

THE TRAP OF WEALTH

SERIES: HOW TO: LIFE | WEEK 7 | 7.26.2020

Welcome to Calvary. My name is Pastor John. I want to specifically welcome all of our venues, and so first I want to say welcome online if you are joining us, I know a lot of you are online still and you're wanting to engage in our community. Thank you for joining us. We hope that you connect during this message so feel free to post, comment, ask questions, we have online pastors that are ready to help. Please give, just be part of us, so thank you so much for being here online. We love you and we miss you. Hopefully you can come back soon.

Outdoor venue, for everyone outdoors, this is live so this is why I can do this this morning, so thank you for joining us outdoors. We're glad you're here, glad you want to come and be in community and kind of take your next steps. And everyone indoors, good morning, good morning, thank you for wearing your masks and being here and we love you and we're glad you're here. It's so good to worship together. Right? Like it just feels so good to be together. [APPLAUSE] Amen.

And so what we're going to do is we're going to continue our series looking at the book of Proverbs, looking at the wisdom literature. So if you're new with us what we're doing is we're looking at Proverbs, King Solomon, who is the author of Proverbs. He has been given a gift of wisdom by God; kind of a supernatural gift, something that he can kind of use to help us see beyond this world and the wisdom of this world. And so in the book of Proverbs if you ever want to, just as a spiritual discipline, uh, oftentimes—I know Billy Graham who was one of my mentors growing up, he would always do his devotions and then read a Psalm and a Proverbs every day, that was his discipline because he prayed the Psalms and he kind of fed his mind with the Proverbs—and so if you guys want to this is a great, great book just to kind of meditate on throughout your lives as you start your day.

But right now what we're going to do is we're going to kind of briefly touch on this Proverb in Proverbs Chapter 22, verse 4, and then we're going to spend a lot of time in the Gospel in the story of Jesus and Mark. And so I want to introduce this Proverbs to you. It says this:

⁴The reward for humility and fear of the Lord is riches and honor and life.

– PROVERBS 22:4 (ESV)

And so let me pray us into this teaching this morning.

Father,

We ask that You would help us to understand not just what your Word says, Lord, but to apply it to our lives. You said not just to be hearers but doers, Lord, so help us right now. We pray as we just sang that, Lord, your Spirit would just move in this place; that You would soften the hearts of the proud, that Lord, You would give humility to those who think they know enough.

Father, I pray right now that we would step out of this room more in love with You, that you would stir our affections for You, that we would be convicted over things that maybe we've held on to, Lord, as our treasures but we need to give to You. So Lord we just ask You to guide this message.

In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

So when I say wealthy, if I said, "Hey, think of somebody in your life that's wealthy," everyone can think of somebody outside of themselves. Right? Like no one's like, "I am the ultimate." Right? Like, this is not human nature. Human nature is to say, "I know somebody wealthier." And so if we think about this idea of the wealthy it's very easy to say somebody else is wealthy, I am not yet wealthy.

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Right? I just heard that the Amazon guy – anybody heard this? – billions, it's just like, "Ah, I just can't even." Right? You just have these people that you're like they have so much wealth, what would you do with that wealth? But, just like Pastor Lee said last week, it was very convicting when I heard this, and I did a little research – you are the most wealthiest people in the world in this room, you are. And I'll prove it to you. Right? So I just did some research. If you have access to clean water, if you have sufficient food and clothing, most of us our food and clothing gets dropped off at our front door. Right? Crazy world we live in. If you have transportation, even if it's public, if you have opportunity to work, if you have the ability to read a book, relative to billions of people around the world you are the wealthy. I just want you to take that in. Okay? Take that in. Okay, it's hard to think about but for billions in the world when they think about wealthy they think about us. Okay? And so that is a burden but also a blessing.

