



## When The World Gets In The Way - Part 3

### Worldly Profits & Godly Investments

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Luke 14:12-14

Well I have been eating more fruit lately, as some of you can tell. No fancy plans or anything just a kind of a common-sense plan. I call it the eat less Cheez-It diet. I'm thinking of writing a book about that perhaps. But I do miss the Cheez-It days for several reasons. One is that I could reach for that box of Cheez-Its and just crack the top open, dig in, I know exactly what I was going to get. But it's a little different with fruit. Isn't it? I mean you reach for the fruit and better be careful and figure out what's on the inside before you go biting into it. And that's the thing about fruit, it can look good on the outside but that doesn't make for good fruit. It better be good on the inside before you think it's good. Right? You've got to know what's going on. That's why I've got pretty good at squeezing it, and smelling it, and thumping on it, you know all the things you do to try and figure out what's going on, on the inside. Fruit. (01:29)

Maybe that's why Jesus so often made the comparison of our words and actions to fruit. See because something that we do that's good, a word that we say, a conversation we have, an act that we do, some sacrifice. It really isn't a good thing if it just looks good on the outside. God is concerned that our good fruit looks good on the inside. And he says one day we'll know if everything that you did, that looked good to people, was really good fruit, because he's going to cut it open and lay it out. It's called Judgment Day. (02:03)

If you're new to this thing called Christianity you may think that because you're Christian now you're going to skip that Judgment Day. Well, you're going to skip the Judgment Day called the Great White Throne judgment and for that we all sing songs and say, "That's fantastic." But there is a judgment called the Beema Seat of Christ judgment and you are going to stand there and all our works are going to be laid bare and exposed before God. To put it in the words of 2 Corinthians chapter 4, the motives of your heart will be disclosed and then your commendation will come from God. In other words, there's going to be a time when everything I ever did that looked good to people, it may even looked good to myself, he's going to say, "We're going to see if it was good or not. We're going to look at it from the inside out and we're going to examine it at that point." So, your life and my life are like a tree. There's lots of things that I can see on it, there's lot of things your wife can see, lots of things your coworkers can see, your neighbors can see but God's going to look at what's going on, on the inside. And he's concerned with that good work being good through and through. The things that lie under the surface. The intentions the motives of your heart. (03:03)

We pick up our story in Luke chapter 14, Jesus still at the lunch scene after church. We've had some things happen, we've had this swollen guy brought there to test Jesus see whether he was going to heal him on the Sabbath or not. Jesus does as you remember, he alludes to Deuteronomy 22 when he heals this man and says, it doesn't really matter what day it is, you would pull your son or an ox out of a ditch on the Sabbath, wouldn't matter, and that's what I'm doing. I'm doing what's right. You may not like it but it's the right thing to do and I'm going to do it because God's word directs me to do it. And it's pleasing to the Father. Then he takes that scene as I said, that ancient near eastern table that you would have where the host would sit at the apex and people would kind of sit there by rank, social rank, and he turns as we looked at last time we were together the people kind of scurrying around for the best spots. And he says, you know what? Let me talk to you a little about that kind of worldly ambition. Let's talk a little bit about godly virtue. And it helped us, I hope, think through our attitude. But then you might imagine if you were the host you'd think well, I'm not a part of that rebuke because I'm the host and the host sits automatically at the head of the table. Just like you do when you have a dinner at your house in the dining room, I mean, you get the prime spot. And so, what's interesting in these next 3 verses is he turns to the host of the dinner and he says, let's talk about that for a second. (04:20)

Which by the way, to host a dinner after church is a lot of work. I mean if there's a good deed I would think that would be a good deed. Right? Why don't you all come over to our house, I'll cook, I'll get it together, we'll host it, we'll have all the people come into our house, we'll clean up when it's done. That is a good work that Jesus is about to take that piece of fruit and crack it open, at least in the theoretical way, to let a man like him who's doing a good work and certainly as a lesson for us all, trying to determine whether it really is a good work or not. (04:48)

Look at this if you would with me, Luke chapter 14 verses 12 through 14 as he says to the man who had invited him, “When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your rich neighbors.” Pause right there for a second. And this is why some of you struggle with the Bible, well come on I can’t keep the rules of the Bible, that right there is crazy. Don’t invite your friends, your brothers or your relatives to a dinner at your house? Well here’s one of the problems unfortunately with our English language not being quite as exacting as the language in which the Holy Spirit choose to write the Bible in. The New Testament is written in Koine Greek. Koine Greek is very specific in terms of its tenses that sometimes carry some meaning that we don’t catch by reading our English text, so take that word there, “invite” and highlight it and underline it and let’s just make a comment about “invite”. (05:38)

