

If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, he is conceited and understands nothing.

But he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words.

out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.

But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment.

For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.

If we have food and covering,

With these, we shall be content.

But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare, and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.

For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some, by longing for it, have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

Thank you.

Thank you, Jason.

That's not going to be the first time I got to clear my throat this morning.

Allergies are getting to me, so if I sound like I'm going through puberty, that's not the case.

I've got four kids.

It's allergies.

One of the reasons Pastor Drew and I talked about sharing that song with you all was because it really is our prayer as we come to First Timothy.

I think one of the

The things that we were seeking the Lord for as we approached this book and as we chose this book to be our text for the spring was that the Lord, in any ways that we've wandered away from him, whether individually or together as a body, as an institution, you know, as an institution, as a body, we have a responsibility to live together in a way that pleases the Lord and is honoring to him.

So it was our prayer that as we come to 1 Timothy, that he would show us and lead us back in any ways that we've strayed or wandered or done stuff that's not pleasing to him.

And as we come to the end of the book, we've got two more weeks after this week in the book.

Pastor Drew's going to bring the middle half of chapter 6 here, and then I'll wrap it up the following week.

It's still our prayer that we would reflect on what we've heard, that we would remember what we've heard, and that we wouldn't be the same on this side of 1 Timothy.

Again, we're preaching week by week and come to another fun subject.

I have heard,

at least a half dozen times, not necessarily by people here in the area or people here in this church, but just in general in my life.

I've heard a number of people that have left the church because pastors talk about money too much.

Well, my commitment to you is to only talk about money as much as the Bible talks about money.

So it's talking about money this morning, and it's my goal to just share what the Lord has for us today.

Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, often we wander and we stray because our eyes are not fixed on your son, Jesus.

Or our eyes are blinded by our own sin and our own sinful desires.

So Lord, would you give us eyes to see and ears to hear this morning?

First and foremost for ourselves, Lord.

Lord, I pray that you'd keep us from hearing these things for someone else.

that you would keep us from what we even see in Genesis, shifting the blame and looking elsewhere, Lord, but you would truly give us eyes to see your glory and our own hearts brightening.

We pray all this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

So have you ever been around someone that has a glaring flaw or a bad habit that they're just like totally blind to and the

They can't see it, but everybody around them sees it and is generally annoyed by it.

My wife helps me with this.

I find it's one of the things that she, you know, I've really come to admire about her and love about her is that she does help me with these things.

Just even recently, like in the last couple of weeks, we were at a friend's house and as we're driving away, the kids were, you know, I don't know, messing around in the back, probably killing each other.

in the back of the van and she was like, you know, you talked way too much and you cut so and so off about five times.

And I was like, I didn't even realize.

I totally didn't realize I was doing that.

Some of it is, I know this is, it's not that I don't realize that this is a tendency of mine.

I have come to see that through the help of my wife.

I just didn't realize I was doing it then.

And some of it's my own pride and some of it's my own,
need narcissism, whatever, to be the center of attention.

Some of it's just Jersey, though, too.

So, like, that's just the way Jersey is.

We cut people off.

We cut people off in traffic, in conversations.

I grew up, you just had to get it in.

You just had to say it, and you had to say it quick, because, you know, somebody else was coming over the top.

No excuse, though.

But some sins, you know, some sins are hard to see, but some sins you can't help but know that you're committing, like adultery.

Like, you don't just, in the middle of adultery, say, well, you're not my wife.

I didn't know that, right?

Like, you know that you're committing adultery.

You have to intentionally do that.

Some sins are like that.

Others, like pride and greed, though, by their nature, blind us to their presence,
and give us this inability to see that they're happening.

I've talked about this a number of times, but I'll say it again because I think it's an important reminder that pride is a form of insanity.

You see yourself differently than you really are, and then that affects how you see everything else.

And also, along those lines, and we all know that we've mentioned these two in the same vein, but nobody ever thinks that they're the greedy ones in the room.

They're wise, they're prudent, they're hardworking.

Or you think, I can't be greedy.

I'm struggling to pay my bills.

Those rich people over there, they're the greedy ones.

There's just some sins we can't see in ourselves unless someone shows us.

And I think, for me at least, as I came to this passage, I think the Spirit is trying to show us in this passage today.

And I would like to invite you to look

I don't want you to think about anybody else this morning.

I want you to ask yourself as we work through this passage, is this me?

Is God showing me something that I'm blind to this morning?

