

17-07 Money Matters-Part 7
Today's Opportunity for Economic Reform
Pastor Mike Fabarez

Susan Atkins. Patricia Krenwinkel.

Leslie Van Houten. You know these names? If you do then you're familiar with some of the dark history of some of what's gone on here in Southern California. These were three young ladies in the hippie subculture in the 1960s who lent their loyalty to a very influential leader named Charles, Charles Manson.

And as it turned out giving their loyalty to Charles Manson they ended up in prison. One has died in prison and the other two of these ladies will die in prison. There are some other ladies that were in the hippie subculture of the 1960s that are sitting in this auditorium right now. They lent their loyalty to another influential leader named Charles, Charles Smith.

They called him Pastor Chuck.

And they are in our church actively serving, leading Bible studies and small group discussions and many of them all across the country being influential in serving in their churches and making a difference representing Christ in their communities. Some of these ladies are on the mission field now nearing retirement in terms of their work overseas. It turned out very different for those hippies of the 1960s and it all came down to who they lent their loyalty to. You see where you put your loyalties can make a huge and enormous and a lasting difference in your life. And that really is what Luke Chapter 16 has been all about as we near the end of our study of this chapter. It has really been about two masters, two loyalties, and as we started last week in the bottom of this chapter, two destinations. Two masters, two loyalties and two destinations.

This has been a study of two masters that were named after the initial parable at the beginning of the chapter in the simple statement in verse 13 that you can serve either God or money. But you can't serve them both. You can't serve both God and money. You're going to love the one and hate the other and cling to the one and despise the other. You're going to have to choose your master and your choosing is going to be represented in the world serving you're going to have to give your loyalty to that master and then that will determine your destination. Now if you're saying well the bulletin covers says Money Matters. Well money matters. The only reason money is on the table is because Jesus is making the rounds in trying to show that there are several things in your life that will determine your loyalties or at least it will express your loyalties.

We could be looking at your conversation.

We could be analyzing your calendar but in this passage we happen to be talking about your cash because all of these things will exemplify, will show, will typify, will give some clue as to where your loyalties lie and that's what this whole chapter has been about. Two masters, two loyalties and then last week we started this final story that began in verse 19 if you had your Bibles open, I wish that you would. Chapter 16 Verse 19 of Luke started this story about this rich man that had everything going for him and clearly he represents the person that saw money as his master. Which by the way let's just be clear, just like anything else that will show your loyalty whether it's your cash or your conversation or your career or your calendar or whatever it might be.

These are things that really only show that it's about you and not about God. Because your money is simply a means to get what you want. What you want.

See it's not about you hugging piles of cash it's about you getting the comfort, the convenience, the luxury, the power, the ambition of your life being played out in a way that brings you what you want. And there are plenty of ways to go about that. But on this particular lesson of Christ in Chapter 16 it's about how that money is used as a means to get you to be the enthroned captain of your own life serving yourself and whether you do that directly or indirectly that's clearly your option. You can choose God or something else and the something else really gets back to YOU. And the destinations in this particular text are typified by a man who had everything going for him because he was serving himself he was amassing wealth for himself he was enjoying all the luxury he was clothed in purple and fine linen he was feasting sumptuously every day it said in verse 19. And then there was this contrasting person that was represented by the name Lazarus which we said was the Old Testament translation the Hellenized form of the Hebrew word Eliazar which reflects something of his hope, his trust, his hope was in God and because of that of course he was one who had a different kind of priority.

His master apparently was God and not apparently it became true and we see that played out because when they both die in verse 22 though Lazarus was a very poor man, a very sick man, who couldn't even get a meal on his own. He had to beg for it. There were no social security offices there were no rescue missions there was no place for him to go but to stand there or at least in this case to lie there and beg at the gate of a rich person hoping his rich friends would come by and give him something to live on. He was a guy who died in verse number 22.

And because he trusted in God he was carried away to a place of feasting, a place of blessing.

In verse 22 the rich man also dies and that's the whole point of the destination. They had different masters they had different loyalties and they're going to end up in two different destinations.

One's carried away to Abraham's side where they're feasting and the other one, look at it, in verse number 23 ends up in a place that's labeled here Hades, being in torment. He looks across and he sees Lazarus. He recognizes that face. I pass by him, walk by him many times never gave him anything apparently but he sees him and he sees him there with Abraham and he calls out and he says if I could just get a little relief here just a drop would be good from his finger. If Abraham you could send him over to help me out here. That would be great. I'm in anguish in this flame verse 24 says. But Abraham says no in verse 25. He had bad in his life, which may or may not happen to those who trust in God.

You had good in your life which may or may not happen to those who were living for themselves but now the destiny for living for yourself or the destiny for living for God is now set. You're there experiencing bad, he's here experiencing good and that's just the way it is. Last word in verse 25 is not a happy word: anguish. And if you were here last week I'm surprised you came back this week knowing there was more to this story.

This is a tough sermon we preached last week and yet it's not over. Verses 26 to 31 is our passage for this morning. You follow along in your text. Look at the text as I read it for you. And besides all this and it's bad enough, right, and a lot of bad going on here. Besides all this between us and you a great chasm has been fixed. In order that those who would pass from here to you, you want to send Lazarus over to give you some relief. He can't. They're not able. Why? Because there's a chasm fixed, it's there, it's fixed, it's set and none may cross from there to us.

And I'm sure you'd like that. But you can't come and get it yourself.

You be there, it's permanent.