There are five tenses in Greek, we have three in terms of time, past, present and future. And I remember even studying Greek. I learned Greek first at the university in a secular setting in a classics department even before I studied it further, in religious, you know, settings in seminary. But we didn’t even call the tense that this particular verb is found in we didn’t even call it the present tense, though some grammars do. We were careful to refer to it as the continuative tense, because it’s not a simple reference to some kind of event. If it were it would mean what we kind of are tempted to think it means here and that is, don’t do this. Don’t invite people to your house if they’re your friends, brothers, relatives or neighbors. Which by the way, you should throw a flag on the play and say, “Now wait a minute. Isn’t that what Jesus was doing? I mean at least at the Last Supper? I mean he’s calling his friends together in chapter 15, in the very next chapter? We have these good stories told of the woman who finds the coin and the Shephard that finds the sheep and the father who gets his son back and every one of them has a dinner or a banquet and they do it for their friends and relatives.” So, we know that it’s not a simple reference and clearly the Greek text would help us understand this, this is in the continuative tense. I mean you hear pastor sometimes refer to this tense when we have that sermon on praying. When it says that you should seek and you should ask and you should knock and if you’ve heard a sermon on that I hope you recognize, just like hey throw the one request out. It’s not a simple reference to doing it, it’s in the continuative tense and sometimes the pastor when they preach on that the passage will tell you, you know, you’re supposed to ask and keep on asking. You’re supposed to seek and keep on seeking, you’re supposed to knock and keep on knocking and that’s not a bad way to put it. It’s just a cumbersome way to translate it and that’s why we don’t translate it that way. (07:16)

So, I guess in this sense you want to be very specific as to how to understand this, you might say do not invite and keep on inviting, it’s not a simple reference to never having your friends, your brothers or your relatives over to a dinner at your house. It’s don’t exclusively continue to do it this way. Don’t continue to just have these people over. And then he does something very bold, well let me give you the next line here in verse 12, let’s finish the verse. Lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. Which you’re thinking what’s the bad thing about that? Well nothing inherently but if that’s all you do. There’s a problem with you doing things and always having an immediate reciprocity, an immediate quid-pro-quo, an immediate come back. Some kind of feeding to you that says, I did that and I got something in return and it’s immediate and it’s now. He says, let me challenge you, verse 13, when you give a feast invite the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind. Now they’re not going to get up and help you clean up when it’s all over. These people can’t, forget even inviting you back, I mean sometimes you’ve got the dish rag over your shoulder and wonder, I wish someone would offer to help with the dishes. They ain’t going to, I mean, here’s this very clear call, do something you know you can’t get anything in return. And he says, and you will be blessed. That’ll be a good thing, you want to talk about a good work? That’ll be a good work because there’s no way in your mind you could ever think, I am doing this predicting reciprocity and thinking I’m going to get something back. No, there’s not even a chance of that. And you’re blessed, why? Because they cannot repay you. And because of that, it reveals the motive of your heart, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just. The resurrection of the righteous. (08:56)

Now, this whole parable, this whole story, this whole explanation to the host is trying to in a very ingenious way as Jesus always is, reveal the acts that we might do and say, make sure the acts that you do are motivated with the right motives. And I think if there’s one thing we learn in going away from this, I hope you’ll drive away from church going, I know one thing I should learn from this passage it should be that I should be much more aware of my motives. I should be more frequent in checking my motives so let’s just jot something down that would remind us of that. Number 1, let’s consider your motives. (09:30)

## 1. Consider Your Motives



Let's think about our motives, let's try to evaluate our motives and do that much more often when we think about as we learned two weeks ago to be zealous for good works. I'd like to do some good works. The guy who hosted the dinner said, "I'm doing a good work." And Jesus saying just make sure, make sure this is purely motivated, it's motivated by something that is not about I'll do this if you do that. And you know what? There are easy ways to kind of test whether or not you're doing that when you do good works. You may be offering your friends to carpool their kids to school in the morning. Now that looks like a good work, but I wonder if the person or persons, the families that you're carpooling for never offer to reciprocate. Those slugs, they just let me do that every week. Now, if that irks you and you get to the place where you're sitting there and you're complaining about the reality that you give and you give, and you offer and you carpool and it never comes back to you. Here's a situation that certainly reveals the expectation, much like picking up the tab at lunch today when you take some friends from church if that never came back to you and you started kind of keeping score which whether it's the carpool or the lunch tab, it's easy for us to keep score and think, well you know what? They never seem to offer and that becomes, hmm, is there part of my motive that says, I will do this nice thing for you but you know what? There is an expectation, it may not be spoken, but it's under the surface, that's an expectation I'm going to get something back. Or even sometimes our good works are a response to that, someone gave you a nice present, you are friends. You've got this nice circle of friends, gave you a present for your birthday, well now it's your birthday. Well I've got to give something to them and maybe even saying I'm happy to give it to them. Why? Because they gave something to me, and I'm happy to spend this much on them because they spent about that much on me. And there comes that expectation of reciprocity. (11:28)

Let me meddle a little deeper, you sign up for ministries to serve in because that particular ministry is serving your immediate family. Oh, I don't mind serving in AWANA as a matter of fact I like AWANA because AWANA is doing some great things in my kid's life. And Jesus said, "Now let's just think about that." Would you do the carpool if they never reciprocated and drove your kids. Would you babysit for that couple to go on their date night if really, they never came and offered to babysit your kids? Would you pick up the tab at lunch if they never said, "Hey, I'll get it next time." And actually, did it. Would you really serve in a ministry and work with the Jr. Highers and say, "I'm going to spend my Wednesday nights with this group and lead a small group." When in reality that ministry is never serving your kids and your family. Jesus said, "Now if you did that without an expectation of anything coming back, man, you're blessed." Why? Because you're going to be repaid at the resurrection of the just. (12:27)

