

Something Money Can't Buy

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Preacher: Mike Scrivani

[0:00] Welcome to Built on God's Word, the preaching and teaching ministry of Highland Park Baptist Church in Bartlesville, Oklahoma.! Pastor Mike Scrivani preaches on Psalm 49.!

We continue to be reading the Word of God. This summer we're going through the Psalms and specifically the ones that talk about fear. And this morning's Psalm talks about the fear of those who have money and the fear of not having money, the fear of losing money.

So Psalm 49, if you're there, would you please stand with me as we honor the reading of God's Word together. To the Choir Master, a psalm of the sons of Korah.

Hear this, all peoples. Give ear, all inhabitants of the world, both low and high, rich and poor together. My mouth shall speak wisdom.

The meditation of my heart shall be understanding. I will incline my ear to a proverb. I will solve my riddle to the music of the lyre. Why should I fear in times of trouble when the iniquity of those who cheat me surrounds me, those who trust in their wealth and boast of the abundance of their riches?

[1:35] Truly, no man can ransom another or give to God the price of his life. For the ransom of their life is costly and can never suffice, that he should live on forever and never see the pit.

For he sees that even the wise die. The fool and the stupid alike must perish and leave their wealth to others. Their graves are their homes forever, their dwelling places to all generations, though they called lands by their own names.

Man and his pomp will not remain. He is like the beasts that perish. This is the path of those who have foolish confidence. Yet after them, people approve of their boasts.

Like sheep, they are appointed to Sheol. Death shall be their shepherd, and the upright shall rule over them in the morning. Their form shall be consumed in Sheol with no place to dwell.

But God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol, for he will receive me. Be not afraid when a man becomes rich, when the glory of his house increases. For when he dies, he will carry away nothing.

[2:39] His glory will not go down after him. For though while he lives, he counts himself blessed, and though you get praise when you do well for yourself, his soul will go to the generation of his fathers who will never again see light.

Man and his pomp, yet without understanding, is like the beasts that perish. May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated? Amen. Luke 12 opens with Jesus addressing a massive crowd.

He warns them about the dangers of being misled by the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. He commands them not to fear those who may harm the body, but to fear God who holds ultimate authority over their eternal destiny.

He emphasizes the serious consequences of rejecting him and encourages his followers to stand firm when they are pressured to deny him.

Jesus, the eternal word of God, the divine son of God, is giving warning and guidance on matters pertaining to life, death, and eternal life.

[4:00] When suddenly, he's interrupted by a person in the crowd. What could compel an individual to interrupt Jesus in his instructions of infinite importance?

Luke chapter 12, verse 13 says, This man was growing increasingly impatient as he listened to Jesus.

He was indifferent to the profound spiritual truths Jesus was communicating. Unable to wait any longer, he interrupts Jesus with his request.

And not only does he interrupt Jesus, but he thought he could tell Jesus what to do. No details are given about the man's motives or the legitimacy of his claim.

All we know is he wanted Jesus to rule in his favor so that he would profit from the earthly property his mind was preoccupied with in which he presumed belonged to him.

[5 : 14] Jesus didn't come to bring earthly property to men, but men to their eternal creator. But Jesus, the master teacher, seized this moment to issue a warning against the danger of devoting our lives to coveting wealth and accumulating earthly treasures that are ultimately worthless in the face of death and the eternal judgment that follows.

Our earthly lives.

He said, to him, fool, this night your soul is required of you and the things you have prepared, whose will they be? So Jesus concludes, is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich towards God. Just when the rich man in this parable thought he was set for life, God took his life. His pursuit of wealth, his plans to preserve his wealth and take pleasure in his wealth, perished in an instant. God wasn't impressed by how the rich man lived his life. He hadn't been wised, he'd been a fool, an *afro*, a Greek word which describes someone who is mindless, senseless, ignorant, and acts without regards of God's revealed wisdom which he's been gracious to give to us in his word. The rich man wasn't a fool because he had wealth. We have plenty of examples in Scripture of godly men and women whom God blessed with wealth. Wealth is morally neutral. It's how you view it and it's what you do with it that matters to God. When you covet wealth, when you hoard wealth, when your greatest fear in life is losing wealth, when you base another person's worth on their wealth, when you idolize wealthy people, when your first pursuit in life is to accumulate as much wealth for yourself as you can, you worship wealth because you look to it for significance for significance and security. It becomes your idol. It becomes your identity.