Apparently he concedes that in verse 27. Well, he says to Abraham then if that's the case I've got a secondary request and here it is. I beg you, Father, speaking to Abraham, to send him to my father's house. Dispatch Lazarus to go to my father's house. Why? For I have five brothers so that he, that is Lazarus, now apparently raised from the dead may, here's an important word, warn them. Lest they also come to this place of torment. But Abraham said they need a warning? They got a warning. They have Moses and the prophets. Now Moses and the prophets, by the way, that's shorthand. It's the way the Bible likes to talk about in the New Testament to talk about the Old Testament.

It's the shorthand sometimes is call the law and the prophets. Law is what Moses was the intermediate to bring, he brought the law he was the agency of that writing of the law. Then you have the prophets that were the agency of all the writings of the prophets. But here we talk about the person that God used to write it, Moses. And then you got the prophets. So were talking about the law and all the writings of the prophets of the Old Testament.

Let them, your brothers, hear them, the writings of Moses and the prophets, the Bible. Verse 30 and he said No father Abraham. That's not enough.

But if someone goes to them from the dead if you can just pop Lazarus back up and send him back he seems to be doing well now he's got a meal he's nourished go send him back. I know if they see a man they walk by to get to my house repeatedly and they see him there raised from the dead, they watched him die. They heard that he was buried.

I know then they'll repent. Another key word to underline or highlight that is the teaching of the Bible the difference between this destination and that destination is to change the loyalty of your life in something the Bible likes to call repentance. Turning from this to that. It takes place in the recess and the secrecy of your heart. And then it's undeniably clear to everyone else whether it's in your career, or your conversation, your calendar, your cash. People see it. You work it out. It's called the fruit of repentance proving your repentance by your deeds. But it starts with Adam. Even this man in torment in the place called Hades in this text knows that's what they need, they need to repent.

Abraham responds, he says to this man begging for someone to go back from the dead and warn his brothers. If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, if they're not convinced and adequately warned by them neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead. And there is a statement with all kinds of entendre. Right? This is reference not only to the Lazarus we do know that was risen from the dead over there in the book of John. Clearly one of the hallmarks of Jesus' power to call life into existence from his own word of his own power. And not only that that's what Jesus would do is rise from the dead.

And he said I'll prove it to you. Just tear down this temple, my body, and in three days I'll raise it again. It's going to be the cornerstone of the veracity of the message of the Gospel that someone would rise from the dead and just like you've told your friends research it there's no other logical or rational explanation than for Jesus to be raised from the dead. All the accounts, all the witnesses, all the first generation written accounts we have. This happened.

Your friends say I don't care, or I don't want to research it, or I've heard it and there may be no other logical explanation but whatever. And you got friends just like this just like he had five brothers that said I don't care. I'm not going to be convinced.

Even if someone should rise from the dead and someone certainly has. This is a tough text but important for us to make a few observations about it as we think about money, the matters related to money and how money matters. This is important for us to catch as we think about where those two masters, if we give them our loyalties, where it will take us, the two destinations. Let's start with verse 26.

And besides all this that you ended up in a place because you did not repent and serve God, you did not give your loyalty to God. You are in a place that according to this text has a chasm fixed, it's a boundary, it's an electric fence, if you will. It's some kind of gulf that you cannot bridge there's nothing that is going to get you from where you're at to the other side. There's no help that's going to be dispatched from that side to this side. You are stuck.

It is permanent. It is irreversible. If you're taking notes you need to recognize this.

Number one on your notes: know that loyalties can have irreversible consequences. And when it comes to the consequences of eternity your loyalty to whether you're living for yourself or for God certainly has eternal consequences.

And once you get there there's no reversing. It is irreversible. The permanence of the destination that cannot be reversed. This is not the only passage on it but it certainly is one of the clearest passages on it. There is no second chance.

And for those of you theological eggheads out there who say well I've heard a lot of fancy theological arguments lately about this. I'll give you some \$5 words here when it comes theology. Maybe you've heard the doctrine of restorationism. Restorationism.

Maybe there is a second chance on the other side there's something that goes on in God's great love and great redemptive work that he's going to take those who have tasted this punishment and somehow bring them back.

We have to take words like *aiónios* and the ideas of Greek that deal with the translation of the word "forever," maybe we can get that to mean that they'll get there but it's not really forever it's for a time it's for an age and then they'll come back.

Restorationism. Or Inclusivism in theology.

Maybe there's an idea there that though they don't trust in Christ, though they don't repent, maybe they get there, they taste it, they have then this great second chance as Christ comes and preaches to them and they are in prison and they have some kind of punishment on them and maybe those passages over there in Jude and Second Peter, maybe that's a second chance and they can be included just because now they have the gospel clearly preached to them and we really have a good preacher preaching to them about what the Gospel is. Maybe then they'll be included.

Or Universalism.

Restorationism, exclusivism or universalism. Maybe at the end of the day when it comes down to it

what Christ did on the cross is really going to be effectual for everyone.

And whether it happens immediately or whether there's some kind of probationary period eventually God's work to save everyone is going to be accomplished. And under the banner of hopeful inclusivism or hopeful universalism we have people that come from good theological backgrounds saying well maybe what really is going on as they say is that God is a God who is so ardent about providing for the needs of the lost that even if people don't respond as long as we can admit that Christ on the cross died for everyone then eventually they'll be there.

Whether it's through restorationism, inclusivism or universalism let's just be hopeful that that's the case.

I don't know how we're going to deal with these passages but we'll just trust in that. And really when it comes down to it all this really is about is that point of Calvinism those Calvinists always talk about that concept that seems so weak to the non-Calvinist and that is the extent of the Atonement. And if we look at the extent of the Atonement, did Christ die for the elect or did he die for everyone? And maybe the only difference here is that point of Calvinism if we can just get down to the concept of figuring out whether or not he died for everyone or just a few, because you know those Calvinists think that if he dies for just a certain amount a specific atonement to those elect then in reality God's atonement through Christ is going to draw them and eventually it will be effectual, it will be an effectual call. And whether it's here or in the next side it's going to happen.