Now, Jesus has taught this early in the book. I know it's a long time for us, because we were going through chapter 6, he taught it this way. He said, you know what? If you love the people that love you, what credit is that to you. If you lend to people and you know you're going to get back the same amount that you lent. And just put it in the context of this, if you bring a nice gift to someone at their birthday dinner and they bring you the same value gift back. He said, what advantage is that? Heaven is not applauding. To say there's a really selfless act of good works. He's saying don't even the sinners do that? You don't think if one, you know, drug cartel kingpin in Central America sends a nice gift, I don't know, don't you think the gang-bangers in East LA are going to scratch one another's back if there's reciprocity? Of course they do and that's all he's saying. You're no better than them. You want to be better than them? Actually, you should be better than them, really that's what Christians are known for, good fruit. (13:25)

What's good fruit? Doesn't just look good on the outside. You did something, you served, you signed up, you went on a missions trip, you picked up the bill, you gave. You've got to crack it open and say what was going on underneath? Was there an expectation of reciprocity. Was there a sense that I'll host that in my house, right? Because it feels good, now let me get into the intangibles now. It feels good, well what happens when it stops feeling good. Would you do it if it didn't feel good? Would you do it if you didn't have that sense of, ahh this is great, I feel really gratified by this. Would you continue in that ministry, would you do that thing, would you continue as long as you didn't have any of those pains? But what happens when it gets hard? Jesus is saying, well it would be kind of hard with you to have this feast with all those people that couldn't help you, but you know what? Then you're doing good works. Then it's a kind of good work that's acceptable. And I know as Christians this is hard because you become a Christian and now it's all about bearing good fruit, not bad fruit. And you go, okay well I can't do bad things, that's bad fruit. I'm a Christian I don't do the bad things. And then I even preached sermons and helped you know that the Bible says you can't even do a bad thing with a good motive. Right? So, I can't do bad things and I can't even justify a bad thing by a good motive. And then you said well let's do good works and now



we're trying to clarify from two weeks ago be zealous for good works and now we're saying you can't even do a good thing with a bad motive and so you've got a twenty-five percent chance of making it, right? (14:46)

You mean I have to have a good deed with a good motive? That's what good fruit really is. I mean there's bad fruit that's hanging off a tree that everyone can see is bad, that's a bad thing, you shouldn't have said that. You shouldn't have done that. But then there's things like all these things we've mentioned, serving, giving, sacrificing, going on that trip, serving in that situation, staying late, helping that person. All of those things look good but you've got to look below the surface, because it's really not a good deed unless it's good in terms of the motive of that deed. (15:15)

So, let's talk about motives for a couple minutes. Turn with me if you would to 1 Corinthians chapter 4, call this passage up, 1 Corinthians chapter 4. I want to say this, without having you assume I'm saying what a lot of other preacher say. In 1 Corinthians chapter 4 the point I want to make initially is this, motives can be tricky to distinguish. Motives can be hard to discern, but with that said, don't hear this pastor saying what you've heard other pastors saying, and that is your motives are hopelessly messed up, you can never get them right. And I hear that all the time. Read these books, see these blogs, listen to these sermons and they all seem to have this kind of a hopeless sense of your heart is so messed up you can never do anything with a good motive. I don't believe that. I don't think the Bible teaches us that. Now non-Christians absolutely, your heart desperately wicked sick, who can understand it. But as Christians you are a new person in Christ, you are a new man in Christ. Now we can still have trouble with our motives sometimes and they're hard and they're tricky and you've got to make sure they're right. But they can be right. (16:22)

I don't want to make too much of this passage but in the Sermon on the Mount when Jesus said, be perfect just as your heavenly father is perfect. Have you been around long enough for me to make clear, that there's another Greek insight that you can't skip. It's the word, teleios, and that word teleios, is not the word perfect as in the guy whose never made a mistake. It's not a linear picture, it's more of a punctiliar thought that you're doing the right thing at the right time for the right motive. Matter of fact I like to say if I'm going to write some Mike Fabarez lexicon next to teleios it's going to say, "Ahh, that's just right." That's the concept, be "ahh just right." as your heavenly father is. Now here's the example in the passage. He sends his rain on the evil and the good, there's a sense in which he's giving to people who are not in any way giving him praise, giving him honor, reciprocating with thanksgiving, nothing. And he says now you go and love the people that aren't going to love you back and be teleios like your heavenly father. How do you think you can do things with the right motive? I think you can but they are a little tricky. And sometimes you've got to look at your life and spend a little time in the mirror of God's word to figure this out. So, with that said, let's make sure we understand this text in light of the context of all of scripture and even the rest of 1 Corinthians and read it carefully. (17:32)