And I think if we're all doing that individually, I trust that God will show us not only our sin, but also that he'll show us a better way forward this morning.

We see in this passage today that a love of money will destroy both individuals and Christ's church,

But pursuing godliness with contentment will yield eternal returns.

So there's good news and there's bad news.

There's bad news and good news.

We're going to start with the bad news this morning.

And then end with the good news.

We've got to recognize a few things or do a few things with the love of money here.

One, we need to recognize the love of money in others.

We need to beware of the love of money in ourselves.

And we also need to contrast the love of money with godliness, with contentment.

So recognize, beware, and contrast.

If you have the outline from your bulletin,

or the outline on the app.

You'll notice that that's a little bit out of order, but as I was working through the passage, I had to make a last-minute audible and switch it.

I just had to.

All right, so we'll start first with recognizing the love of money in others.

Let's look at verses 3 to 5 again.

If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing.

He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.

All right, so first, Paul's wrapping up the letter here, and he's starting into a summary that kind of bookends or parallels the intro that he gave us in chapter 1, 3 through 7.

There's a little speech there where Paul talks about the false teachers and summarizes what's wrong with the false teachers, and now he's bookending it, he's recapping what he said at the

just exactly what's wrong with these false teachers, as well as encouraging Timothy in a really concise way to walk faithfully in leading the church.

Pastor Drew is going to have a little more of that encouragement to walk faithfully in leading the church next week.

I'm focusing on kind of the summary of what's wrong with the false teachers here.

So again, Paul begins this summary here by pointing out why these particular false teachers in the Ephesian church are at a step with the gospel.

Why is what they're teaching not in line with the gospel that Paul has brought to them in the first place?

He says here that in pride...

These men are teaching things that are, one, out of step with the sound or true words concerning our Lord Jesus Christ.

They're teaching words or doctrines, principles that are out of step with the gospel.

When he says here that they do not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ, 90% of the commentators agree that it's not Jesus' words that he spoke.

but it's the teaching and the interpretation of what Jesus said and did, right?

So the gospel, it's the concise gospel of the work of Jesus Christ and what he accomplished.

So it's like words about Jesus, if you want to like jot that in your Bible, just to clarify that.

So he's saying that what they're teaching is out of step with the gospel.

He also says that their teaching does not accord with godliness.

It's out of step with teaching that is in line with, in fellowship with godliness or godly character.

Teaching that looks like God and smells like God and has this character of holiness and Christ-like character as well.

So they're teaching false things that aren't true about Jesus, right?

And aren't true about the work that he did.

But they're also teaching things that are out of step with godly character that the gospel produces.

So this pride has not only blinded them to their own flaws and shortcomings,

but it's also blighted them to the truth of the gospel and the world around them, so much so that Paul summarizes it and says that they don't understand anything, right?

They understand nothing.

This is, again, an echo of what he's already said in the beginning of the chapter, that they've distorted and don't lack all understanding, even of the world around them.

But not only is their corruption visible and their prideful teaching, it's also visible, right?

So this is kind of, he's reminding Timothy

This is how you can know that these false teachers are not teaching the truth, that they're teaching a false gospel.

One, pride, right?

That they're all puffed up.

They think they know a bunch of stuff, but actually they know nothing, right?

You can see it in how they're behaving and what they're teaching.

But also, divisiveness.

Look at the end of chapter 4.

into five here.

He says he has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are depraved of mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is

is a means of gain.

So we have this list in the description of divisiveness.

Again, we've got a list of those things a couple times already in 1 Timothy.

But this kind of conceit, this kind of prideful teaching, it produces minds that are first depraved, Paul says, depraved meaning they love,

and desire selfish and evil things.

So you have this depraved mind, and it's also a deprived mind, meaning that they lack and can't have the truth because of their deprived state.

If you want more on that, you can go to the end of Ephesians 4 and the beginning of Ephesians 5.

Paul starts off with a description of us in our sinful state.

He calls it the Gentiles.

He

And he says that they're darkened in their understanding, right?

And then he talks about how from them being darkened in their hearts and at the core of who they are, how that trickles out into how they view the world or how we view the world in our sin and how we lack understanding.

So he walks us through that in detail.

You can look for it more there.

But he sums it up here as being depraved of mind and deprived of mind.

And when you add a depraved and a deprived mind to a community of people, you're going to get divisiveness in all of its forms that he talks about here.

And when you add a depraved and a deprived mind to the church, to a Christian community, you're going to get divisiveness that is rooted in and kind of centered around imagining that godliness is a means of financial gain.