And I'm just going to say that's a silly argument.

Not specific atonement. I'm not saying that but to say that some specific atonement or universal atonement whether you believe he died for all or just the elect when it comes down to it that has nothing to do with what the Bible teaches regarding the shut door and the clear teaching of Christ that once it shut it isn't opening again.

Let me put it this way. It is as silly as me saying that this afternoon I'll take my daughter up to Knott's Berry Farm and I can say, hey you've got 10 friends. Invite 10 friends.

Now here's the thing. Whether I go out and buy five tickets because I know that in my choice or my election or however theological you want to make this illustration, I'm going to call five and five in real time will embrace the invitation to take her five friends to Knott's Berry Farm. I'm going to pay for all 10 or I'm only going to pay for five. It really doesn't matter when it comes down to it. What matters is when the call goes out we get in the van and all the instructions about when we get up to the gate and the gate is there and the tickets are given and the gates are closed and no longer can you get through without a ticket. All that really matters is who walked through the turnstile. It has nothing to do with how many tickets were paid for.

Or to put it another way, what it comes down to it doesn't matter whether Noah had put the time and the investment and the economic resources into putting 80 seats in the ark for human beings and providing all the food for 80 people in the ark, all that really matters whether he built it for eighty or eight human beings all that really matters is who got through the door before God shut it. That's all that matters.

So don't talk to me about your hopeful universalism as it relates to whether or not is a specific Atonement, a specific kind of focus on dying for the elect or others dying for everyone. That's not the argument.

It has nothing to do with it.

What matters is whether or not all the clear teaching about the response to the Gospel and the closing of the door and the permanence and eternity of punishment can clearly be read the way it's read and that's exactly how it's read throughout Scripture from beginning to the end. Isaiah 66, when it speaks of those who will be punished in verse 24, it speaks of the rebels, that means they are not repentant, you've got repentance and you've got the rebels who will then be cast into eternal fire.

They will not die and they will have a fire that is not quenched. The concept is a kind of punishment that never ends and they never cease to exist in that punishment. Jesus by the way apparently like that passage he quoted it verbatim in Mark Chapter 9 verse 48. And he clearly took what is plainly taught in Isaiah in the Old Testament and he taught it clearly in the New Testament.

Daniel Chapter 12. Jesus when he is speaking of eternal punishment.

Matthew 18. Matthew 25. His half brother in Jude verse 7 clearly takes the concept of eternity and says here is what it is regarding the shut door when the door is shut it's over. And it is an irreversible consequence to being an unrepentant rebel. And Second Thessalonians Chapter 1 verse 9 when it speaks of being shut out from the presence of God, it begins with the word that we see throughout the Scripture and that is an eternal punishment and an eternal destruction. Shut out from the presence of God.

The door shuts and the opportunities are over and the consequences eternal.

And for those that want to get *aiónios* and the Greek word and how that may be is not always the case in terms of "forever." It is the same exact phrase in the same exact context that puts a perfect equal parity to statements like this that Jesus makes regarding eternal life and eternal punishment. Matthew Chapter 25 verse 46. And these will go away into eternal punishment and the righteous into eternal life. Those are perfectly squared to each other the parity and symmetry grammatically, syntactically is perfectly presented to us. Now if there was hope for you to go out of this auditorium and believe that once you end up in a place of punishment there is a way to get out of it. Trust me, I'd give it to you.

I'd provide it. Because I think that would be really cool. But that ain't the way that God presented to us the warning of Scripture regarding whether or not we should continue on our rebellion or repent. He gave us the truth in clear terms that he'd be a liar if he didn't do what he said that once you're carried away at the end of this life you end up in one of two destinations of the consequence of that destination because of your loyalty to the two masters whether you choose God or whether you choose yourself, is permanent and irreversible.

Well I can understand that for the kind of distinction that you draw in this passage between some guy that is so self-indulgent, sumptuously feasting every day in the finest clothes that only kings would wear at banquets. And the guy who's poor and certainly needs a break and so you see a very contrasted set of polar extremes and I just know that in life it's not that way. My next door neighbor for instance, let me just say, somewhere in the middle. You know that in the Bible from beginning to the end all you have is what people accuse me of saying which is really exactly what the Bible says that we're constantly trying to bifurcate people into two camps. I understand that and we are. Only because we're trying to teach the Bible. You can go through almost any book of the Bible and just start looking for how it's presented. I'll give you a short book because it's only got five chapters,

how about First John. First John Chapter 1. Just to look at how the Bible describes people. Here's the choice you get. You either walk in the light or you walking in the darkness. You've got to pick one or the other. There's no gray in that passage.

Chapter 2. You're either in the truth or you're lying about being right with your Creator. Chapter 3 you're either a child of God or a child of the devil. Only two options in terms of taking the humanity that we all live in and saying they're one or the other, it's either or. Chapter 4. You either have been given his spirit or you don't have his spirit, one or the other. You don't have part of it, you don't have a little bit of it. You either have it or you don't. Chapter 5 ends this way almost to the very end. We are either from Go, born of him or we lie under the power of the evil one.

That's the rest of the world he describes. It's as either/or as being pregnant. Can't be kind of pregnant, sort of pregnant.