Verse 3, 1 Corinthians 4:3, is talking about he's a steward, steward should be faithful and he says but with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. Now, he's not saying it doesn't matter, it does matter, but it's not the ultimate arbiter of whether or not it's a good fruit or not, whether he's done a good deed or not. In fact, now you've got to understand this and not misunderstand it, I do not even judge myself. Now put this in the margin, 1 Corinthians 11:31, 1 Corinthians 11:31, so next time you see this verse you'll know that is not an unqualified statement. 1 Corinthians 11:31 he says we should judge ourselves and certainly Paul's not a hypocrite he practices what he preaches, he judges himself. But what he's saying is, he's not the definitive judge or the definitive arbiter because when a real judge who is the definitive judge and the gavel comes down and he says that's a good deed. Or bam, that's a bad deed, there's no court of appeals when the supreme judge of the universe judges your action but he says I can't do that. I can't definitively judge that and I know that's what he means because of the next verse. Verse 4, for I'm not aware of anything against myself, I mean my conscience is clear but I am not there by acquitted. Acquitted you can hear the gavel bang. [Kung] in other words I'm sitting here thinking, my motives are pure, I've done the right thing, but that doesn't mean that the action or the thing that the Corinthians were concerned about in his life because there's a lot more of that certainly in 2 Corinthians, he's saying that doesn't make me right. Because ultimately the gavel has to come down from God. It is the Lord who judges me. The Lord is the definitive judge, obviously, therefore don't pronounce judgement before the time. Now even that you need to put in the margin, I mean even the end of this chapter, he wants us to make judgments, he just wants us to know there's always an asterisk by it, it's not the ultimate judgment. Sometimes churches can get it wrong, sometimes leaders can get it wrong, sometimes our judgment can be wrong so we have to have a sense of the ultimate judgment kind of postponed in our minds. Therefore, do not pronounce judgment, as in the gavel going bang, definitive absolute





judgment before the time. Before the Lord comes who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness, there's the fruit, got to crack it open. And it will disclose the purposes the motives of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation, not from people but from God. In the words of our text, he'll be repaid at the resurrection of the just. (19:59)

So, motives can be tricky. I can never have an absolute definitive surety, that you know what? Listen when it comes down to it, I just know that this was right. But we can proceed in our Christian life with a relative confidence that this was the right thing to do. Now we should have a sense in which I want to make sure I'm purifying my motive as best as I can. And in our passage, it's making sure that you're not doing it with a sense that I want immediate feedback, I want immediate gratification, I want immediate payback. Nope, you've got to postpone that. (20:30)

Let me help with that. Three things real quick. How to evaluate your motives. One thing that's going to help you, jot this down, Hebrews chapter 4 verses 12 and 13. Hebrews 4:12-13. And that is you need the Bible in your brain, the more Bible, the more clear honest reading of the Bible, the more it does this, it discerns the thoughts and intentions, the motives, of your heart. You know the passage, the word of God living and active sharper than any two-edged sword, what does it do? It divides between the marrow and the spirit, you know all that, bone and marrow. And then it says it discerns rather the intentions of your heart. So, an honest reading of the Bible can do that, why? Because the Bible is, verse 13, the extension of the God who looks into your life like an x-ray machine and sees everything about your fruit, your life, your mind, your motives. It says this in verse 13, no creature is hidden from God's sight, they're all naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give an account. So, in a sense God doesn't need to crack open your fruit on judgment day, he's already seen it, it's going to be cracked open for our benefit. Here we're going to see each man's commendation come from God. But right now, God is looking at you, he knows exactly what you're doing and why you're doing it. Why did you sign up to teach that class? Why did you agree to go on that trip? Why did you say you would be involved in AWANA leadership? Why are you even going to go to the Bible study? Why, why, why, why? Your motives, God sees them, and he's saying listen not really a great motive, it's not really even a good work until it's good on the motive level, the intention of your heart is righteous. So that is something God knows. The word of God as we read it and we're open to read it honestly it starts to reveal some of that. (22:08)

Second thing, Psalm 139, I quote this one all the time, verses 23 and 24. Psalm 139:23 and 24. Here's the way I would put it. Ask God, how did I write it down? Ask God directly. Just ask him directly. Is my motive good? Ask him directly. You know the passage. Search me, O God, know my heart, try me, know my thoughts, see if there's any grievous way in me. Now here's the God of the universe that's looking at you for everything you do, you're going to go do something kind, something good, something righteous, whatever it is in your neighborhood, in your office this week. God is looking at that, he knows exactly what your motives are. Now as you go to do that, all I'm saying is make sure you're spending time in the word, that needs to be a daily thing. And then you're saying to God, God I want my motive to be right. Please reveal to me if my motives for leading the carpool, you know picking up the tab at lunch, whatever, God I want you to show me if my motives are wrong. Do you think God, if you asked him that, would not want to reveal that to you? Here's how he does it, by the conviction of the Spirit. The Spirit of God will be grieved by bad motives. And the Spirit of God, one of his jobs is a lot like what our conscience did before our conversion. It was the only thing to give us that sense of discomfort when we did the wrong thing. Now the Spirit of God is there to take it to the next level. To take it to the place of your motives and making sure that your motives are right. So, ask God. God, am I wrongly motivated by this? I assure you that God is very interested if you asked honestly, ask honestly and sincerely to let you know what's going on. If you're willing to listen the conviction of God's Spirit will tell you, your motives are good or they're not. (23:57)