[8 : 36] It becomes your God. This is a problem for rich people, middle-class people, and poor people, for both young people, middle-aged people, and old people, for citizens both of affluent nations and impoverished countries, for both believers and unbelievers. It's a problem for all humanity and a problem which the Lord frequently addresses in his word. Psalm 49 confronts us with uncomfortable truths that people are desperate to ignore, that we will all die, and that earthly wealth is worthless in death. This psalm issues a warning to teach people to be wise. And so the main idea from our text for this sermon, beware of squandering your life by trusting in earthly wealth, for it cannot save you from death or ransom your eternal soul. Beware of squandering your life by trusting in earthly wealth, for it cannot save you from death or ransom your eternal soul. You know, many people are living like the rich fool today in Jesus's parable. Many people are living like the man who interrupted Jesus's teaching, which prompted his parable on the rich fool. They seek Jesus and they ask him to intercede in their lives for the purpose of accumulating earthly wealth. Their focus is on this world and the accumulation of material things, deceived into believing that they can build heaven on earth in a world cursed by sin and is destined for destruction. The Bible says this is a foolish way to live. As believers, as those who have been born again, we need to be aware of the pull that earthly wealth can have on us and does have on us.

John Stott once preached to a crowd of eager young students interested in giving their lives to international missions. He reminded them to not forget who they are as citizens of heaven and pilgrims on this earth and to be weary of how quickly we can fix our eyes on things below instead of Christ above.

And so he told them, I read some years ago of a young man who found a \$5 bill on the street and who from that time on never lifted his eyes when walking. In the course of years, he accumulated 29,516 buttons, 54,172 pins and 12 cents, a bent back and a miserly disposition. He couldn't see the radiance of the sunlight, the sheen of the stars, the smile of the face on his friends or the blossoms of springtime for his eyes were in the gutter. Stott tells them, there are too many Christians like that.

We have important duties on earth, but we must never allow them to preoccupy us in such a way that we forget who we are or where we are going. We live in a world and a culture that is flush with wealth and possessions. Our culture is saturated with messaging that seeks to convince us that money buys happiness.

A culture that also avoids the reality of death and denies the eternal consequences of sin. We are surrounded by prosperity and it's easy to trust in money for significance and for security.

[12 : 32] As Christians, we can allow our view of money to shape our view of God instead of allowing God to shape our view of money. Brother, sister, friend, God doesn't want you to waste your life on earthly wealth.

He desires that you see, pursue, and live your life for the treasure and wealth that is to be found only in Jesus Christ, who is the only one capable of ransoming your eternal soul.

And so in this psalm, there's three commands. There's three ways to be so that we don't squander our life trusting in earthly treasures, which cannot save us from death or ransom our eternal souls. And so the first command, the first B is to be wise. Be wise. Verses one through four again say, hear this all peoples, give ear all inhabitants of the earth, both low and high, rich and poor together. My mouth shall speak wisdom. The meditation of my heart shall be understanding. I will incline my ear to a proverb. I will solve my riddle to the music of the lyre. So Psalm 49 opens with a call from the psalmist to all people. Everyone, all the world's inhabitants, all descendants of Adam, all rich people, all poor people are invited and urged to hear and understand the wisdom shared in this psalm.

This psalm, which the psalmist says, has a proverb that solves a riddle, which is the question that he asks in verse five. But before we get to that question, it's important to first understand the source of wisdom contained in the proverb. The root of the Hebrew word translated as proverb means to be like.

[14:38] The book of Proverbs is full of simple comparisons and illustrations, which teach deep truths about the realities of realities of life, which make us wise and help us be like God, who is the source of all truth.

Proverbs 1, 2 through 7 says, To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity, to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth.

Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance, to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Fools despise wisdom and instruction. So here we read that wisdom results from living in fear of the Lord. An unbeliever should live in fear of eternal separation from God, but a believer's fear of the Lord should result from their knowledge, their constant awareness of God's nearness to them. The fear of God that results in wisdom comes from an awareness that our loving heavenly Father is watching and evaluating everything we think, everything we say, and everything we do.

When we live with the sense of God's nearness, we make wise decisions. If you think about it, children typically are more obedient when they realize their parents or a teacher or an adult is observing their behavior. And so they are motivated to obey. Wisdom comes from the knowledge of who God is which is communicated to us in God's Word. And one of those places is Psalm 119, 98 through 99.

Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation. We grow in wisdom when we read, study, and obey God's Word. And it guides us. And it lights our path in the dark world so that we can resist the snares of temptation and the pitfalls of sin. Wisdom is not just knowing about God's character, His presence, and His Word. It's the willingness and the ability to apply that knowledge in our lives as we make decisions as we make decisions and we discern with God's Word truth from error. The psalmist knows the Lord and has acquired this wisdom which he's willing to share with everyone that they too may be wise. I think most people's favorite Bible verse is their favorite because it contains the truth that they constantly need to be reminded of. Mine is Proverbs 3, 5, and 6. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make straight your paths. Many people want to rely on their own understanding and they allow their feelings to guide them, but feelings are often deceiving. And so one thing that has been helpful for me is to compare what I feel to what God says in His Word and ask myself, am I right to feel this way?

[18:34] And to ask myself, does God want me to feel this way? Does God want me to feel fearful? Does God want me to feel anxious? Does God want me to feel stressed? Being wise means fearing the Lord, obeying His Word, and trusting in Him more than yourself and more than anyone else. It means learning from your mistakes when you choose to lean on your own understanding. Now look, you don't have to have a college degree to be wise. You don't have to be considered smart to be wise. If you know the Lord and you fear Him and you are aware of His constant presence and you obey His Word and you don't lean on your own understanding, you will be wise. And if you think you lack wisdom, then pray and ask God for it.

As we read in James 1:5, if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach and it will be given Him? God wants you to be wise. He wants you to be wise so that you don't squander your life pursuing worthless things that cannot save you from death and cannot ransom your eternal soul. So be wise. Next, be warned. Be warned. In verses 5 through 6, the psalmist asks a question.

This is the riddle that godly wisdom answers. 5 through 6 again, why should I fear in time of trouble when the iniquity of those who cheat me surrounds me, those who trust in their wealth and boast of their abundance of their riches? Again, the problem here is one experienced by all people.

Both rich people and poor people have a problem with loving money and treasuring it more than the Lord. The psalmist describes being surrounded by people who have cheated him financially.

Love for money motivates both poor people and rich people to steal. Whether they live in the inner city, the suburbs, the country, or on Wall Street, the love of money has caused people to come up with schemes to cheat people out of their wealth. Prisons are full of people who have stolen cars, stolen identities, and stolen people's investments. This is a common problem which still surrounds us today.

[21:23] Have you ever been robbed? Have you ever been scammed? I have. It's infuriating, isn't it? We can feel legally cheated too. Take property taxes, for example. I'm paying you rent for what I own?

That doesn't seem to make sense to me. Or take a sudden increase by your internet provider with no explanation. We're just going to charge you twice as much as we did before just because we can.

Expensive purchases like cars and appliances that are made cheaply and seem to be designed to break so that you have to buy replacement parts or replace the whole thing altogether. And that can leave us feeling cheated. Maybe you've lost a job that you were good at. You were good at that job. But the company that you work for wanted to show the board of directors an increased profit. And so though they could afford to keep you, and you probably made less in a year than the top executive gets for a Christmas bonus, they let you go and it doesn't seem fair. There's an old saying that cheaters never prosper. But cheaters often do prosper. And they often target honest people because honest people aren't typically thinking about cheating because their minds don't work that way. It's troubling when people cheat us. And it's angering that we have to be on guard, so on guard against people who will cheat us. And so we have to wonder, how can the psalmist say he is not afraid when he could be cheated like this again? Well, because losing money wasn't his greatest fear. Losing money wasn't his greatest fear and he wasn't envious or covetous of those who trusted and boasted in their abundant wealth.

He had something of much greater value, something that money can't buy, which he shares in verses 7 through 9. Truly no man can ransom another or give to God the price of his life, for the ransom of their life is costly and can never suffice that he should live on forever and never see the pit.

Money can do many things in this life. But when the end of this life comes, money cannot help you with the biggest problem of all. The richest person in the world doesn't have enough money to buy one more breath before they die. No amount of money can keep you alive and no amount of money can ransom your eternal soul from God who owns everything, including your life.

[24:35] Brian Johnson is an American entrepreneur, a venture capitalist, author, founder, and former CEO of a company called Kernel, which creates devices that monitor and record brain activity.

He is well-educated and he's very wealthy. He's estimated worth is around 300 to 500 million dollars. He was the subject of a Netflix documentary called Don't Die, The Man Who Wants to Live Forever.