And you know you either are or you aren't. You're in or you're out. There are only two groups. Now I know within those group you've got some that are Christians that bear fruit 30, some 60, some 100 fold. When it comes to non-Christians you've got people that are just living for themselves in some simple way and living for themselves in some extravagant way and some living for themselves in a real jerky way.

But they're all living for themselves. And their calendar and their cash and their career and their conversation will all reflect that. Know that loyalties to the two masters have irreversible consequences because there are only two kinds of people. There are only two destinations.

And Jesus tries to tell us that there are two paths that you can be on and the good thing is you can go from the path that leads to destruction and you can transfer to the path that leads to life. The word used is repentance throughout the New Testament and the Old Testament. That's the concept. But there are two paths. And they seem very closely aligned in terms of temporal reality and my experience with my next door neighbor and they're on a different path. But we live right next to each other and our lives intersect all the time. But there are two paths.

It's like you being at a water park in the middle of August and you've got these big slides that they create. If you ever been to these you know on a hot summer day you're trying to get up these stairways and of course they're made of metal and burning hot it seems. And you go up a flight and you turn and you go up a flight and go around and you know get this weird circuitous path to get up to the top and at the top of course you get there and soon as you get to the top they shove you in one of two tubes to go down. And let's just say in this stairway you got one of two tubes to go down and in this, I don't know, eight foot wide stairway you've got two lines, one on the left one on the right. And those two lines take you to one of two slides up at the top. When you finally get to the top of the platform. Now you can switch from one line on the right side to go to the other line on the left side. But you can't do it once you get in the slide. Once you get in the slide there's no switching. You're stuck and you're going to end up in a pool one of two places and if one is a place of destruction, and in this passage it's described with the word torment, and the other one is a pool, if you will, of feasting and satisfaction and comfort and pleasure.

The Bible says you're going to end up in there but soon as you get in the slide there's no switching. You can't be attended by the angels at your death and say hey I don't like where we're going here. Like it's an Uber driver or something and you say can I go to the other place?

You're stuck. At the moment of your last breath it's over. Two destinations. And I didn't mean to

reference Led Zeppelin there when I talked about a stairway to heaven, you understand. There are two paths you can go by. What's the other line I jotted down when I realized I was doing this? There's time to change the road you're on. I'm not quoting Led Zeppelin in defense of any Biblical doctrine, you understand.

Because if you play it backwards you're going to get some satanic message, you know. Yeah right. So clearly I wouldn't do that.

They didn't even know what they were saying when they were writing the lyrics. I understand. You know that right?

To switch lines means I'm going to have to switch loyalties and, yeah, when you switch loyalties and when you switch loyalties the lines really get either, easy, that's the line you're born in, to a line that's hard. So picture my little stupid analogy here of the metal stairway. You are either going to be in the sun or you're going to be in the shade. You don't have flip flops on so this is going to be an easy choice for most people.

And if you get in the sun you probably going to get people mocking you. Someone's going to throw an ICEE on you. You're going to be mocked for being so stupid to stand in the line why would you be sweating and burning your feet in that line that's dumb. Here's how Jesus put it.

There's a narrow gate and a narrow road that leads to life. And here's what he said. The way is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life.

But the other road that he described previously says there's a wide gate and a broad road and that leads to destruction and that is a road that is marked by, here's the word he uses, an easy road. It's an easy road. And many are those who enter by it. Of course that makes sense because right now if you choose to get in the line that leads to God's eternal destination which is a good one.

Well then you're going to have to stand in line we're going to have to put up with a lot of what Jesus put up with and that is what he continually reminded us and promised us of one of the problems is we don't like to claim that if they persecuted him they're going to persecute us. If they called him the head of the house Beelzebub, what's he gonna do with you? You claim to be associated with him. If you stand up for Christ as the Bible says only those that are saved, right, are going to stand up for Christ in a biblical sense you can't say you're a Christian and not stand up for Christ. If you don't confess Him before men, clearly you don't have the Spirit of God dwelling in you.

But if you do you're going to suffer for that. Enter by the narrow gate. Matthew 7:13. The gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction. Verse 14. The gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life. When you pick your loyalty it comes with a price tag and if you've been around here I hope you know from the platform when we've been through the book of Luke, we're clearly seeing that in many, many chapters including chapter 14 where we itemized some of the costs of following Christ. And by the way if you think I got time to switch paths here. I can go on the other line, I can get in the other line, just know you don't know when the line is going to be up.

Well I do. I'm just at the bottom I can see a lot of people ahead of me on the line. Well just know at any point a guy with his whistle around his neck could come pull you out the line take you right to the top and shove you down the slide.

You want to be in the right line now. To put it in the words of James Chapter 4 verse 14, he says

you don't know what your life will be like tomorrow. What is your life like? A mist that appears for a while and then it vanishes. I know it's a passage about business and it says before you go making these plans you ought to say if the Lord wills. But the first line is if the Lord wills we will live and then do this or that.

So I know if it's not for the Lord's will then tomorrow I won't live. As much bread as I eat I don't live by bread alone I live by whether or not God decrees from the word of his mouth that I'm going to be alive tomorrow. Therefore I don't know I may think I've got a few flights of this metal staircase to ascend before I'm done. But I could be killed in a car accident this afternoon. This may be the last time you see me.

You don't know and I don't know. What is life? It's a vapor. It appears today is gone tomorrow. It vanishes.

So that's why I suppose I can't preach on a passage like this without at least giving you the poignant exhortation, are you sure you are in the right line? Because this may be the last time I see you. You know, every year, every single year, I start the year preaching to a group of people. We have three services just like this. People come in. I look at all these faces. I see all these faces. And a year later, 12 months later, we've buried some of them. And if you say well I know who that'll be and you'll look for the oldest, most decrepit people in the room.