What are we to do with where God placed us? Many of us we grew up in Chester County in America in 2020, we didn't have a lot of options but we are placed in a position where in the majority of the history of humanity no one has ever had more wealth and comfort than we have right now in – the history of humanity. And so I say that to say when we're talking about the wealthy, okay, it's us – it's me, it's you, this is perspective because we don't want to take what God's going to talk to us about this morning and say this is somebody else—this is us. And so when we see what God is going to say please, please don't pass it off as somebody else. This is why God convicted me so much this week as I read this saying I am this man. The battles that he faced I have to face because I'm put in a position that most of humanity never had, which is there's a lot of comfort and a lot of entertainment and a lot of things that make me not have to depend on God—or so it seems.

And so here's the passage I want to live in most of the morning, it's in Mark Chapter 10, so if you have your Bibles turn to this, Mark Chapter 10, verses 17-31. And so Jesus is going to nail this principle that that Solomon's teaching us, He's going to nail it down hard for us this morning. He's going to make it rock solid about what Solomon means by that statement and what Jesus thinks about possessions and wealth. So Mark Chapter 10, we're going to be 17 and 31, we're going to read it here together.

¹⁷ And as he

— Jesus —

was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"¹⁸ And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone."¹⁹ You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.'²⁰ And he said to him, "Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth."²¹ And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."²² Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

²³ And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!"²⁴ And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God!²⁵ It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."²⁶ And they were exceedingly astonished, and said to him, "Then who can be saved?"²⁷ Jesus looked at them and said, "With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God."²⁸ Peter began to

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say to him, "See, we have left everything and followed you." 29 Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, 30 who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. 31 But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

– MARK 10:17-31 (ESV)

Lord,

Help us to understand what this text is telling us. Father, we are the rich, help us understand why You say it's so hard. Please, Lord, help us.

In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

So first thing we see in this passage, okay, first thing we see is that Jesus calls this rich man to surrender. If you look at this text what we see is that Jesus fails in the evangelism class. Like, like imagine Bill Gates comes to Calvary Fellowship church, comes up to Pastor John Lawley and says, "Listen, man, I've been praying my whole life. I want to follow Jesus." And I say to Bill Gates, "In order for you to follow Jesus, sell your company." Think about that for a second. You would say to me, "Hey, man, that's like, don't go there, guy." Right? Like, don't go for the jugular, like, talk about Jesus, open the Gospel with the guy. Man, he has a lot of opportunity to, like, help our building expansion around the world. Right? Like he's got a lot of money to give to mission, man, why are you running him off?

Like here's a rich, young prospect—man, think about the missionary journey of Paul. this guy could have just been. Right? But he fails because he says – he doesn't fail, but he looks like he fails – because He says what? He says sell everything or you can't follow Me. And so He goes right to the heart of this young man and the question is: Why would He do that? The disciples are astonished, why would He do that? Right? I mean, what – if a man came to you from work and he said, "Hey, I wanna know Jesus," would you be like, "Sell your car"? Right? Like, why are you going towards possessions? But I want you to look at this text. Okay. I'm gonna break this down, this is what I believe that there are so many things that pop that sometimes we just read through.

Here's the first thing, the man runs up to Jesus and he says this, "*Good Teacher,*" – see that? – "*what must I do to inherit eternal life?*" What did Jesus say? He says who's good; and for us – You are, Jesus. He says who is good, there's no man who is good. Right? And so here's the first thing that we see in this text when it comes to our wealth and possession, this young man saw Jesus as a good Teacher. Is Jesus a good Teacher? Yes, but is that all He is? No. He is what? He's Lord; He's more than a good Teacher. And so as he's coming to Jesus he's saying good Teacher, so what Jesus is seeing is that this man is coming to Me wanting to hear my words as a Teacher would teach his students, not as a Lord to obey, but a Teacher to respect. Do you follow what I mean? And so as this man's coming he's saying listen, I want You to talk to me about things like my wealth and my possessions and my family, but You're not my Lord. If I don't like what You say, I don't have to listen to You because You're my Teacher, not my Lord. And so Jesus sees the heart of this young man, He sees it—and doesn't that pass as Christianity today?