Thirdly so I got Bible and prayer, this is sounding a lot like grandpa's church now, right? Not the Bible and prayer, always Bible and prayer. Sorry, grandpa had it right. The Bible and prayer. You need those two things. Now, thirdly let's just say this, this is the way I wrote it down, consciously establish a selfless motive. Consciously establish a righteous motive, a godly motive. Consciously establish that. The passage I want you to put down for that one is Colossians chapter 3 verses 23 and 24. Which I think is a great example of this. Colossians chapter 3 verses 23 and 24. Here's an example of workers who are just told in verse 22 that there's supposed to do work for their leaders, their masters, their employers without just doing good when their master is looking at them. Not just by way of eye service, where you just respond because the manager is watching you. But then he says this, I just want you to do whatever you do, work hardily, here it comes, as for the Lord. In other words, you may be taking your friend's kids to school in the carpool but do it as though you're doing it for God and not for them. That's what it says, what every



you do it hardily as to the Lord and not for men. Knowing, here it is, that from the Lord, you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. Therefore, God is saying everything is really done before God. Worry about him, focus on him, and therefore when you pick up the tab at lunch you know you're completely indebted to the God of the universe. You know that Christ gave his all for you and you say I'm happy to pick up the check because I'm really picking up the check for Christ. I'm really serving in AWANA for Christ, not because AWANA is helping my family. I'm really signing up to go on this missions trip because I want to help, because Christ has done so much for me. Do that for Christ and it purposefully and consciously establishes a selfless motive. I'm not doing it for them so that I can get back. I'm not doing it for them so that I'll even feel good. Check your motives, the word of God, directly asking God for conviction if it's wrong, and then establishing in your heart a clear motive to do it for the Lord. (26:01)

Which by the way, that's really what it comes down to. If you do it for the Lord, as it says in verse 14, that's what I want to focus on here. You're not going to get repaid now. Oh, there might be some things that God does to pat you on the back, shore you up, comfort you in the midst of your good works, but the real repayment comes at the resurrection of the just. And guess what that presupposes, that you've died, okay? Oh man, so do this and I'll pay you back once you're dead. I like to go and hand, you know, my debit card over to the Best Buy guy and immediately give me something back that's really cool, that I can go home and enjoy. I love the quid-pro-quo of that. And the Bible says, no, no, no, what you're doing is your sliding across these things that are important to you, not just your money, your time, your effort, your resources, your priorities. And you're saying I'm willing to invest these things when I'm not going to get the payback now, I'm going to get it later. Which by the way, let me state this, and I should state this very clearly. Compensation is not the problem. Reward is not the problem. Being interested in dividends is not the problem. You can look throughout the Bible and you can see this. God is not against you wanting to be rich, he just says, why don't you strive for true riches. He's not against you being satisfied. He says work for the bread that doesn't spoil, right? That doesn't go away, that endures. He doesn't have a problem with you having treasures stored up. He's just says store up your treasure in heaven. Compensation is not the problem. (27:33)

God actually said, quick little sidebar on this. He says if you want to turn an atheist into a theist you've got to start with him believing God exists. I'm quoting now Hebrews 11:5. He says and once you get that, the next thing you need to teach him and that he is a rewarder of those who seek him. I mean think about that. At the very beginning of what we're supposed to think when we think there is a God, the next thing we're supposed to think is he's a rewarder and it's all throughout the Bible, matters of fact that's how the Bible ends. Jesus gives us this reminder, I'm coming back. I'll just quote it for you, Revelation 22:12. Behold I'm coming soon and I'm bringing my recompense, my payment, with me to repay each one for what he's done. It's all over the bible, Psalm 19:11, moreover by your commandments your servant is warned and in keeping them there is great reward. Jesus is constantly holding out, you should work for these things that endure. So, he wants you to invest what's important to you, your money, your time, your effort, your resources. The priorities of your week, the decisions of your week and you slide some of these over and then it is, you're not going to get the payback right now. And you know what that's going to necessitate? Let's go a bit deeper here pastorally, I just want you, two words, number 2, to cultivate patience (28:44)

## 2. Cultivate Patience

We just have to learn to be patient people. And don't you want to teach your kids that? In our crazy day, you can lay down plastic and not even have the money in your account and get something now without even paying for it yet. I'm just trying to get us to recognize, I just want you to not to even expect the payback when you get the payment. That's super hard for people because we're super impatient people, are we not? (29:04)

I read a survey, I guess it was a part of an advertising campaign by Timex the watch people. And the watch people, Timex, they did this thing about how long people were willing to wait. 13 minutes they said, the average person is willing to wait for a table at a restaurant, 13 minutes. 20 minutes before you leave if you're expecting a blind date to show up, so you give them 20 minutes. Could be your future wife, but 20 minutes, can't wait 30 minutes. 26 seconds before shushing a talker at the theater. And at this point, I'm thinking you know what? I was starting to suspect this was not a So Cal survey. And then I knew it when this one was next on the list, 13 seconds before honking at a car not moving at a green light. I got my glasses and I looked at the screen, I was looking for the word milli before the word second. Where is this? Nebraska they're taking this survey? Dude, you can't wait a second and a half, right? I



mean you scratch your knee and the light turns green, the guy behind you is laying on his horn. 13 seconds is an eternity, that guy in the front is not getting it right, I mean you've got 2 seconds at the most and that's because I'm a Christian, right? I'll give you 2 seconds to get that car in gear, wake up, I've got places to go, you know. My point is that if this sermon is needed in Nebraska it is needed right here. You and I do not like to wait. And if I'm going to give up something I want the payback right away. (30:54)