It doesn't always work out that way.

You know that right? This could be the last year you have. Are you sure you're in the right line?

If not you need to switch your loyalty and when you switch your loyalty it will cost you because you will stand in the line where you're going to be opposed.

You're going to join one who was opposed. You're going to stand with Christ and he's going to ask you to do a lot of things that are going to affect your checkbook, your conversation, your career, your calendar. And if you're a real Christian you've really switch lines are going to do what the boss says and that'll cost you. You and I need to say are we in the right line, am I sure? And some of you I know get sick of me saying this from the platform but I guarantee you there is not one person in this room that will come up to me 100 years from now and say I wish you hadn't always made me question whether or not I'm saved. As a matter of fact there may be some who will say to me why didn't you say that more often? Because the Bible says there are many people who think they're in the right line that will get to the top of the platform. They'll be carried away at the moment of their death and they will raise their hand and say I thought I was in the other line and he'll say nope, you were in this line.

But I went to church. It doesn't matter. You are in this line. But I gave money. You are in this line.

But I even talked to people about me being... You were in this line! Because you tried to take certain things in your life and think that those somehow made me not see the real loyalty that underlies your life that ultimately expressed itself in other ways that you never told people in your small group about. All the things that express where your real loyalty lies.

You have to know some loyalties can have irreversible consequences and when we're talking about loyalty in this particular passage which happens to be the intermediary of money that ends up just being a reflection of you serving yourself in this world or, instead, serving the God who created

you. It will certainly have irreversible consequences. Which line are you in? Pastor Mike I know I'm in the right line, all right? My feet are burning. I've got ICEE on my shirt. OK. Great. If you know you're in the right line I just want you to think of the people that aren't in the line with us.

I want you to think about those people. The people that are in your family, the people that you work with, the people in your classrooms, the people in your neighborhood, the people you rub shoulders with every week. They are in a line that at one point they will get to the top of the line.

They may be called out of the middle of the line and put to the top of the line. And the moment they breathe their last according to this passage and this is Jesus talking I'm just preaching what he said here.

They've got one of two destinations to go to that will all come down to where they were loyal, to whom they were devoted.

I want you to have them in mind because when it comes to being confident about the line you're in, in verse 27 of our passage, he knew which line he was. Well, OK. If I'm in this line I've got some other people in view that I care about and that's where I want you to be right now. Verse 27 Luke 16. I beg you father send him to my father's house for I have five brothers. That might not be a bad thing for us to do right now. Do you have five faces you can think of right now that you think, yeah, I think these five people are in the wrong line?

Here's what he's concerned about. Rightfully so. He knows he's missed the line. But it says in verse 28 "I want you to send someone to warn them." There's the key word, underlined it. So that they may warn them. I want this man to warn my brothers lest they also come into this place of torment. And if you're standing in the good line and you know that you have a right relationship with the living God and you understand because of the fruit of your life and even the persecution of your life. Yeah I'm in the right line. I want to think about those that aren't.

And I want to think about the warning that they need. They need someone to warn them. And Abraham the father of faith says in verse 29, they have Moses and the prophets. Let them, your brothers, hear them, the prophets and Moses.

Now of course in the New Testament we have not only Moses and the Prophets we have the Messiah and we've got the Apostles. We've got the full of God's library and the Bible is saying to us here that the Bible is what people need to hear. It's the warning they need to hear. Here's the thing some people think a very eloquent evangelist is better than the Bible. A very intelligent apologist is better than the Bible. As we learn in verses 30 and 31 maybe a really nifty miracle would be better than the Bible but it says in verse 29.

Heaven's perspective is what they really need to hear is the Bible. You need to respect that book as the ultimate need of every person you know that's in the wrong line. Number two. Respect the Bible as the warning we all need to hear. And I say we all because even Christians need the warning of the Bible and the warning is you need to repent which is said as frequently, even more frequently, to Christians than it is to non-Christians. Repent. Repent. Repent. If something trumps the supremacy of God, repent. When it comes your non-Christian friends what they need to hear is the message of repentance. And that's going to be given as clearly as it can be given in the Bible. The Bible is a warning. You know it's a warning, do you know that? "Well... I don't think it's full of warnings." It is full of warnings, full of warnings. You're in Luke, go back to Luke Chapter 12 with me real quick. Luke Chapter 12. Here is Jesus, a passage that I'm sure those who like to bounce

around in the Bible and avoid passages they don't care for, they're going to avoid this one for sure. But it's Jesus being very clear about warning people "friends I tell you..." verse 4 Luke 12:4. "I tell you my friends do not fear those who can kill the body. And after that there's nothing more they can do." They can mutilate your corpse I suppose. But there's nothing more they can do to you. The real you.

"But I will warn you whom to fear." That may be a good word to underline there it is again I will warn you. Be warned, be cautioned. "Fear him who after he is killed has authority to cast into hell." There it is again.

Yes, I tell you, fear him.

Jesus said one of the greatest preachers, didn't say one of the greatest he said the greatest, of course barring himself, was John the Baptist. Well, we met John the Baptist who talked a lot about bearing fruit that was reflected in your checkbook. How you exercise management over your money. Remember how it all started with a warning. Who warned you to flee from the wrath that is to come?

And then he said you know what you need. You need to repent and then you need to bear fruit that's in keeping with repentance and then he talked about how to do that and he talked about their employment, their career. He talked about money as a primary theme, a thread through that whole discussion about what should we do. Here's how you reflect your loyalty and your money.

Again we have warning and repentance, warning and repentance, warning of what? Of hell Jesus says. What do we need to do? We need to repent. What is repentance? We need to dethrone anything in our heart that is not the Triune God. We needed to dethrone it.