Like, how many of you have an easy time saying man, the Bible has a lot of good advice and it's a helpful Book for my whole pursuit of self-help. It's really good. It makes me feel good. I like the idea of Heaven. But when it comes to commands in Scripture where the question becomes is this a teaching

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thing or a Lord thing, then it becomes harder. If I said to you God calls you to take everything you have—your family, your wealth, your power, your influence—everything and lay it before the throne of God and say, "God, if You want me to give, I'll give." That's harder than, "Lord, I love the blessings You give to me. I like that if I follow You, I'll get these things." And Jesus is calling out this young man's heart to say: Are you willing to give everything to your Lord, or are you just wanting a good Teacher?"

And so the basic Christian confession of our faith is not Jesus is a good Teacher. This is the basic tenet of our faith, Romans 10:9:

⁹ because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is

— what? A good Teacher? Jesus is [PAUSES, POINTS OUT AT AUDIENCE] Lord —

Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

– ROMANS 10:9 (ESV)

Luke 9:23

²³ And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

– LUKE 9:23 (ESV)

Luke 14:43¹

³³ So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

LUKE 14:33 (ESV)

So Jesus loves this man, we're going to see this, He loves him, so He sees the heart of this man when it comes to his possessions and wealth and He calls out this idea of: Am I Lord or am I a Teacher, because what I'm about to say to you is going to challenge who You think I am. So here's the application: Do

APPLICATION

you die daily? This is what God calls us to. Do you – do YOU in your own pursuits and your own desires and your own need to be praised by people, do you take all of that and put it on the cross daily and say, "Okay, this is my former self before Jesus was my Lord." Do you die daily, denounce all that you have in pursuit of following Jesus? This is the main point: To acknowledge Jesus with your whole life.

So some of you right here, online, outside, some of you have never done that in your walk with Jesus. He has always been a Teacher to respect. Maybe you've grown up thinking Jesus is part of my life and I like that He's part of my life, but you have never wrestled with the idea that is He a Lord to obey? And so you are this wealthy, young man who has possessions and wealth and his comfort and his security is in that—not in his relationship with Jesus—it's in those things and he wants other things to complement it. And this is the danger of wealth that it can take the place, just like Lee was saying last week, it could take the place of God even if we show up on Sunday mornings, even if we read Christian books, it can still be our god if we hold our stability and our treasure and our hope in those things.

¹ Transcriber Correction Note: In the video Luke 14:43 is stated, it's actually verse 33 (there is no verse 43 in Luke 14).

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Another thing He says to this man that I love is He says go and do, He has this list of commands that Jesus calls this young man to do. Like, look at the passage, He says, "You lack one thing" – and what does He say? He says, "go, sell . . . give . . . follow." He says you lack one thing – obedience. I mean, when you look at this passage does this mean—and again, I want to push into this—does this mean, "Aw, no, this passage could go after the wealthy and say that if we own stuff that we're sinning and that we can't own things." Of course not, that's not what this is saying. It's not. It does not say that God is not going to give you things and delight in giving you those things. And so there's most of us in this room, this is not sin to be who we are in the time we're in, but the disciples had to sacrifice greatly in their pursuit of Jesus and so do we.

It also says – and this is the truth – be careful, be careful because it means that if Jesus calls for some of us to sell everything we may have to and we can't say He's not going to do that; it's whatever you want, Lord—you get the difference? I'm not comfortable, Lord, I surrender to whatever You want. We can't – because here's the problem with this text – is we can't minimize the command, we can't say Jesus looked at this guy and said *if you choose* sell all your things. He says if I'm your Lord, sell it, and he was confronted with am I going to obey or am I going to make excuses and somehow make it so that, "Oh, that's not what really Jesus wants." You see, that's the challenge of surrender. Right? Do we surrender or do we just step in with one foot? He says sell, He didn't say if you're willing. The truth, listen, the truth is uncomfortable sometimes.



When Jesus looks at possessions and looks at wealth He says okay, are you willing to give it up for my will and my glory? And that in ourselves it just makes us have to declare allegiance. Right? Are we of this world or are we not? And we're going to talk about this a lot this morning. Is this our home or is it not? Is my mindset, "I'm going to do whatever He wants me to do, whatever He wants me to do. However He wants me to give, I will give." Is he a Teacher or is He Lord? And listen, I'm not pushing – guys, look at me – I'm not pushing any further than Jesus is with this.