That's why there's a lot of day traders in California. I mean I hate to pick on us provincially but I mean there are a lot of day traders, who try to invest in stocks and by the end of the day they have some money back. I read an article this week that said 95 to 96 percent of these guys that try to make money in day trading they bomb out, they can't do it and they fail. I mean I guess the odds that any four percent is eventually going to make some money just by chance I suppose but I mean most people can't do this. Matters of fact if you want to go to a financial planner he's going to say the best thing to do if you really want to have good returns, you've got to just put it in there and let it ride and let it go. And if you really want to be conservative you can go with these US Treasury Bonds and just park it there for 10 years or 15 years or I guess you know they go as far as what, 30 years. I'm thinking that is not an exciting way to invest money. I do not want to take some money, if I come into a little money this year I don't want to stick in a 30-year T-Bond, and say well I'm going to wait for the Treasury. I might be dead in 30 years. And then I thought of my passage, that's what he's saying. Invest and when you're dead then you get the dividends. (31:59)

And let's call them K-Bonds, how about that? Kingdom Bonds. Invest in the kingdom. Seek first the kingdom and if you do he's saying you're storing up treasure in heaven. Now that's not an exciting investment plan until of course you hear, the dividends. And that's where I don't have time to explain them but if you go on the back of your worksheet I've given you some teaching in the past that kind of highlights what the scripture teaches regarding the rewards. And I think the top of the list I put 07-05, that message, Motivated by Christ's Rewards at His Return. Or 11-32, Living in Light of Our Coming Judgment. That would be a good place to start, a couple books on the list although you don't find a lot of good books on this topic, we need more. You need to be motivated by the rewards that are coming. There's nothing wrong, people say don't be selfish. No, this is the right kind of self-interest. I want the Lord to say to me well done. When Jesus looked at the people that said, don't heal this guy, you'll be a bad guy. I don't really care what you say, ultimately, I'm working to please the Father. That's the example for us. I live for his approval and with his approval comes amazing dividends, but I've got to wait for them, so I've got to be patient. Be patient (33:08)

If I were going to help you, as your pastor, be more patient, I would first of all remind you, that you are not by nature a patient person. Ask your spouse, right? You're not a patient person. You're born with this tendency to want it now and certainly the Timex ad helps me with that, of course we're not patient. We want stuff we want it right away so I need to know my natural bent is to be impatient. And if it's my natural bent to be impatient then here's what I need, something supernatural to help me be patient. And now I'm starting to think in my mind into Galatians chapter 5 verse 22, something supernatural, something that's not human or fleshly. The Spirit of God says I've got something you need, and here's how the list goes. Love, joy, peace, what's number four? Patience. You need patience? God is willing to give you that patience. I'll give you that patience and the patience for you that you need it comes from me so you need to, in that passage, walk in step with the Spirit. Which of course brings us back to grandpa's church, you need time in the word, the book that he wrote, you need to pray to him. Praying in the Spirit, praying according to his will, asking him to give you what you don't inherently have, the Spirit of God will grant you that, love, joy, peace, patience. That patience that you need and I need is so important and you need to pray for that, you need to ask God for it every day. Because if you don't have patience you'll never invest in kingdom priorities because you'll say I want the payback right away. And Jesus says you've got to be ready to invest in things that don't have their payment until the resurrection of the just. Cultivate patience. (34:49)

I had some helpful feedback from last week and I gave you some diagnostics. I've got one diagnostic for you in this point. If you want to know where your patience is, here's the indicator for that. How much you complain. There's the indicator. In the scripture, you see the tie between people that are impatient and how much they complain. Classic passage just by way of example, Numbers 21 verses 4 and 5. Numbers chapter 21 verses 4 and 5. Moses is leading the people out of the promise land, now think about this, pack up your kids, pack up your stuff, we're leaving out of a bad situation and I'm taking you to a good situation but we've got to go through the dessert first. So, Moses is going to lead these people out of the land of slavery to the land of promise. But you know what? It was taking too long, and here's what the passage says. As they set out from the mountain, they set out by the way of the Red Sea and going around through the land of Edom, the people became impatient on the way. Next verse, verse 5,

and the people spoke out against God and against Moses. Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There's no food, there's no water, we loathe this worthless food. Why don't you give us some good, and on they went down the list, everything they complained about. When you complain it certainly reveals the impatience of your heart and the impatience of your heart really show my motive isn't right. So, your serving in AWANA but you come home complaining, your hosting the home fellowship group, the small group, but you know when it's all done, you're complaining. How many people didn't help you clean up. You're picking up the tab but you're complaining. You're doing the carpool but you're complaining. You're serving, you're complaining, you're going on a missions trip, you're complaining. The complaint is the indicator of the impatience and the impatience shows you're not doing this with a motive and a focus on the Kingdom, on eternity. (36:39)

