritually rich because our faith is in Jesus Christ?

Because our faith is not in stocks, not in bonds, it's not in real estate. All those things can be wiped out in a heartbeat during any random financial disaster. No. Our faith is in God, the one who is unshakable, unchanging, eternal, the one who existed before time.

[38 : 02] And our faith is in Jesus Christ, his son, who paid that ultimate price for us so that you and I have an eternal future which is secure. Today, if your faith is in Jesus Christ, you are the son or daughter of the great king.

Forget about dividing the inheritance. You and I will receive the full inheritance in heaven. Amen. Therefore, we can be rich toward God in this life because we know our inheritance is eternal through the blood of Jesus.

Second reason is because it's the only way to fight greed. If this warning about greed that Jesus gives, if this has impacted you today, then you realize it's a battle we need to fight.

So let's fight this battle together. And the only way to fight greed is to regularly give your money away. The only way to tear down these false idols of materialism, comfort, pleasure, is to regularly give your money away.

Why? Because then it's not about you. It's not about me. money. Worried about how you're going to raise your children in Hong Kong when the city is so expensive?

[39 : 28] Give your money to God. Worried about how you're going to pay rent when property prices here are the most expensive in the world? Give your money to God. Concerned that perhaps money has too tight a grip on you?

Yeah, you guessed it. Give your money to God. And as you do so, get on your knees and pray.

Let's pray together. Let's pray that God would tear down this false idol of money and greed and put Christ in his rightful place as the only one we worship.

If you are a young adult this morning or fresh grad here today and you've never given to God, I want to encourage you. Look, I know how difficult it is to part with money you think you've earned.

You think it's yours, but it's not. You only have it because God gave it to you. So just start by giving \$50 or \$100 a month and pray that God will change your heart to start giving sacrificially and worshipfully.

Final reason to be rich toward God is because you will receive eternal joy. If you want to receive eternal joy, joy which transcends all the temporal materialistic joy that we have in materialism and possessions, then give.

[40 : 59] If you want to see the beauty of Christ more clearly without being blinded by this pursuit of money, then give. Jesus said it's more blessed to give than to receive.

This is so true. I believe there's a very close relationship between giving to God and receiving incredible joy. And that is because as we give to God, praying that he would multiply or giving a thousand times so that the poor, the marginalized, the widows and orphans would be comforted, so that the woman in the red light districts of Hong Kong would be free of that bondage, so that the lost, those who don't know him, would know the love of Christ.

And as we see God's hand working in those lives, we receive joy because we receive a glimpse of God's own heart. Because God loves the poor.

God loves the marginalized. He loves the lost. So as we give, we receive joy. And as we receive joy, we're encouraged to give more.

As we give more, we are encouraged, we receive joy, we give more, there's this symbiotic two-way feedback loop that goes on and on and on.

[42 : 23] So let's be rich to our God because Christ has made us rich, because it's the only way to fight greed, and because you will receive eternal joy.

Let me close. friends, the world is constantly telling us this lie that money will make us happy. That is a lie.

That is the foolishness of greed. Let's not let money cloud our vision of God. God, there's an eternity after this life.

If your faith and hope is in Jesus Christ this morning, on the last day, you and I will stand before him. He'll show us his scars on his hands.

He'll show us the wound on his side. And I'm pretty sure you and I will fall to our knees in worship, finally realizing the depth of the love and sacrifice of Christ.

[43 : 39] But before then, we have a little bit of time left on earth. So let's be rich toward God. Let's give Jesus everything we have, our lives, including our money, because he has given us a secure future, and he alone is worthy.

Let's pray. Father, this is a challenging subject.

It's very challenging for me, Lord. You know my heart, God, and you know my struggles. You know all of our struggles, Lord. Forgive us, God, where greed, the pursuit of money, have clouded our vision of you.

Forgive us, Lord, where we've elevated this idol of money above you. Oh, God, would you tear down this idol of money, God, of greed, Father?

Father, comfort us, Lord, when we worry about money. Teach us, Lord, that money is not the key to happiness, that we can only receive true joy in you, Jesus, that you are our greatest treasure and our highest value.

[45 : 08] Lord, we're rich toward you. And, Father, help us to be rich toward you, not because of some religious need, not because of legalism, not because of guilt, but help us to be rich toward you, God, because we see you as wonderful, we see you as beautiful, we know you as holy, as sovereign, as perfect, as righteous, and worthy to be praised and worshipped.

Give us the vision of you, God, that is so beautiful and so wonderful that all these idols of life are meaningless and nothing compared to you.

I want to invite the prayer team to come up in a moment. If this warning against greed, if this, the word of God today has impacted you, right, and you realize that greed is something which has gripped your heart, that the worries about money, the lies that this world tells us that money will give us happiness, if this is something that you have realized has gripped your heart and you've never been rich toward God, I encourage you to come up here for prayer.

We would love to pray with you and walk with you. Pray for God to plant his spirit into your heart to see that he is our greatest treasure, not money, to tear down these idols of materialism, gaining possessions, storing up, securing stuff because we're worried about the future.

Let's pray together. Let's be a church who truly elevates Christ at the forefront of our lives, doing so because we have this picture and vision of him as awesome and sovereign.

[47:17] Maybe be a church who worships the only God who is worthy. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.