Like, if we say this is not a "big cone" [SEE END NOTES AT THE END OF THIS TRANSCRIPT], we would be lying to you. If we would say what that looks like in your life – that's where the little cones start to pop up. Right? And this is kind of a principle we have of what is God calling us towards and then how does it look in our lives; I mean, it looks different for a lot of us, but the reward for humility and fear of the Lord is riches, honor, and life.

And so another thing that Jesus does with this rich man is He calls him to not only give but to give sacrificially *because* He loves him. Look at this passage here, it says, "*And Jesus, looking at him,*" – don't miss this – "*loved him,*" and so He said.

So here's the comforting thing for us who are the wealthy for billions around the world, Jesus loves [AUDIO SILENT 0.23.07.0–0.23.05.2], He loves you, and obedience to Jesus's command to look at your possessions and what God's given you and have a posture of saying "This is yours" is not because He wants to hurt you. This is a comforting thing, this is going to be the main point of this message. The comforting thing is when Jesus calls out your wealth and possessions and says do not worship those things, He's not doing those things to make you lose out on life. In fact, He's saying in those things you will lose out on what it looks like to be in relationship with Me because they will distract you from the joy that's found in Me. And so in love He calls out the worship of possessions in this young man

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knowing that if this young man chooses Jesus he doesn't lose anything. This is the act of love because it says in Luke 12:32:

³² "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

– LUKE 12:32 (ESV)

For your Father is good, His pleasure is good, He wants to give you the Kingdom of God. So here is the principle, I'm going to say it a bunch of times, Jesus—look at me—is better than possessions and money. Young people, young people, this is something that you are trapped into believing that in Jesus you can get these things –OR– if you follow Jesus you can't get these things. If you buy in to pray the prayer, live a good life, and then Jesus is going to get you all of these things, wealth and promotion, it's a pursuit of these things over Jesus. Here's the whole thing that Jesus is teaching us that Jesus is better than that stuff. He's better than that stuff. So if you gain the whole world and you miss Jesus – you lose. This young man thought, *Man, if I follow Jesus I'll get those things.*

Do you see the problem? He's saying no, no, no, no, no, no, you get Me. So many of us right now we're like Jesus, You're not enough. That's what our heart says, that I've tried You and, man, it's way nicer to be on a yacht or to have a big house than following Jesus. I'm telling you right now you're wrong. But the pleasures and the momentary joys that happen with the world and the stuff the world has to offer does not hold a candle to what it feels like and what the experience is when you're fully in the presence of Jesus Christ our Lord. They're not even close. I'm testimony of these things. Scoring a winning touchdown compared to knowing Jesus—are you kidding me?! Getting a raise compared to knowing Jesus? Buying a house that in a couple years you're gonna think is just a normal house? Buying a car that's shiny and in a couple years you're gonna want a new one? Compared to knowing Jesus? Are you seeing this? So He's not saying these things in and of themselves are wrong; He's saying don't trade Me for them. What are we doing? And so Jesus is better. Jesus is better.

Jesus calls this rich man to the Gospel. Look at verse 23, He says, *"How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!"* Listen, this should hit us saying hey, listen, Chester County, it's hard to get to Heaven, it's hard to get to Heaven from Chester County. This is what the Bible's saying. But it says this, listen, in fact, it's impossible to get to Heaven from Chester County if you want to get to Heaven alone. It's impossible for man. You will never buy your way in. You will never earn your way in by good works. It's impossible. But with God—here's where our joy comes, right?—all things are possible. And for us who have a lot, with Jesus it becomes like Solomon where, listen, these things are meaningless in and of themselves. Solomon writes a whole book in the Bible [SEE ECCLESIASTES] talking about the idea of – listen, stuff in and of itself, if you're gonna find meaning in that, man, there's meaninglessness in that. It's like chasing the wind. But with God all these things become meaningful. As God transforms your heart He's gonna transform the way you look at the things in your life, and then it doesn't become hard, it becomes a tool for the Kingdom.