That's old school language I understand but we need to do that. Whatever that means in terms of saying I'm no longer living for them or this or that, I'm living for God.

Well that's not what I hear in terms of really good solid healthy Christian ministries. Listen, I know that we don't just preach to this crowd. We will celebrate on Friday over seven hundred radio stations that hear these sermons every week. And I hope here, I mean as long as, I may be hit by a bus today but if I'm preaching in the future I continue in my commitment to preach the whole counsel of God.

But you have to be listening to these words right now and you're in a church saying well I don't hear a lot of warning and I never hear about Hell that's for sure. Then you're in the wrong church because the Bible is full of warnings. The whole goal of preaching by the way and this should give some bearings especially if your visiting your checking out churches and you're trying to find a church here in Orange County, you better make sure you find a church where the Bible uses the preacher to preach its message and the preacher doesn't use the Bible to preach his messages.

There is a lot of that going on is they're not?

Because the goal of preaching, as I often say, is, I didn't write it, I'm just here to tell you what it says, is to give meaning and application and to show you the relevance of the scripture and that's all that preaching is. Bringing the word of God to you every week. And I only get you for an hour. Some people say you preach so long.

Well, the doors aren't locked, you know, the bathrooms are open and if you need to take a break or bring an apple or whatever, do what you have to do. Keep your blood sugar up, fine.

Is it really all that long? Take a quick nap. I see that happening, it's not a problem.

But I get you for an hour. Out of 168 a week, I get a chance to give you what is I hope is the most unadulterated deliverance of the Word of God and it is a warning. Did you do the Daily Bible Reading this week? It's another thing. I try to have you read through the Bible every year. Are you doing that with this? Please smile at me if you're reading through the Bible. We hit this week, did we not, Deuteronomy Chapter 28, which we call it the land covenant, God's gift to Israel. And when he warns Israel about the land he says there are blessings and there are cursings just like Jesus comes and talks about heaven and talks about hell. Talks about what happens for the repentant and the obedient and what happens to the rebels and the sinners. I just want to know what was the parody of those. What was the..., I mean how did that balance out in the teaching of that chapter? And I love the fact that because it's such a long chapter we just read that one chapter in the Old Testament this week. We read it on that one day we didn't have more than one chapter and then we read it. Was it 50-50? Just if you can remember that text from this week? Was it, you know, half of the verses were about blessings? It was a very long chapter. It wasn't 50-50.

It wasn't, here's 50 promises and then 50 warnings. And it wasn't 40 promises and 60 warnings. It wasn't even 30 promises and 70 warnings.

Do you understand that in this scripture what we had is what we have all over the Bible and that there are other promises of heaven there are talks about love? There are talks about blessing. All that's in the Bible and they are the favorite verses of the people who like to make greeting cards and put up plaques on the walls in their house.

I understand that but if you want the whole counsel of God you're going have to find that most of it is warning. I went crazy on this. I counted all the Hebrew words in Deuteronomy 28, which I thought might be revealing, it's about the same as the English percentages and the verse breakdown. You could do it with the verses, take you two minutes. Seventy five percent of that chapter is warnings against disobedience and only 25 percent of that chapter is promises of blessing for obedience. I just want to tell you if you're in a place where you're only hearing the 25 percent you need the word of God and you need the warnings of the word of God. As Thomas Watson says in his great little book "The Great Gain of Godliness" which I should have put on the reading list this week on the back, the gain of God is the great gain of godliness.

We don't understand how those kinds of statement shouldn't affect the way we view our lives and view God. If there's not a sobriety about our Christianity because we know we're countering warning after warning after warning in the scripture then we're chasing some religion of our own manufacturing. We're not chasing Biblical Christianity.

You should have something to say about how you do evangelism too. I know you want to be a great apologist and defend the faith like some professor up the road. Or I know you want to be some kind of great orator and be able to speak in some eloquent way to the non-Christian. You know what they need? They need scriptural truth. Usually to get the word of God dwelling in you richly and be able to give biblical statements and biblical principles to people. And I think some of the most effective evangelism I've ever had is to say, "Great, we'll talk about Christianity. I'm going to tell you what the Gospel is but I want you to go home and read the Bible and I give them a Bible. And I have them start reading and I just love this I'm doing this for decades now. I usually start in Luke

and I say we're starting Chapter 9 and we're going to read the Chapter 24. We're then going to start at Chapter 1 and we're going to read the Chapter 24.

Let's just do Luke a time and a half and when we get together and we have lunch and we talk about what it is to become a Christian, we're going to talk about what you read.

Many people come to Christ just through that simple thing and I know some of you give them the Book of John or whatever. Great! Get them in the Bible. The warnings of scriptures are what they need. I begged you father send him to my father's house I got five brothers you've got to warn them. No, they have Moses and the prophets. And we have all of that re-iterated, fulfilled in the New Covenant message of Christ and the Apostles. Let them read the Old Testament, let them read the New Testament. Make sure they hear them. And by the way as Christians you have a lot of warnings in your sanctification as well. Hebrews Chapter 12, First Thessalonians Chapter 4. There are so many passages that remind us that you need to live with that sense that it's not just about hanging a carrot out there saying you are be blessed if you're a doer the word and it does say that in James Chapter 1. But it also says for the sake of discipline we endure. Hebrews Chapter 12. It says to brothers, I warn you. Don't transgress your brother in this. Why? Because the Lord is the avenger and all these things just as I've also solemnly warned you. Respect the Bible as the warning we all need to hear. Your non-Christian friends and you every morning when you get up, every night when you go to sleep, get in the word, respect it as the thing that you need the most. You need to hear the voice of God in the pages of Scripture.

