

Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23

Psalms 49:1-12

Colossians 3:1-11

Luke 12:13-21

Sermon July 31st, 2022

God's Love for Us Is What Is Important

Over the years, I have come across many scenarios like the one we hear about in the gospel this morning. People fighting over their inheritance. Taking each other to court. Not speaking to each other for years over these disputes. Creating division within their families and communities.

When our primary focus is on money it can have devastating impacts on our relationships.

We see this impact when siblings fight over their parent's estate.

We see this impact when couples fight over money. Financial stress and differences on how people value and spend money contribute to the break down of marriages.

We see this impact when we use money in ways that try to manipulate and control people.

We see this impact when our focus on money influences how we treat those living in poverty. Instead, of trying to find ways to help people living in poverty. We see these people as lazy. As a burden on our society. We end up neglecting them (**Image**).

We see how our fears and insecurities about our finances can impact us as a church community. We focus on where to cut back. Where to save. Our attention turns inwards. Instead, of focusing on where we can share our resources to help those living in our community.

When our primary focus is on money it can have devastating impacts on our relationships.

We know this. Many of us have experienced these impacts. And yet, focusing less so on money is easier said than done.

Many of us feel insecure when it comes to money. Many of us worry about whether we can pay the bills. Many of us worry about our future. When inflation is high (**Image**). When interest rates rise. When the cost of housing is unreachable for so many of us. We become hyper-focused on money. We really start to feel that insecurity. Will I be able to afford the increase in rent or mortgage? Will I be able to buy enough food to feed our children? Will I be able to afford enough gas to get to work? Will I have

enough left over to put into my savings? Will I need to take out a loan? But what about those rising interest rates? Will I need to help my child pay their rent this month?

In response to our insecurities. In response to our hyperfocus on money. Jesus tries to turn our attention back on God (**Image**). On God's love for us. On God's generosity. Jesus doesn't try to solve our disputes. Jesus reminds us that we do not receive life from money. We receive life from God.

When our primary focus is on God. On God's love for us. On God's generosity. Then we feel freer to depend on God for our wellbeing. To not worry so much about money. Because God will care for our needs. God will provide for our wellbeing.

If you take a moment to reflect back on your life is there a time where you thought you wouldn't be able to pay your bills, and yet, something unexplainable happened to get you over that hump. A cheque you forgot about showed up in the mail, or a neighbour/family member came to your aid unexpectedly.

When we have an experience where we witness God's generosity, we feel less afraid of losing everything. We feel more secure in our financial wellbeing. We don't feel like we are facing these financial pressures alone.

When we have an experience where we witness the generosity of our neighbour (**Image**), we feel less afraid of losing everything. We feel more secure in our financial wellbeing. We don't feel like we are facing these financial pressures alone.

When we no longer are controlled by this feeling of insecurity. This fear that we could lose everything. Then we become more generous. We start to reflect God's love in the world so others too can experience God's generosity.

We start to pour more time and energy into our relationships. Realizing that what is most meaningful to us is the people we share our lives with. The God we share our lives with.

As a church, our attention becomes more outward focused as we care for those in need in our community (**Image**). Building relationships and partnerships with our neighbours.

In fact, in times of economic hardships, the faith communities who continued to share of their resources with others became healthier and more vibrant communities in the aftermath. While, faith communities, who held tightly to their resources struggled long after the economic hardship ended.

Jesus breathes new life on us in the midst of our fears, our insecurities. Freeing us to focus our attention on God's love for us. God's generosity. Freeing us to live out this love, this generosity, to our neighbour.

Let us pray, gracious God, open our hearts to trust in you. To believe that you will care for our needs. When we get hyper focused on money turn our hearts back to focus on your love. Your generosity. Freeing us so that we can share your love, your generosity with others. In Jesus name we pray, **Amen.**

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