Listen to me, here's the goal of our lives: It is not and this is—I tell you what, this is something that is a great lie that most of us believe—the goal in our lives is not to reach a place of comfort when we retire. For believers the goal is not retire in comfort, not the goal for believers, that is the goal of the world chasing after the things of this world. That's not the goal. Our goal is to give to the Kingdom [AUDIO SILENT 0.18.04.1–0.18.02.4]. I need believers to agree with me because [APPLAUSE] this is it. Right? Like, it doesn't mean, guys, if you're watching, like, it doesn't mean that you don't have things. What's the goal? Again, famous quote, there's never a U-Haul behind a hearse. The goal is not comfort. It's Kingdom impact, so I'm going to use the blessings. Man, if God's given me the gift of earning money that's great,

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how do I use it to be generous to the Kingdom and the work of the Lord? That's the only thing that I can take with me, that's my goal; it's not comfort, it's Kingdom.

This is why it's a blessing—look at me—it's a blessing to be a believer in Chester County IF your goal is Kingdom. It's a burden and an obstacle if it's not. It should hit us. Right? Because if this is true, which it is, then we should want to give. It's not a burden to give, it's a blessing to give; to give our time, to give our resources to the Kingdom. That's a blessing because, man, I gotta pay bills that aren't Kingdom bills. Right? That aren't a blessing, they're just a need and it's okay. Right? God wants to keep us protected, He wants to provide for us, there's nothing wrong with paying that bill, but I don't want to pay that bill if I could give it to the Kingdom. Right? It's like renting a house, you're not getting a lot of investment back. This is the wrestling of like, yeah, I want to be generous because at least I know that when I'm generous to the Lord, man, it's eternal. This is the obligation and the blessing that we have.

Jesus calls the rich man also to use the money and possessions but I want to call something out here. Okay? I'm going to harp on this. Do you notice in this passage that the disciples were what? When they were hearing this, so again, Peter, the disciples are sitting there, it must have been a conversation around a group of people, the disciples were hearing this and what was their response when they heard this? It says they were astonished. Not like, "Jesus, that's so good." It was like, "WHAT?!" It's like, "How dare You say that." Like, that's the, like, what? Did I hear that right? That's the response. So here's the question: Why? Why would the disciples not say, "Yeah, yeah, [HE APPLAUDS] Kingdom work, that's great, Jesus, that's why we're following You." In fact, what do the disciples do? They're like, "Well, why did we leave everything to follow you if that's true? We left everything and You're telling us that we gotta give everything? We left everything. So what did we get in return for following You, Jesus?" This is their attitude. Why?

Well, if you look at Old Testament what you'll see is that there was this understanding, a lot of Jewish people in the Old Testament they didn't even have a concept of Heaven. They didn't even think about after death but what they understood was obedience to God leads to blessings. Hear me here, they looked upon the people of God and said when they obeyed what happened? They got the land that was promised. When they obeyed what happened? They built a king—like David, a kingdom filled with power, filled with riches when they obeyed. Solomon had a kingdom filled with power, filled with riches. If you obey, you get blessings.

And so as the disciples see Jesus here was the narrative in their mind, if we follow Jesus we'll no longer have to be fishermen. In fact, we'll be second-in-command to this guy, and this guy's gonna be King. Man, I'm in a good spot. It's like hitching your wagon to somebody you know is gonna go to the top. It's a good wagon, to hitch your wag—right? Like, I'm gonna be in and He's gonna be the King of kings. He's going to take over Rome and I'm going to be His #2 man. This is a good thing. And Jesus has said if you want to follow Me, you gotta give all of that up. So again, what does Jesus change, I mean, this is a redemp—redemption in history is flipped on its side right now. This is the moment where all of a sudden Jesus says you know how you want to follow Me to become *this* [RAISES HIS HAND INDICATING A HIGH LEVEL], I'm better than that [RAISES HIS OTHER HAND EVEN HIGHER] — Me.

That in fact, your understanding of what you get—listen to me, please—your understanding of what you get when you follow Jesus is less than what you get. Like for some of us, we think if we follow Jesus we lose, and Jesus is flipping it and He says no-no-no, if I became the King of this world and that was it, if I was just a man and I became King over Rome and then I died in 70-80 years and you were my #2 for 70-80 years, that is less than what I'm offering you. Because when you follow Me you get a King and a

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Kingdom that never goes away; it's eternal. Jesus is better than anything this world has to offer, so the narrative flipped.