You need to be hypersensitive to your own complaining, it reveals your impatience. As 2 Corinthians 9:7 says, God loves a cheerful giver. Do you think there's any way to reconcile the concept of cheerful giver with someone that complains about it? This is so hard, so difficult, I mean I just preached on this last night, and I come home and I sit down and no Cheez-Its anymore unfortunately, I'm eating I don't know, something boring, and I get my phone lit up with stuff and my wife is there and I say, I mean the words come out of my mouth but I wanted to jam right back in my mouth, because my wife was in the service last night. She's about to throw a flag on that play and say hypocrite because and here it was they needed Pastor Mike, it's late. I said, I am so tired and here I was about to do a good work, pastor is on call 24 hours, about to do a good work, last night late, after I've served and the first thing I said was I don't feel like it, I'm tired and I'm like arh arg. Do you see Carlynn the example of how you're not supposed to, see there? Just trying to teach you how not to respond to the problem. And I thought to myself I just preached on this. And I'm thinking it reveals the fact that, you know, if I felt good, if I could do it and felt good about it, if I could have the immediate feedback that made it feel good, no I had an opportunity to do a good deed last night and I revealed to God that I wasn't really patient enough to wait for God to bring the feedback, the recompense, the payment at the right time, I needed it now. The Lord loves a cheerful giver. So, I understand the challenge of this, but look to your complaining and recognize that has to go away as your heart begins to imbibe on the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace and the fourth one, patience. More patience, God we need that. Be a cheerful giver. (38:42)

Well Jesus says something crazy in verse 13 and I'd like to end with this middle verse. Luke chapter 14 verse 13, when you give a feast, here's the challenge, he throws down the gauntlet, here I'd like to invite the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind. Let's just do that., What? Right, I mean, he doesn't say keep on inviting all your friends and then you know what, just in your heart don't expect reciprocity. No, he says now do something that there's no chance of reciprocity. Do something where you just know you're going to push yourself to a pure motive because there's no possible way you could get the feedback. That is a challenge. It is a call for us to be extravagant, I like to put it this way because it's put this way in 2 Corinthians 8, I want to excel in generosity. Let's put it down that way, number 3. (39:31)

### 3. Excel in Generosity

I want to leave church today saying I've got to check my motives, I've got to be a patient person if I'm going to bear good fruit. Here's the thing I just want to test my motives sometimes just by doing something extravagantly generous. I'm going to plan to do ministry when I'm tired on a Saturday night, you know, at ten o'clock. Just going to do it and I'm going to say, I know this isn't going to feel good. I'm going to do something where I know I can't get repayment. I'm going to do something anonymously where I know I'm not going to get the thanks and the praise from anybody. I'm just going to do something extravagantly generous. (40:00)

2 Corinthians 8 I mentioned that, let's turn to that, last passage I'm going to take you to. 2 Corinthians 8, I'm asking you to invest in those Kingdom Bonds, K-Bonds, the treasury bonds from heaven. They don't mature for 100 years so they won't be in this life you'll get anything back. And Paul was bragging on some of those in the early church that were doing that, now he's challenging the Corinthians to hop on the bandwagon, and he says this in verse 3. 2 Corinthians 8:3, 2 Corinthians 8:3, for they gave, speaking of these Christians who have done so well, they gave according to their means. In other words, they gave proportionally, and then he says, but you know what? I can testify they gave beyond their proportions, they gave beyond their means. Now that's obviously hyperbole, you can't really give beyond your means, but this means they gave something that seems inappropriately extravagant. They gave beyond their means. But of their own accord, they did it willingly. Begging us, earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints. Now here's a motive that's crazy. I'm going to give away money and I'm going to do





it with a sense of I'm sacrificing but I'm begging with you. Now the only way I can help you with this, is to think about, and this is why I use the word in my subtitle, investments, godly investments, is if I said, I have an investment for you and I can quadruple your money. Now I know I can get you to beg to be part of the investment if I just told you I'll double your money in a week. Let's just say this, I'll quadruple your money, quadruple your money in a week, and I'm going to be out there at a table and I want you to come and sign up. Only take the first 100 people though. Now, some of you don't trust me, it's a scam or what it's his Porsche fund or what ever, okay. But if you trust in me, I'm saying I've got a sure deal here, quadruple your money in a week. Now you can see that passage working. You would beg earnestly for the favor of taking part in that because you had that sense of I know I'm going to serve the Lord and the Lord is going to bless me, he's going to bless the recipient. God's going to bring praise to him, there's going to be repayment in the kingdom. You'd beg me for that. Now this is hard to image if it's a K-Bond and it's not going to mature after your life is over. That's the challenge, that's why you need patience for this. (42:16)

And this is not as we expected they gave themselves first to the Lord of course we always should, and then by the will of God to us also, they gave beyond their means accordingly we urged Titus that as he had started a collection among you Corinthians that you should complete among you this act of grace, this favor of giving. And just as you excel in everything, right, you're full of faith, you have some rhetoricians and teachers there, you're full of knowledge you've got growing knowledge of truth and you're earnest and you're zealous and our love for you, we see earnestness and excelling in a lot of areas. See to it that you excel in this act of grace also. What act of grace? The act of grace he described in verse 3, people giving sacrificially beyond their means, verse 4, begging to participate in it. Excel in that. (43:00)