And in that documentary, it records how Brian Johnson spends approximately two million dollars a year on an extreme data-driven anti-aging regimen called Project Blueprint. His goal is to reverse biological age of his organs to match that of an 18-year-old and effectively end aging. He famously declared that Jesus is his ultimate competitor because of Christianity's monopoly on eternal life. Recently, Johnson shared that he has an incurable autoimmune disease, which he described as his stomach eating itself. But he's undeterred, trusting that his regimen will result in the cure of his disease. Now, if your view of death is based on evolutionary assumptions about the origin of human life, it's not all that surprising that someone with the financial means like Brian Johnson would use

them to try to defeat death. For such a person, death is a glitch in the universe. Death is a problem they trust will be solved. It's just a matter of time through human ingenuity. But as Christians, we know that

Brian Johnson will never find a cure for death, Brian Johnson or anyone else, not because he isn't smart enough or will run out of money. We know he will never cure death because we know where death comes from.

We know why death exists, and we know the only way that death can be overcome. Our hearts should break for people like Brian Johnson.

[27 : 04] Because he, like us, is created in God's image. And he, like us, bears the consequences of sin that we all inherited from our first parents when they defied God's command and trusted in their own understanding, being deceived by Satan into thinking that defying God would make them wise and that they would not die.

Brian Johnson is doing what all unbelieving people do in the face of death. He fears it. He denies it as a reality. And he thinks he can cure it.

The psalmist issues a warning here which Brian Johnson and those who believe like him should heed. No amount of earthly wealth can save a person from death or can ransom their eternal soul in death.

God is holy as we've sung this morning. God is just. And we've all sinned against him. And he owns all things. And he can't be bribed.

In Matthew 16, 24 through 27, Jesus said, If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

[28 : 24] For whoever would save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?

Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father. And then he will repay each one according to what he has done.

We should take care of our bodies. They are temples of the Holy Spirit. But what a relief the gospel of Jesus Christ is. What a relief it would bring to someone like Brian Johnson.

All those hours exercising, weighing and measuring his food, pumping millions into his health, trying to concoct a cure for death as he seeks immortality.

What a relief it would be if he realized that the cure for death and the reality of immortality has been achieved already by Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

[29 : 36] In John 3, 16 through 17, Jesus says, For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Jesus settled a dispute among his disciples.

They were arguing over which of them was going to be the greatest in Jesus' new kingdom. They were focused on earthly titles and positions. And Jesus said to them in Mark 10, 43 through 45, But it shall not be so among you, but whoever would be great among you must be your servant.

And whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Brian Johnson is right in one important sense. He will never die. Human beings have eternal souls that will live forever.

[30 : 50] But an eternity apart from Christ is so terrible and horrifying that Scripture describes it as a kind of eternal death.

In Matthew 25, Jesus shares about his final judgment. And he says there to those on his left who have rejected him.

He will say to those on his left, Depart from me. You cursed into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food.

I was thirsty and you gave me no drink. I was a stranger and you did not welcome me. Naked and you did not clothe me. Sick and in prison and you did not visit me. Then they will answer him saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not minister to you?

And he will answer them saying, truly I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me. And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

[32:02] If you die in your sin, apart from saving faith in Jesus Christ, you will pay the debt of your sin to God eternally. Agonizing.

Unceasingly. Eternally. In judgment. The wise person knows this. And warns others.

As the psalmist continues to do in verses 10 through 14. In verse 10 he says, For he sees that even the wise die. The fool and the stupid alike must perish and leave their wealth to others.

In other words, all your earthly wealth will be given to someone else when you die. All of your treasures which you lock up in your safe and you fear losing will be placed into the hands of another person who didn't work for it and who may not value it as much as you do.

Verse 11 says, Their graves are their homes forever. They're dwelling places to all generations, though they called lands by their own names. You can have a building named after you.

[33:12] You can have a state named after you. You could have a country named after you. A lot of real estate can bear your name, but in death, the only space you'll occupy is a three foot by eight foot grave plot or a nine to 12 inch urn.

If that's what you choose to do. Verse 12, Man and his pomp will not remain. He is like the beast that perish. Though human beings are created in God's image, they will die just like the beast, just like the animals who aren't created in God's image.

Verse 13 says, This is the path of those who have foolish confidence, yet after them people approve of their boasts. People may celebrate the achievements of a wealthy person and marvel at their luxurious homes after they die, which are probably going to be turned into a museum.