JESUS IS BETTER THAN ANYTHING THIS WORLD HAS TO OFFER

And by the way, you know these disciples that were astonished [AUDIO SILENT 0:13:04.8–0:13:01.7] in this world knowing full well the treasures that awaits them in the next. So they got it, they just didn't get it then. Think about John and James, they still wrestle with this conversation. What are we going to gain from following You? What in this world do we get? Jesus is like no-no-no, I've not come for this world. Look deeper into the things that are greater to come. This is where we are as believers that we know that Jesus offers us more than what the world offers us. Jesus is better than wealth. Jesus is better than wealth. Old Testament, animal sacrifice; New Testament, Jesus, perfect sacrifice. Old Testament, temple is the dwelling place; New Testament, the Spirit dwells where? In the believer. Old Testament, working through nations; New Testament—this is what we need to know right now—works through the church which is who? Us people. That as you follow Jesus you get Jesus and you get His pleasure of His work, His purpose in our lives as a church. We have more because we know that with Jesus it's better than the temples. It's better than the riches that He dwells in us and He's enough to satisfy our soul. The reward for humility, fear, is riches, honor, and life.

OLD TESTAMENT	NEW TESTAMENT
Animal Sacrifice	Jesus The Perfect Sacrifice
Temple was the dwelling place	The Holy Spirit dwells IN the believer
God worked through nations	God works through people IN His Church

Jesus called the rich man to recognize that money is deceptive; it's deadly if it's not used for His glory. And most of us as believers when we think about wealth, okay, when we think about material, and I'm just gonna honestly say we think it's a blessing. Like, how many of you have never got a promotion, got a good job, and listen, not bad things, and just say, "Thank you, Lord"? Like it's a blessing. Right? Like if I said to you, "How dare you be successful and work hard!" You'd be like, "Why is that a problem?" And listen, it's not a problem if it's not your Lord; if it is, it is a dangerous trap.

Like, here's an example that I've read that I just think is really good. He says it's like you drinking salt water. If your idol is possessions and wealth and that is your treasure, that is what you think about on a daily basis, when you wake up in the morning and you think about your day and you think about your life, if that's what governs your mind as your goal, it's like drinking salt water. It's a trap. It's like you drink and you drink and you drink but the more you drink of salt water, what happens? The more you dehydrate; the more you die. And so he's like, it's a trap for the soul, the more you chase after that thing as the thing to gain the more your soul is going to die in that pursuit because your soul does not find joy in things; it finds joy in the Lord. And so be careful because it's not about those things being with you, it's about how you see those things, and it could be a trap.



This is why He's saying listen, you need to sell it. Why? Because in this young man we know this, he sees it as the ultimate, and Jesus is like listen, I don't want you to see it as the ultimate because it is something you worship and if you worship that you can't worship Me. And so here's— let me ask you this question: Have any of you ever read this passage before? Okay. Great. Have any of you ever asked the question what happened to him, this young wealthy man? Like, I've always asked myself that question, like what happened? He's young! So here's my question because I always think, okay, I'm

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kind of probably older than he was but, man, I've learned a lot in my life since I was young, and so is it that this young man leaves, this is my prayer, that this young man leaves Jesus because he had to choose Jesus or his stuff and he chose his stuff, we know this, I wonder if he left and then in life when he had all that stuff for all that time eventually he just grew to realize that there's nothing there. My prayer is that man in the early epistles, maybe early church, maybe he showed up again. Maybe he was a wealthy older man and was like, okay, this time I'm in.