Paul points to this as a root cause and a root symptom, both cause and symptom, of a depraved and a deprived mind living within the Christian community or the community of the church, imagining or deciding that godliness is a means of financial gain.

We know Paul has financial gain in mind when he says gain because he moves into talking about the love of money in the next couple of verses.

So he expounds on exactly what kind of gain he means.

And Paul wants us to note here that the love of money or using godliness for financial gain was at the heart of the Ephesian false teachers, but it's not far from any of us.

All right, so Paul's not giving, again, a comprehensive description of what's at the heart of all evil.

He's not talking about even what's at the root of all divisiveness within the church.

He's pointing out, he's saying in this particular case, you've got some false teachers who are using godliness or attempting to use quote-unquote godliness for financial gain, and that's leading to

this kind of divisiveness and pride.

But he says also, this is not more common than you think.

He says, this is what's happening here, but be careful that it's not, or beware that this kind of love of money is not in you.

He gives us this idea because he refers to the love of money as a root.

Look at verses nine and 10 again.

He says, but those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.

It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

You know, the thing about the love of money is that it's a root.

It's not on the surface, right?

Roots are below the surface.

We might be pulling at the weeds of bitterness in our life or at the weeds of anger, frustration, constant friction with others.

Are you always at odds with others or feeling used, feeling mistreated?

feeling like no one gives me the recognition and the respect that I deserve.

You might be pulling out those weeds.

You might recognize that those are wrong, that they shouldn't be in your heart, and you might be fighting them and pulling out those weeds.

But really, what might be at the root is a love of money.

And again, the thing about roots is that they're below the surface, right?

You can't see them

unless they're dug up and shown to you.

And they need to be dug up here because these weeds aren't just ugly, they're dangerous.

Paul refers to this love of money, this root of the love of money as a snare and a lure that leads to destruction and to pain.

You know, I love the fish.

Some of the lures that we use to fish, or I use to fish, look absolutely ridiculous, right?

It's a piece of metal with a little hair on them.

Especially if you're a muskie fisherman, use the most ridiculous lures in the world.

Some of them are like this big.

I had a friend, Rick, we would fish the upper river, upper Niagara River for muskie.

He and I would just be up there fishing, minding my own business, and I would hear, go splash!

And I'd look back, and Rick's throwing out this like two-foot lure out into the water.

I'm like, Rick, what are you doing, man?

Like, just...

Anyways, you're never going to catch anything on that.

But a little piece of metal with a little hair, it just looks ridiculous, right?

Why would a fish, why would any fish ever bite this?

But it's moving, right?

It's moving through the water.

It's shiny.

It promises.

It's just telling fish out there, eat me and you'll have a full belly.

And yet, despite its promises, it yields only a pierced lip or worse, a short and final ride in the fry grease.

The love of money or the lack of contentment is another way Paul describes it here.

Not being satisfied with what you have is like being hooked up on a lure or having your foot caught in a trap.

Paul says it will plunge you, lack of contentment, not being satisfied with what you have will plunge you into ruin and destruction.

More significantly, it can lead us away from the faith into what he calls in the first chapter, spiritual shipwreck.

He says in verse 10, some have even wandered away from the faith.

And it most likely, based on his description here, won't be a quick destruction.

That last phrase in verse 10 is a gory image of being impaled and impaled by many sorrows.

Pierce sounds like you're getting your ears pierced and it's pretty.

That's not what he's talking about.

He's talking about being impaled through the stomach by many sorrows.

Discontent is a slow death.

Some of us, like maybe myself in my office earlier this week, might be sitting here thinking, well, thank God that's not me, right?

I don't have any money.

So how could this describe me?

I don't have any money to spare.

But Paul didn't say money, did he?

He didn't say money.

He said the root of all evil is the love of money, or all kinds of evils, I should say.

The root of all kinds of evils is the love of money.

You don't need to have money to love it.

In fact, it's quite possible to be one of the ones who loves money the most while having the least of it in your bank account.

George McDonald puts it this way.

He says, if it be riches that slay you, what matter if it be riches you have or riches you have not?

Well, this sounds pretty serious if we're being thoughtful and, like I said, reflecting on our own lives this morning.

We've got greed and discontent.

might possibly be ruining my life and my relationships, especially my relationship with God, and I may not even know it.

So how can I spot it and how can I get rid of it?