But all of their achievements have failed, and all the celebration of people who are still living fail to save their souls. And those who still live are blind to see it.

Verse 14 says, Like sheep, they are appointed to Sheol. This is a word that describes a place for the dead. Like an English word, we say a place of the dead would be like the grave. Death shall be their shepherd, and the upright shall rule over them in the morning.

[34:31] Their form shall be consumed in Sheol with no place to dwell. Whereas the righteous have God as their shepherd as they walk through the valley of the shadow of death, Psalm 23 says.

The unrighteous has no shepherd. Death is personified here like a grim reaper. They will fear death as they walk through its dark shadow into the eternal fire, where instead of receiving goodness and mercy all the days of their life, they will weep and gnash their teeth forever.

The Hebrew word translated as form in verse 14 is an interesting word. It was used to describe an image fashioned by human hands like an idol.

In the ancient Near East, the tombs of the elite display effigies, these forms of the deceased.

There are temples that housed statues, these forms, idols, that people believed were a mediation of whatever false god that they believed in.

[35:50] Israel's neighbors trusted such things for protection and status. And so this verse isn't teaching annihilationism, that the souls of those who go into hell will eventually cease to exist.

It means that their form in life, their status, their wealth, their foolish beliefs, the things they idolized and based their identity on will be consumed, will be stripped away.

Like Jesus' parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16. The rich man who in life dressed in purple and he lived lavishly, while Lazarus, the poor man, begged at his gates.

They both died. They both died. But even in eternal death, the rich man called out to Abraham and commanded Abraham to command Lazarus to dip his finger in water and send him down to cool his tongue.

He thought he still had his form, his station in life. But there was a chasm that could not be crossed. And he was forced to suffer in anguish forever while Lazarus was comforted.

[37:07] Their stations, their forms in eternity were forever changed. This is the warning. And the psalmist issues it to everyone.

Don't trust in wealth. Don't waste your life being deceived into thinking that wealth can save your life. Rich and poor who covet earthly wealth will both die.

And the wealth they had pursued cannot ransom their eternal soul from God. Verses 5 through 14 address all people. But in verse 15, the psalmist turns his attention to those who are wise because they've trusted in God, who has ransomed their soul.

But his encouragement here is for them to be weary of earthly wealth's enticement and the temptation to trust in it for what only God can give.

So the third command, the third B is be weary. Verses 15 through 20. But God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol. He will receive me.

[38 : 16] Be not afraid when a man becomes rich, when the glory of his house increases. For when he dies, he will carry nothing away. His glory will not go down after him. For though while he lives, he counts himself blessed.

And though yet you get praise when you do well yourself, his soul will go to the generations of his father who will never see light. Man in his pomp, yet without understanding, is like the beasts that perish.

When coworkers get promoted instead of you. When siblings achieve more than you. When your neighbors purchase new stuff.

When your friends wear expensive clothes. When your teammates have expensive equipment.

When the church down the road breaks ground on a million dollar edition.

You can think. We can think. I must be doing something wrong. Or. Why not me?

[39 : 26] We fear that we don't receive the same increase. And that maybe we'll get left behind. Or maybe we'll be left out. Sometimes God causes others to prosper through good means.

And if that's the case, we should celebrate them, not covet them. Sometimes in this case, the unrighteous prosper. But we should not envy them because they don't have what money can't buy. As Christians, we know this. But sometimes we can't help but think. You know. If I just had one million of Elon's trillion.

I could pay off all my debt. I could fix all my stuff that's broken. I would have ample good lays up for many years. Relax.

Eat. Drink. Be merry. Brothers, sisters, we must be wary of such thoughts. They can cause us to cheapen or think less of the ransom that Christ has paid to save us from our sins.

[40 : 39] They can cause us to trust in earthly wealth for joy instead of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. They can tempt us to squander our time instead of spending our lives obeying our Lord's command to build His kingdom, to share His gospel, to make disciples, to give cheerfully of the wealth that He has given to us to serve Him and His mission for us.

He is the one who justifies us, not wealth, not possessions. Soon after the Titanic sank, the North Atlantic Sea was littered with objects of social status.

clothes, jewelry, fine leather shoes and luggage, carefully selected and worn to display and to communicate to everybody else on that ship, I have wealth to seek their validation and to justify themselves as being important people.

after the Titanic struck the iceberg, the crew passed out life vests to panicked passengers. The vests were covered in brown canvas and had big blocks of cork sewn into the chest.