He objects, verse 30. No, Father Abraham what my brothers really need is a miracle. Someone goes from the dead they will repent. Verse 31 Luke 16. But he said to them if they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.

Number three on your outline, this clearly demonstrates the fact that this is not an issue of intelligence, not an issue of my mind not grasping the facts, it's an issue of the will, it's the issue of volition. It is as I put it here number three I know it's a long statement. Write it out please. Discern the natural aversion to God's supremacy. Discern that.

Understand that. Understand that when you're sharing the gospel. The real concern is a natural inborn aversion to the supremacy of God. It's not God as a concept. Most people in your world believe in God. Around the world, in California, even in liberal Southern California they believe in God.

They're not opposed to the concept. What they don't want is God, at least not anything that looks like the God of the Bible, being in charge. Don't want that.

I don't want God to be supreme. Because even if you had the miracle that wouldn't change.

A lot of people in first century had the miracles. Did they not? Matter of fact, it is ironic and I'm sure it's strategic, Jesus raised the guy from the dead rather, Mary and Martha's brother named Lazarus. And that certainly convinced everyone who saw him, right? No.

John Chapter 12 verses 10 and 11. "The chief priest made plans to put Lazarus to death as well."

This is after he was raised by Jesus "because on account of him," Lazarus, "many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus." Yeah, we've seen the miracle but we've got to cover that up because we don't want anybody to believe in him, because we don't believe. Luke 11 as we read and

studied months and months ago and he did miracles right in front of them.

And the mute man spoke. They said well it may be a miracle but it must be Beelzebub. It's got to be Satan. We have a natural aversion to the supremacy of God. And I guess I should've put natural and supernatural because there is a supernatural aversion we have as well. Not only are we born rebels resisting repentance but there's something behind it all. There was a very rich and wealthy fifth century B.C. city of Phoenicia called Tyre. It was doing so well, a coastal port, great weather, great income, great economy and the king was just like Nebuchadnezzar. Everything was great. Everything was for him he probably a lot like this guy feasted sumptuously every day dressed in purple. This guy was doing well. Things were great. In Ezekiel 28 God has, five centuries before Christ, this prophet go and give a prophecy against that king.

But for the first ten verses he's never called the king he's called the prince. Now that's interesting you don't call the king a prince.

And yet the prophet does. God says go tell the Prince of Tyre. The Prince of Tyre? And then here comes the railing prophesy. You know in your heart you make yourself out to be a god.

You think you deserve everything being about you. You think you deserve all the money being your way.

You think every agenda should be about you. You live for you. Just like we demonically tell our children. I just want you to be happy, Junior. You can be whatever you wanna be. I know that's almost blasphemy you think it is a joke. Right? Nothing could be more demonic than telling our children that. You be whatever you want to be. I just want you to be happy. That's the enemy speaking worldly advice to the next generation and we parrot it because we think that's exactly what people should think.

No, that's what the King of Tyre thought, that's what Nebuchadnezzar thought. And he keeps saying you make yourself out to be that this world's a big apple, you're going reach out and grab it and take it by the horns and live once and grab all the gusto you can. And that's how he was living. And after 10 verses of that then we get the real lament and it's called the lament of the King of Tyre. You know this, Ezekiel 28? Now all these verses come in and now we're not talking about the prince who really is the king we're talking about the king who really is the King of Tyre, who's the King of Tyre. An anointed covering cherub.

What's that? It's an angel walking in the garden of God, given great responsibility among the Seraphim, the burning ones.

And he's there filling his heart with pride saying I don't want to submit to the supremacy of God. I want some of this to be about me as a matter of fact I want to live for me. And you are blameless, perfection. God doesn't call anybody that. Blameless in perfection, this must be a holy angel. It was a holy angel until unrighteousness was found in you.

And he said I want this to be about me.

And he fell and he was cast down and exposed before kings. Interesting. So the Prince of Tyre, who is really the King of Tyre, learns from the real god of this world, Second Corinthians 4:4, the spirit that's now at work in the sons of disobedience. Ephesians Chapter 2. And we have that king doing nothing but wanting to tempt any human heart that will listen.

It's about you. Live for yourself. That income you have it's for you. That job you have, that position, that influence, that leverage, it's about you. That family you have, it's about you. If your kid says I'm going to go live for Christ on the mission field in a dangerous place, you go, "oh, no don't do that." Why? Because it's about you. You want him to be happy because you think it's about you, his happiness, your happiness. It's not about you. It's about the Lord Jesus Christ. It's about even us saying I'm willing to die for him. I'm willing to give up everything for him. And here is Satan described and the fall of Satan described wanting us to daily fall to the same agenda that he fell to.

And here's is a great example the Nebuchadnezzar of the coastal region of Phoenicia doing the exact same thing Nebuchadnezzar was doing and that is, it's about me. And it's the temptation you fight and it's certainly the way your non-Christian neighbor is living right now and the whole call is to repentance.

But you need to know what you're up against a natural aversion, even a supernatural aversion, to the supremacy of God. They don't want to live for God. So we're crying out for a miracle are we're not. A miracle I hope that's happened in your life, has it? I'm switching lines here. How do you do that? You have to repent. How does that happen? God asked to work in your life a miraculous change of your heart as Ezekiel went on to say a change from a heart of stone to a heart of flesh. That natural aversion to God can be overcome and it has been in many that hear my voice in this room and it's a miracle we're praying for in people's lives. The agency, verse 29, of our passage says it's going to be the Word of God. Miracles aren't going to do it. Your friend does not need a miracle. He may say that but if he had it then it wouldn't matter. If he's unwilling to hear the truth of the scripture which is in concert with creation and his conscience he's not going to listen to the miraculous sign that's before his eyes. It doesn't matter if he can smell it, touch it, taste it, feel it, see it. It doesn't matter.