Well, Paul tells us or helps us in this passage to contrast the love of money against the gain of godliness.

Let's look back at verses six through eight.

It says, "'But godliness with contentment is great gain.'"

For we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world.

But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.

First thing Paul shows us or tells us is that the gain of godliness is eternal.

So we see here in his description that the opposite of the love of money is godliness with contentment.

So what he's contrasting against the love of money is godliness with contentment.

Or another way to say it is beautiful character, beautiful God-like, Christ-like character with restful satisfaction.

You can hear this contrast in Ecclesiastes 5.10.

This is not a new concept that Paul's introducing.

It says, he who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income.

This also is vanity.

So you can run that backwards, right?

If you're trying to figure out, do I love money?

Do I love wealth?

Well, are you satisfied with your income?

Are you satisfied with your money?

Are you content with those things?

And the only way to be content and satisfied with what we have is to be content with
with a properly ordered love and desire.

He says the love of money.

He goes right to the heart, to our desires, to what we love.

And the only way to be truly content is to love God and pursue godliness, godliness with contentment.

Because true contentment, and I think a lot of times when we think of contentment, or if you just throw that word out there, the first thing that comes to mind

is a type of self-satisfaction, or I just need to be happy with what I've achieved and what I have, or even a sense of self-reliance.

But true contentment is a satisfaction in Christ and what he's achieved and a reliance on his work for us.

The irony is that when we stop running after financial gain and the quick fix of material satisfaction, we find that godliness and contentment is gain.

And when we actually find satisfaction in Christ and what he's achieved, when we rely on his work, we find that the godliness that comes to us and that we receive there is gain.

And it's gain for a couple of reasons.

A couple of them are a little deep and abstract and some of them are simple.

I'll try to lay them out as clearly as I can.

It's gain because peace and contentment are a gain in and of themselves.

You may gain a lot of riches, I guarantee you, if you love money, you will not have rest and peace and contentment.

Barnes puts it this way, a poet, he says, contentment is a constant feast.

He's richest who requires least, right?

It's a constant feast.

There's a rest, there's a satisfaction, there's a fullness that comes when we're content with what we have.

There's an old fable that the king desired contentment and one of his wise men told him, well, what you really need is to just put on the shirt of a content man.

He's like, if you can put on the shirt of a content man, you'll find and achieve contentment.

So he sends out people into his kingdom.

This isn't in my notes.

I'm just giving it to you as a freebie this morning.

Sends out people into his kingdom to look for the shirt of a content man, to find a content man so he can get his shirt.

And they look and they look and they look and they can't find one.

They finally, after months and months of searching, find a content man, but he doesn't have a shirt, right?

Meaning that it's not about what you have.

That's right.

It's not about what you have.

It's about satisfaction in Christ, what he's done for us, and reliance on his work.

But also, Paul reminds us that financial gain, the financial gain we crave and pursue, is only temporary.

Look again at verse 7.

For we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world.

The financial gain that we think will satisfy us ultimately will fail us at the end of our lives if it doesn't before then.

And one of the reasons godliness is great gain is because it's eternal.

It goes with us to the afterlife when we're with God to heaven.

The fruit of godliness here is gained because it's a witness and a testimony to the work of God in our life.

I'll say it again.

Godliness is a witness, or Christlike character is a witness and a testimony to the fact that God is working in our lives.

And it gives us confidence that we've received Christ's righteousness and that if we've received Christ's righteousness, we will receive our eternal reward, his eternal reward that he gives to us in heaven one day.

It's also great gain because as C.T.

Studds says in his famous poem, and if you haven't read this poem, I'd encourage you to go look it up and read it.

I need to have this plastered in my office or in my home somewhere.

There's a refrain in the poem and it says, only one life will soon be passed, only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life will soon be passed, only what's done for Christ will last.

Jesus gives a very moving picture of this in the parable of the dishonest servant.

So you gotta flip to Luke.

I'm not gonna put it up there for you.

Flip to the left to Luke chapter 16.

This is a weird, weird parable.

I had no idea what it meant for a long time.

And then my dad preached a sermon on it when I was a teen.

And I was like, oh, that makes sense.

And it's stuck with me ever since.

It's the parable of the dishonest servant, Luke 16, 1 to 13.

I'll read it for you.

He also said to the disciples,

So summoning his master's debtors one by one, he said to the first, how much do you owe my master?

He said, a hundred measures of oil.

He said to him, take your bill and sit down quickly and write 50.