They looked like potato sacks with the holes cut out for the head and the arms. Do you think anyone cared in that moment how they looked? Do you think they worried about the vests covering up their fancy clothes?

[42 : 31] I can't wear this. Tailored suits and dresses don't float. They couldn't save the passengers fortunate enough to be clothed in the plain brown life preservers which would keep them alive.

When the ship is sinking, you want to wear what it takes to survive even if that means standing out, even if that means losing all your earthly treasures that you once looked to to justify you.

The only ones who will be saved, who have eternal life are the ones who will be clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

It's the ones who realize that they have sinned. It's the ones who confess their sins to God and whom they have sinned against. It's the ones who realize that I could never do enough, own enough to make God ever be in my debt.

It's the one who realize the grace of God to send his only son, Jesus Christ, to live the perfect life that they could not live, to die in their place and suffer for their sins, to endure the wrath of the Father for the sins that they've committed, who shed his blood, who took our place, who died and who rose again and who ascended and who we are forgiven through.

[44 : 10] The Bible says that when we turn to Jesus in faith, we are clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. We are saved from our sins. We are saved from eternity apart from God.

We have eternal life. We will not suffer in hell eternally dying. Are you clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ? If so, rejoice, brother.

Rejoice, sister. That can never be taken from you. No matter what you have in this life, you have Christ, you have all that you need.

You have salvation. Rejoice. What more could you need? Why look to validation? Why look to earthly possessions for security, for status, for significance?

If Jesus has saved you, then you have all that you need for this life and the next. If you are not saved, Jesus has brought you here to hear this message, to hear about the eternity that awaits you apart from him.

[45 : 26] He's been gracious to bring you here, to hear this word in the hopes that you will hear and believe it. Two other parables Jesus told were the pearl of great price and the parable of a treasure hidden in a field that a man finds in each case and he sells all that he has to acquire that pearl of great price, to acquire that treasure in the field and that pearl of great price, that treasure is Jesus himself.

You will never give anything or lose anything for the sake of following Jesus Christ that won't be eternally worth it.

I think another way we need to adjust our lives according to what we've heard as believers is this, let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ. Let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ who has saved you, who has clothed you in his righteousness.

Be wise, be like him. Be generous. Be fruitful. Be obedient. In all your ways, seek to be like Jesus. Philippians 1.27 says, Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.

[46 : 56] Church, may that be the case here at Highland Park Baptist Church, that we are seeking together to live lives worthy of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Let's pray. Lord, forgive us that so often our eyes are focused on this earth.

We are like the man that was in the example John Stott gave to those young men and women considering giving their lives to following you in international missions. Our eyes are focused on the gutter.

Lord, we allow our disposition, our thoughts, our attitudes to be affected so much by how much earthly wealth we either have or don't have.

and Lord, we can be covetous of those who have what we don't. Lord, we can have a lot of wealth and think that because of that we are secure and we can boast in what we have and take our side off of you, that maybe you've given it to us to share with others.

[48 : 15] Lord, you've called us to be good stewards and there's certainly nothing wrong with that, but Lord, forgive us that so often I think we are focused on money and what it can do for us instead of you and what you've done for us.

So, Father, I pray that we would be wise, that we would be people who know your word and who do what your word says. I pray, Lord, that we would issue the warning that we've heard in Psalm 49, especially in our nation who there's so much affluence that we would warn people about the folly, the foolishness of squandering their lives, seeking to acquire earthly things that will perish, and instead, Lord, that we would share the gospel boldly and clearly with them in the hopes that you would save them.

God, we pray that you would help us to be weary. Lord, though we know that we're clothed in your righteousness as believers, though we know that we are saved by you and have eternal life, we can be tempted into thinking that there are other things that if we had them, they would give us joy instead of understanding or believing or trusting that true joy, lasting joy, permanent joy is had in you.

And so, Lord, help us to be like you in all of our ways. God, as we go about our daily lives from morning to evening, may it be our great desire to be like you, Jesus, to be like you in what we think, to be like you in what we say, to be like you in what we do, and to be like you being a servant to all in the hopes that you will be glorified in our lives.

you are worthy. We pray for your help, and we trust that you'll provide it. In Jesus' name, amen. To learn more, visit us in person or see the website at highlandparkbaptist.net.