So we have a natural aversion to supremacy of God. Remember how non-Christians are described in Romans 1? They knew God but they didn't honor him as God. They acknowledge God but they didn't see fit to acknowledge God. They knew his righteous decrees but they weren't willing to really know his righteous decrees they were giving hearty approval of those who sinned like they did. God turned them over.

And again if you just think that's a description of non-Christians after all that bifurcation of humanity in first John, walking in the light, walking in darkness, having the Spirit, not having the Spirit, being a child of God, a child the devil. At the end of all at the very last line of First John to Christians, his little children. My little children, my congregation.

Keep your self from idols. For you it could be your time, it could be your family, could be your career, could be your money, and the topic of Chapter 16 is let's look at your money for a little while. Do you think it's your money or are you a steward? Are you ready to utilize your money as a sign that your captain and your king is God and not yourself? Jesus is always fighting that in our lives, he said don't be anxious about what you can eat, what you're going to wear, what you going to put on, what you're going to drink. The gentiles chase after, they seek after all these things. Your Heavenly Father knows you need them. You need the basics. He'll get you what you need. Seek first the kingdom. Do not worry about your money. Can you worry about being a money manager who sees the principles of scripture and says I'm going to live according to those? I want to seek the kingdom, advance the agenda of the kingdom. I want to live a generous life.

If you do then God will take care of the other things. Don't be anxious about tomorrow.



Verse 34 says, "for tomorrow will be anxious for itself." What does it mean? Well here's the last line - sufficient for the day is its own trouble. You know what the trouble is today on this hot steel staircase. Dealing with me and my life reflecting the character of Christ staying firm and resolute in this line against all odds against all opposition.

I'm going to deal with today I'm going to worry about kingdom agendas.

I'm not going to really worry about whether I'm going to be the richest guy, most famous guy, the most advanced guy, the most influential guy in my office. None of that matters.

What matters is the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

The supremacy of God is what it should be about and for you as a Christian if you sit here today as a Christian and you care about the five friends that maybe came flashing through your mind a moment ago, I need us to demonstrate with all the elements of our lives that we're committed to God. We're going to live for God because that's what we value the most. I heard in the news recently about a comic book that originally sold at a dime store in America in June of 1938. It was featuring for the first time a character named Superman in tights. Some kids liked it. Other kids didn't. Some thought it was stupid. Some were interested. Some thought they should spend their hard earned allowance money on it in 1938. You can go and check this out, it costs at that point, printed right on the front, 10 cents. So they're at Woolworth deciding whether or not they're going to give their 10 cents for this new comic book. I said it recently sold. It sold by the way at auction for \$3.2 million.

\$3.2 million. Now what if I could go back in time and talk to those little boys deciding whether to buy that magazine and what to do with that magazine after they bought it.

If I knew what I know now and could go back and tell them, listen this is the most important purchase you'll ever make.

Matter of fact it's 10 cents and for you, you may not have it. But you better go out and get it. You better sell every little trinket you have, every toy, every top, every jack, every ball and you better go buy this magazine because if you can just hang on to it and keep it in good shape.

One day it's going to be worth millions.

And if that kid believed me even though his friends thought, that guy? That's stupid. I've never seen anything like that before. Why would you buy that especially if you can't afford it? It's going to cost you so much.

I think they'd put up with any ridicule they have. I think they would pay whatever it meant to be paid in terms of whatever cost the safety deposit box at their bank.

They would do it. And they value the rest of their lives if they really believe that what they were purchasing had infinite worth in the mind of a little kid at Woolworth in June of 1938. Jesus says that's how it ought to be for you whether you come across it and stumble upon a treasure in a field you better go sell everything you have and value the superlative nature of this kingdom. Or whether you're a seeker looking for it like a merchant looking for pearls of great price when you find it sell everything you have.



See everything as less important. See every bit of money you have is irrelevant next to gaining that kingdom.

That's what the Kingdom of God is like.

The superlative value of the kingdom and the relative unimportance of everything else, your reputation, your money, your time this week, your kid's lives, everything is second. I count everything as a loss, Paul said, in light of knowing Christ my Lord. To have the concept in our minds that nothing is more important than that. That sounds zealous then it's zealous. And God loves one who is as zealous for his name as he is. I hope it's reflected in your money. It has not been about budgets, it's not been about raising money at church, it's not been about anything other than reflecting in your life that you seek first the kingdom, the kingdom of God and his righteousness. May that be our resolve this week and for the remainder of our lives.

Let's pray. God help us please to reflect in our calendar, our conversation, our careers and our checkbook everything that you would expect from people that are sold out to your son, his advancement, his kingdom, his agenda. And be willing to give ourselves afresh even now as we sit at the end of this service and say we want to live for Christ knowing that our friends, maybe five friends in our minds that popped up, need to switch lines.

They need to repent. God maybe some even here need to repent this morning.

Let that be the reality here as you work that miracle in our hearts and as you grant that kind of repentance to our friends, our neighbors, our coworkers, our family members. Let us get serious about this job of making disciples in South Orange County and beyond. Let's be willing to live for you in a way maybe that we haven't in the past and I pray that you just refresh us even with this warning this very tough text about the warning of what's at stake. Two master, two loyalties and two irreversible destinations. Sober us, motivate us and even encourage us with this truth. In Jesus name. Amen.