Then he said to another, and how much do you owe?

And he said, a hundred measures of wheat.

He said to him, take your bill and write 80.

The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness.

For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light.

And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails, they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.

One who is faithful in very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in very little is also dishonest in much.

If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?

And if you have not been faithful in that which is in others, who will give you that which is your own?

No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.

You cannot serve God and money."

Don't have time to go into all the details, but the key to this parable is that last line.

You cannot serve God and money.

You cannot serve two masters.

The manager here, he used power and wealth that wasn't his, was no longer his, and it wasn't gonna last.

He was about to be thrown out, and he used those things to invest in his future.

And both the master and Jesus commends him for having the foresight to do that, to use the power and the wealth that wasn't his anymore to invest in his future.

Jesus says, likewise, if we're not using our power and wealth that's not really ours and won't last into eternity, if we're not using those things for eternal gain and purposes, then how can we be trusted with true riches?

Whatever that is.

And he says the only reason you wouldn't leverage, and this is the end of his explanation here, the only reason you wouldn't leverage this wealth, this temporary wealth and power that's not really yours and that won't last is because you love it and you have made it your master.

The only reason you wouldn't part with it is if you love it and you've made it your master.

And I don't know about you, but again, I come to this parable and I find myself saying, well, I clearly have not made it my master because I'm just trying to get by, right?

I have needs.

I need a car.

I need a phone.

I need a nest egg.

My kids need braces.

They got to go to college.

We need family time, right?

I need some mental health days, vacation.

And the list of needs grows and grows and grows.

But Paul helps us keep a proper perspective if we flip back to 1 Timothy and look at verse eight.

He says, but if we have food, if we have food and clothing with these, we will be content.

That is a very short list.

He doesn't even say shelter.

He's trying to figure out why he doesn't say shelter.

That's usually on the list of needs.

And I think it might be because Jesus didn't even have a place to lay his head.

He's not saying, here, we gotta be careful, he's not saying that having more than food and clothes is wrong.

Paul condemned earlier in the book, I can't say that, especially without any spit in my mouth, asceticism.

He condemned the rejection of enjoyable things earlier in the book.

He says, enjoy them to the glory of God.

So he's not saying that we should all give everything absolutely away and just get down to food and clothing.

He also even says in Philippians 4, right, 11 to 13, not that I'm speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.

I know how to be brought low.

I know how to abound.

In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.

I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

So there's a right way and there's a wrong way to have stuff.

And there's a right way and a wrong way to not have stuff.

So we're not looking to judge anybody or just what kind of car do you drive, what kind of house do you have, what kind of income do we think you're bringing in, and we're looking down our nose at you this morning.

That's not what we're doing.

We're not judging people for having money or not having it.

But we ought to individually reflect because it is wrong to love stuff

and to be discontent with what God has given us.

Because in all things, Christ is our strength and our satisfaction.

That's what Paul says in Philippians 4 there.

I can have a lot, I can have a little, I can do all things when Christ is my strength, in Christ who strengthens me.

When I rely on him and I'm satisfied in him and I'm relying on what he's done for me and not my own work, I know how to handle both of those situations.

So the love of money will destroy both individuals and Christ's church, but pursuing godliness with contentment yields eternal returns.

So what are we to do with this passage today?

One, we have to walk away from it, examining our own lives.

We have to look and say, are there the signs of the root of the love of money in my life?

I know there was for me this week.

There are signs of the root of the love of money, and they need to be repented of and taken care of and fought against.

Is there divisiveness, bitterness, frustration, constant friction with other people in your life?

There's a chance that what's at the root of that is the love of money.

To get specific, maybe a little uncomfortably specific, but is there a discontent in your heart that is bearing fruit in the form of crippling debt

Debt is generally expected in our society, especially when it comes to mortgages and to car loans.

I'm not gonna litigate all forms of debt this morning because the scriptures don't forbid debt.

They do highly discourage it.

Proverbs 22, seven says, the rich rules over the poor and the borrower is the slave of the lender.

So it's a gray area where exactly we fall on whether or not to borrow money.

But we ought to say in light of this passage, at least,

that a willingness to spend money we don't have, especially at foolishly high interest rates, ought to at least cause us to pause and examine how we're defining our needs.

At least ought to cause us to pause and examine how we're defining the word need and to take a close look at our heart for discontentment.

And we probably need help with that.

Remember, pride, greed, blinds us to our own sin.

So we probably need a godly brother or sister to give us a hand in that examination.