Because here's my problem with thinking that because I think, okay, what did that young rich man really gain from saying I choose stuff? What did he gain? Like, when he walked away— for us, do you say to yourself, *What are you thinking?* You should. Why in the world would you not give because if that young man chose stuff over Jesus, does he have stuff right now? Did he really think that stuff over Jesus is going to somehow create more joy in his life? Of course not, it was a trap. So I pray that he saw that trap and came back. But for some of us we're in that pursuit. Right? We're in that pursuit right now of saying, "Hey, listen, I'm going to run after my desires of this world. I'm going to build my kingdom on this world and for some of us we don't realize we're drinking salt water. But today my prayer is that God will convict you and say again—don't worship that, it can distract you from the God who made you.

Another thing we see is that Jesus says sell all your possessions, give to the poor, and you will have treasures in Heaven. Again, the treasure is Jesus, the treasure is Jesus, not stuff. And then he's disheartened and he goes away sorrowful because of the great possessions he had. He chose those things. And so who are you, like, who are you this morning?

I tell you, in my life I have never thought of myself as the wealthy. I'm not... but I am. Right? For billions around the world, I am. But when God has blessed me to go around the world and to see the things through His eyes, to see the need in this world through His eyes, to see the injustices in this world through His eyes, my ability to look at my life and one, be grateful has just grown tremendously; to be thankful of what God's given me. But also perspective – perspective of what I have compared to what the world has. My heart should be completely towards generosity and my heart should be growing in not I want more but growing in contentment. That I talk to my wife about this all the time; that we have children and we have responsibilities and it's not bad to have responsibilities and for God to bless those things, not bad, but my goal with my wife and I is to say listen, when we don't need that we will get rid of it because I want my giving to go like this [GESTURES UP] and my comfort to go like this [GESTURES DOWN], and it looks different but, man, I don't want to not pursue generosity because I understand that this is not my home.

And here's my final point, I want everyone that's not yet pursued a career to listen to this. Okay? Listen to this, and for some of you who realize this now that you're on the other end of your career – all right? – maybe it's a little bit too late but I think you can receive this, too. Right? This is not – look at me online, outdoors – this is not our home. This is not our home. When we look at wealth and possessions this is what we need to think, this is what I want to dominate your thoughts the rest of the week, this is not our home. Let me explain this to you.

So imagine you were given the opportunity to go overseas and to spend a month overseas. Let's say your work takes you overseas for a month and you stay in a hotel room. Okay. Now imagine in that hotel room you're thinking, okay, I need basic needs. So the hotel room has a couch and has a little TV and has a kitchen, not bad, but imagine all of a sudden you're going to the store and you're buying the most expensive TV to fit in that apartment and you're getting the most expensive bed to put in that apartment, and you're getting the most expensive things and you're building this apartment and you're

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painting this apartment and you're shaping it and you're changing your light bulbs out of this apartment, and all the while in a month you're gone—are you not a fool? Why? Because that's not your home. It's not your home. Do you need to have things in that apartment? Of course, but if you're building upon something that is not your home, listen believers, this is what God is calling us to think about as we live this life: This is not our home. Do you get it? Do you get it? Where is our home? That's where our priority lies.

And so as we bring the wealthy, as we bring our wealth and possessions before the Lord, listen, I'm going to say, I say this all the time to my small groups and to our students, if you look at the numbers of people in the church that say they believe in Jesus but give the way God calls them to believe, it's shocking how many people don't. And here's the thing, it does not impact us on a micro level—personally, doesn't impact me – Right? —how you're wrestling, but listen to this, if the church would just obey, if the church would just obey, poverty, hunger, famine, sex trafficking would stop. If we just obeyed. Not give sacrificially, just obey. Think about that. When it comes to the Kingdom impact, we could have if we look at these things in our lives and say, "Father, I'm going to give everything to You because we" – don't we turn on the TV and we say that is just horrible, but we're chasing after the same things.

And so my prayer as the band comes up is that we would think about our home as we relate to what God's given us. What a blessing to be alive today in Chester County. It's a blessing. Praise God, but recognize that we have an opportunity to do amazing things for the Kingdom of God, but it just takes us to fail and not understand this to have the enemy win. And so I don't know about you, but here's what God's convicted me of, it's not – it's not – that I don't enjoy the things God's given me, but if you're going to wrestle with the things that God's given you and saying how am I using that for His glory, that's a good thing. If you don't buy that extra thing because you don't need it, that's a good thing because this is not our home. Amen? I hope this blesses you.