I'm just asking you, which I know in a sermon like this could be one of the reasons why you don't like my preaching because you think it's just so crazy and zealous and who could live like that, and the bar is too high. Okay, just, can you just do one thing this week? Where you say, I'm going to excel in generosity in this one thing, expecting nothing in return from people now. I'm going to do it for the Lord and I'm going to expect his repayment in heaven. I'm going to do it with a godly ambition, not an earthly ambition. I'm going to have a concern about eternal investments, not worldly profits, I'm just going to do something beyond the norm. I'm going to get out of my comfort zone, just like this guy who's been challenged. Hey, have a feast, have the poor, crippled, lame and blind there. I'm just asking, pick an area of your life and just do that. Put this passage to work in your life and do something that sets a priority for eternity and the kingdom and not the here and now. Doesn't advance your job, doesn't help you get applause, doesn't make people think you're godly, it just something you do that's extravagantly generous for the sake of the king. Cross the page you'll see it, the Lord loves a cheerful giver, verse 7 chapter 9. He loves that, do it, make your motive right and do it. (44:14)

It all comes down to choices that we make every single day. I've been reading a biography of a man named Charles Thomas Studd. You've got to like that name, Studd. Charles Studd. C.T. Studd. Maybe there's a couple of you in the room that have heard his name associated with Christianity. It's an apt name because he was a stud, he was a major athlete, now he's an athlete in England and so you know, one of their games of choice is Cricket. He was a Cricket star. Matters of fact, if you go and read even in the history of Cambridge he was one of the great Cricket players, I mean, he's at Cambridge, he was at Eaton College first and then he went to Cambridge, so he's super smart, good looking, tall, strong, athlete. I mean this guy as they say had the world as his oyster, he could do whatever he wants, I mean he was the big man on campus. His name is still on trophies at the Cambridge campus, this was over a 100 years ago he was born in Northamptonshire, England and this guy had it all in worldly terms. Could have done a lot to leverage his gifts and his talents and his looks and everything else to do things for himself. But he got invited to a meeting he didn't really care to go to, the preaching of D.L. Moody from Chicago, who most of these English guys thought he was just kind of a, you know, old country hick who happened to talk about God a lot, but he was doing amazing things. One of his friends said, you know I went to hear D.L. Moody and Ira Sankey he was leading in the music and this guy is going to tell you what's going on in your heart. Speak right to heart. He goes, God gets a hold of his life and he becomes a Christian because of the preaching of Moody. And he recognizes that he's looking at his life now and his life continues all these exciting advantages and applauds of everybody and so he's got some choices to make and it took him a few years after he was a Christian to really look at the practical decisions of his everyday life and the next season of his life, what am I going to do with my life? He heard a line and wrote a poem that unfortunately is known to you because of a cheesy set of lyrics from a Christian song written in the 70s. But this dates back 100 years. I want to give you these words in the original context, I want to read you a little bit from C.T. Studd's poem that changed his life. It's a poem that expresses the change of his life. And you'll recognize the chorus



as soon as we get to it. But know this is the original context. As he decided to make some kingdom investments, here's how it starts. (46:40)

Two little lines I heard one day, Traveling along life's busy way; Bringing conviction to my heart, And from my mind they would not depart. Here it comes - Only one life, twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last. Only one life, yes only one, Soon its fleeting hours will be done; Then, in 'that day' the Lord to meet, And stand before the Judgment seat; Only one life, the still small voice, Gently pleads for a better choice. Bidding me selfish aims to leave, And to God's holy will to cleave; Only one life, 'twill so be past, Only what's done for Christ will last. Only one life, a few brief years, Each with its burdens, hopes and fears. Each with its clays I must fulfill, Living for self or His will; When this bright world would tempt me sore, When Satan would a victory score; When self would seek to have its way, Then help me Lord with joy to say; Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last. Give me Father, a purpose deep, In joy or sorrow Thy word to keep; Faithful and true what e'er the strife, Pleasing thee in my daily life; Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last. Oh let my love with fervor burn, And from the world now let me turn; Living for Thee, and Thee alone, Bringing Thee pleasure before your throne; Only one life, yes only one, Now let me say, "Thy will be done"; And when at last I'll hear the call, I know I'll say, "twas worth it all"; Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last. (48:39)

I hope that we take our cues from C.T. Studd and if you read his story he becomes instrumental in the change of the lives of many. Not just in England but in places as far away as China, working with the China inland mission and doing amazing things with his life, saying let me just reprioritize. Am I going to live for this life or am I going to live for the next one. And all I'm saying let's start with some decisions this week. Invest and see what God does. Let's pray (49:04)

God help us rethink our lives, reevaluate our priorities to take a look at what we see in the scriptures as a call to a dinner host and accept it as our own. God, how are my motives? What am I doing this for? Am I patient enough to work for the kingdom and store up treasure there instead of here. And then God am I ready right now to make some decisions this week to excel in generosity, a kind of generosity that really pushes me to think about my time, my effort, my resources and all that I own and all that I have, my house, my car, everything and say God what can I do this week with this to do something good for others, to be zealous for good works, making sure that I'm really doing it for you. God that's a challenge we see many people in the past respond to in a positive way and we'd like to join that group. Let us live for you, for your approval, for your commendation knowing that you care very much about the decisions that we make this week. God of course we want the best to offer to you and the best of our lives and that fruit that comes by your empowerment by your granting of our patience, by your helping us with your priorities, by seeking first your kingdom. Make that a reality for many, many people that hear my voice right now. In Jesus Name, Amen. (50:26)