Debt and money problems can be a form of just a lack of stewardship.

I'm not saying that the only issue here is discontent, although I'd be pretty surprised if that's not at least a little bit at the root.

So if you're feeling a little convicted and you're like, okay, I need to start handling my money better.

I need to not just go with the flow of the whims of my own desires and what feels good in the moment.

I need to be a better steward here and not let money rule me.

But I have no idea how to go about doing that.

If no one's ever showed you how to make a budget, or no one has shared with you the basic principles of handling money, there are tools available.

There are tools available to you.

I talked with Bob and Lisa Allen this week and asked if I could drop their names because I just had some good conversations with them and know that they have some good resources available to help you get started in that process.

Lisa says that budgeting is her love language.

Also, they have seven kids, and I know Bob's not Bill Gates over there, so something's working, right?

So if you need help, reach out for help.

Don't do this alone.

That's why God puts you in a community of believers.

So we overcome the love of money, one, by first examining our lives, contrasting the love of money against contentment, and really, honestly, with the help of a brother or sister, asking some of these diagnostic questions.

But more importantly, we overcome the love of money by treasuring Christ, right?

By loving Christ.

What does treasuring Christ look like?

It looks like daily fixing our eyes on him, right?

Reminding ourselves that he's the pearl of great price.

He's the treasure hidden in the field that it's worth selling all that you have, right?

To gain him.

Because he gave up all that he had to come rescue us, right?

We need that daily.

We need that vision daily.

Also, treasuring Christ looks like investing financially in the glory of Christ and the advancement of the gospel.

Jesus says, where your treasure is, your heart will be also.

Our hearts will not be turned unless we...

Put our treasure there, right?

There's a, you know, have you ever noticed you invest in a stock and all of a sudden now you're really concerned about, you know, Chamonix and the product that they produce because your treasure's there, right?

Jesus gives this very simple principle.

Invest, put your treasure there, your heart will follow.

So even before your heart's there, put your treasure there, your heart will follow.

This is one of the reasons, you know, Lydia and I give to the church.

You're like, well, why don't you just have them pay you less, right?

Like, you know, you get money from the church and then you're giving it back to the church.

This is kind of silly.

Why are we doing all this?

Then you got to pay taxes on it, all that stuff.

But it's important for me and Lydia, right, to invest financially in God's people and this church.

It's important for

our hearts.

I will make this pledge to you today.

I will never preach a sermon on money or giving because of a financial need of the church.

I preach on it because it's in the Word of God, and I think the Word of God talks about it because it's a heart issue.

It has to do with our hearts.

So I would encourage you, there's booklets out there that we got from the ACME conference on

All of those missions, people, organizations that are in there are church-centered gospel preaching organizations that you can partner with financially and through prayer and all the other ways that you can partner with ministries.

Obviously, like I said, we work hard here to make sure that we're stewarding your giving well for the advancement of the gospel in our area too.

Invest in Christ's church.

Christ said he will build his church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

It's an investment that can't fail.

Again, I'm not just talking about our church.

There's many church-centered missions and organizations in that booklet that I can point you to.

I'm getting a little too long on that.

The last way that we treasure Christ.

We treasure Christ by fixing our eyes on him, by investing financially in his glory and the gospel.

And lastly, the way that Paul tells us in this passage to treasure Christ is by pursuing Christ-likeness.

Godliness with contentment.

Those two are together.

Being more concerned with, to view godly character and becoming like Christ as more of a gain than financial gain.

As a more valuable gain than financial gain.

And working towards that.

working towards that this week, pursuing Christ's likeness and the beauty of his character.

Because that's the beauty, that's the game that truly lasts.

Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, we just ask that you would help us to see Christ today.

Lord, you loved us, you loved the world today.

And the way that you expressed that was by giving and giving your only son.

So Lord, I pray that you would teach us and help us to see what's truly valuable and that you give us eyes to see again our own hearts and what we tend to value above what's truly valuable, your son.

And Lord, I pray that you would guard us against legalism and cold reciprocal religion that tries to put you in our debt and make you work for us.

But Lord, that we would be cheerful givers free of the love of money and its destructive path.

Lord, and that you would help us to be people

that are built up by you and that build up others with all of our resources and all that we are.

People that plant and water and see life grow all around them because of our dependence and reliance on you.

Why would you do that this week?

And Lord, would you help us again with this first step of helping us to see and treasure Christ.

We pray all this in Jesus' name.

Amen.