Again, I want you guys to walk in joy. God loves us. In doing this we are going to experience more of Him. This is a great gift that we have been given. So I'm going to pray us into giving; online, if you guys don't want to give to the church, if you already give to the church, this may look like something more than that. Maybe you need to give your time, your gifts, your energy; maybe you need to look around in your life and see needs that are unmet and meet those needs; be active in your generosity. But if you're not even obedient right now, be obedient so that God looks at your heart and says they're willing and they're ready to do whatever I want them to do because I'm their Lord. I'm not a Teacher. Amen? Let me pray.

Father,

We love You and we thank You for this morning; I thank You for everyone who joined us. Lord, this passage in Proverbs and what we see in Mark, it's not an easy passage for us because the world will look upon us and how we look at money, and for those who claim to follow Jesus, Lord, there is an obligation to teach them that You are to never worship that which is given but You are to worship the Giver. Lord, help us to worship the Giver. Help us, Lord, to be in reverence of You and all of You with all that You've given us. Lord, help us to go towards generosity in our lives, move towards the things that matter. Help us to have, Lord, a home mentality that is not in this world.

But Lord, we thank You for the blessings. We thank You for all that You've done for us even in this season of fear of the unknown. Lord, so many of us we still have jobs, we still have

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employment. Lord, thank You for that provision. We just want to give You praise and honor.

And Lord as this church continues to navigate in this season, Lord, I pray right now that You would comfort those in fear; that You would bring peace to the souls of those that wonder what will happen to this world. And that we are reminded, Lord, help us to rest in your promises that are unfailing and eternal.

In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

Will you join us in one last song?

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KEYWORDS: wealthy, rich, possessions, humility, fear, surrender, obey, go, follow, worship

WATCH
OR
LISTEN

Calvary Fellowship Website: <https://www.cfdowningtown.com/ondemand>

YouTube: <https://youtu.be/9Spdq04wlg0>

SoundCloud: <https://soundcloud.com/cfdowningtown/the-trap-of-wealth-calvary-fellowship-72620>

END NOTES

"Big cone" refers to the big cone/little cone sermons. They can be viewed or listened to as follows:

Original sermon, Something Only God Can Do | 9.2.2012

Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/48904479>

Transcript available at: http://jetwriter.com/jet/2012-0902_SomethingOnlyGodCanDo.pdf

(Note: jetwriter.com is the transcriber's website where I have maintained a repository of Calvary Fellowship sermon transcripts from 2013 to 2020 on the HOPE webpage. This is not an "https" website as I do not handle financial transactions that would require obtaining the "https" certificate, but clicking on the above link you will most likely get a Security Warning pop-up stating it's not a secure website and asking if you want to proceed – I get that warning myself. This 9.2.2012 transcript is not available on the CF website as the sermons listed below are, which is why I have provided this direct link to it on my website.)

DO'S & DON'TS SERIES: What are grey areas in the Bible? | 10.20.19

<https://youtu.be/7ToTvWtLNQQ>

<https://soundcloud.com/cfdowningtown/what-are-grey-areas-in-the-bible-102019>

Transcript: <https://www.cfdowningtown.com/sermonnotes>

LOVES DOES SERIES: What are Christians hypocrites? | 11.3.2019

<https://youtu.be/X4gRc13h6QI>

<https://soundcloud.com/cfdowningtown/why-are-christians-hypocrites-11319>

Transcript: <https://www.cfdowningtown.com/sermonnotes>

LOVES DOES SERIES: How do we live by faith? | 11.10.19

<https://youtu.be/6dfrF-V1V8g>

<https://soundcloud.com/cfdowningtown/how-do-we-live-by-faith-111019>

Transcript: <https://www.cfdowningtown.com/sermonnotes>

LOVES DOES SERIES: How to be the body of Christ | 11.17.19

<https://youtu.be/HMUiNvpcXW8>

<https://soundcloud.com/cfdowningtown/how-to-be-the-body-of-christ-111719>

Transcript: <https://www.cfdowningtown.com/sermonnotes>

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