

START OVER AGAIN
SERIES

DISCUSSION

Guide

H

January 28, 2024

START OVER AGAIN (Week 4) Aaron McRae

➤ CONVERSATION STARTERS

When you see a warning sign are you most likely to bend, break or follow rules?

➤ EXPLORATION

Over the past few weeks we have learned practical aspects of the soul that we don't think about very often. If we actually pay attention to Jesus' words and his teachings about our souls, we will see that he uses repetition concerning specific actions, behaviors and attitudes that influence our souls.

As we read the following passage, pay attention to the heart motivation behind the conversation.

Luke 12:13-15 (From your bible read aloud)

What was the motivation of the person who called out to Jesus?

Why do you think Jesus answered in this way?

This encounter between Jesus and the man in the crowd may seem to be about fairness at first, but Jesus sees the man's motivation and addresses the real issue. While his request was specifically about getting his fair share of an inheritance, Jesus knew that the deeper issue was the attitude of the man's heart toward the money he felt he deserved.

Jesus actually has a lot to say about our attitude toward money. He warns us to be careful not to get greedy. Greed is not only an issue for the rich, it can also be a consuming motivator for those who are poor.

A powerful prayer that Pastor Aaron shared from Lectio 365 says, "God is there anything I own that I would struggle to give up? Show me which of my possessions truly possess me."

Wealth and possessions are not bad in themselves, but we must be careful not to let our desire for them to be our main focus in life.

Biblical Warnings About Money

Wealth can be deceitful (Matthew 13:22)

Love of money is the root of all evil (1 Timothy 6:10)

Lovers of money never have enough (Ecclesiastes 5:10)

You cannot serve both God & money (Matthew 6:24)

Why do you think a healthy view of money is so important?

Luke 12:16-20 (From your bible read aloud)

The man in this parable seems to be living the good life. He has an abundant crop and decides that the best thing to do is to build bigger barns so he can store more grain. He believes this will be what makes him feel happy and secure. Look at what he says again,

"And I'll say to myself (my soul), "(Soul) You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."

Apparently having an abundant crop too big for his barn wasn't enough for him. He wanted to store up just a little bit more and then, he thought, he would be happy.

Luke:20-21 (From your bible read aloud)

You might wonder why God would call this man a fool when by the current cultural standards we might say he was being wise, strategic and successful. The problem here is not the abundance this man has, it is about his heart and his attitude.

Look back once again at verse 21, ***“This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”***

What does it mean to be “rich toward God?”

Luke 12:22-30 (From your bible read aloud)

Jesus gives us a beautiful picture of God's provision for his creation. We find the key to this parable as we read on: ***“But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.” Luke 12:31***

The priority here is to keep God and his kingdom as our first love. When our hearts are focused on the right thing, God can pour out blessings of all kinds. This kind of abundance will not hurt us, it will bring peace knowing that everything belongs to God and we are simply stewards of his resources.

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Luke 12:34

HOW ARE WE INVITED TO LIVE

- Treasure Christ above everything else

This parable is more about the attitude of the heart than it is about managing our resources. Jesus is clearly saying that we need to be sure that our hearts are focused on the right thing and not on ourselves.

Matthew 6:24 (From your bible read aloud)

1 Timothy 6:17-19 (From your bible read aloud)

What stands out to you from these verses?

HOW ARE WE INVITED TO LIVE

- Treasure Christ above everything else
- Invest in eternal things

Jesus reminds us that there is more to life than the here and now. We are preparing now for eternity. While it might be tempting to focus solely on our immediate comfort, we must be reminded that there is more to come.

HOW ARE WE INVITED TO LIVE

- Treasure Christ above everything else
- Invest in eternal things
- Live as faithful stewards

1 Corinthians 16:1-2 (From your bible read aloud)

ACTION STEPS FOR GIVING

- 1 Make a pre-decision to live generously
- 2 Seek to give consistently
- 3 Plan to give proportionately

One of the ways that you might choose to approach the use of finances is as follows:

Save 10% - Spend 80% - Give 10%

While there is no biblical formula that is prescribed for everyone to use, there are principles that help us view our finances in a biblical way. Remember, Jesus is pointing out in the parable that the issue was not the abundance, but the attitude of the heart. When we give regularly it helps us to practice the rhythm of remembering that everything we have is a gift from God and we are to use those gifts in ways that honor him.

> TAKE AWAY

The man in the parable focused only on himself and his interests but the result was not what he expected. This is a powerful reminder that everything comes from God and we can trust him with everything we have. He invites us to use what we have been given in a way that acknowledges his provision and keeps our trust and hope in God alone.

> INVITATION

Take some time to pray this prayer daily, asking God to realign your focus as needed.

“God is there anything I own that I would struggle to give up? Show me which of my possessions truly possess me.” Teach me how to use all that I have to honor you. Amen