



Jesus as Our Priority

January 14, 2024

Luke 12:13-21

BI – Our motivation for a living should be eternity priorities

## Introduction – Stanley H2O Thirst Quencher- Classic Stanley Tumbler

Rapid rise of the popularity of these new tumblers tumblers



Crazy response of wanting to get them – selling out in minutes  
fights breaking out<sup>1</sup>

-We've seen this level of competition for goods before (think of  
the lines that used to exist for black Friday shopping and the  
fights that would break out, the people who would camp  
outside apple stores for days sometimes to get the new iPhone  
when it came out)

-This quickly demonstrates what a person's priority is if you willing to go out and fight for a  
thing



Last week Pastor Steve introduced the theme for this year for our church. Coming from  
Colossians 1:18 ***He is also the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn  
from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything.***

The Theme is the preimence of Jesus, that every thing do we puts Jesus first!  
The church can not be the church of Christ if we do not submit to His leadership.

If we are disciples of Jesus we called to put Jesus first.

John tells us how Jesus defined His followers – John 8:31 ***Then Jesus said to the Jews who had  
believed him, "If you continue in my word, you really are my disciples.***

This is choice that we as believers will have to make. Are we going to put Jesus as the priority  
of our lives or not.

One of the ways that Jesus would teach is by something called a parable or a story with a point  
or principle for the audience to take to heart. Sometimes, He did this because the 1<sup>st</sup> century  
was an oral culture. They taught by telling stories. Sometimes, He would do this so that the

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.tiktok.com/@victoria\\_robino\\_26/video/7318781471873977646](https://www.tiktok.com/@victoria_robino_26/video/7318781471873977646)

crowds who followed Him would listen, but they wouldn't understand. The truths of the parable were for His followers (Mark 4:10-12 speaks to this).

The first passage we will be looking at is a parable that Jesus tells that gives us a principle that could be considered a kingdom value for us to take to heart now, even though the Kingdom has not been fully realized yet. The specific tenets from this first passage in Luke speak about money and not building earthly treasures but ones that can be found in Heaven. This parable that Jesus tells and that we will look at in the moment is the fact that Jesus wants us to operate with an eternal perspective. The things, actions, and choices we make should be run through the lens of what matters for eternity. Those are the things of lasting value.

Verse 1 of this passage tells us that Jesus had crowds of thousands following Him. They were inspired by His teaching and miracles, wanting to know more about Him.

## **Our Focus Should Be Eternity | Luke 12:13-21**

***<sup>13</sup> Someone from the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."***

It's interesting to see this question that comes from the crowd. Remember, verse one mentions that crowds were following Jesus, wanting to hear His teaching and see miracles. Some genuinely wanted to know about Him, and others were just there to be entertained. Some, like the Pharisees, showed up to build their case against Him. From the crowd, one man calls out with a question. He addressed Jesus by the title, teacher, or other translations that say, Rabbi. This is the word *didaskale* in Greek, meaning teacher.<sup>2</sup> In that culture, the teachers of the Law had significant authority over the people's lives. This person makes a statement – Jesus, will you tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me? Rabbis could be called upon to adjudicate civil issues because they know the Law and its commands for the nation's lives.

It doesn't say much about this guy; I wonder if his brother was right there. And he pointed at him while he was asking Jesus the question. Ultimately, this comes down to the fact that this guy doesn't feel he is getting what he deserves. He wants Jesus to step in and fix his issue.

The Old Testament actually addressed this issue (maybe this guy was aware of this or not). *There were ancient laws in Israel about the inheritance, Deuteronomy 21, the book of Numbers. The estate was left to the oldest son. The estate therefore was kept intact and the oldest son would manage the estate, and use all of its wealth and all of its products and all of its possessions for the benefit of the whole family. He sort of became the new father of the family. He didn't waste it all on himself, and he simply managed it. That's what the Law of primogenitor was intended to do, not to divest certain members of the family of the care they*

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<sup>2</sup> [The Rich Fool \(gtv.org\)](http://The Rich Fool (gtv.org))

*needed, but rather to pass on the responsibility of headship and leadership to the father, the next generation.*<sup>3</sup>

***<sup>14</sup> "Friend," he said to him, "who appointed me a judge or arbitrator over you?" <sup>15</sup> He then told them, "Watch out and be on guard against all greed, because one's life is not in the abundance of his possessions."***

Jesus responds friend, who appointed me to judge? That's an exciting response. We know that in His second advent, Jesus will be the judge of humanity; Matthew 25:31-32 speaks to this fact. But there is something else going on here. There are two different motivations in the play, both from this guy and Jesus, regarding their actions.

Jesus makes it clear that in the first advent, the first time he came to earth, He was here to bring about the redemption of humanity. In His own words, He says, "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost." Luke 19:10. His motivation was not to come and settle inheritance disputes amongst the Jews. There was a bigger picture in play: God's eternal plan for the redemption of humanity.

However, the guy who asked this question seems to have other motives, namely his greed. All he cared about was the here and now. There was no thought of eternal principles in play here but rather what I can get from my brother here and now. I want mine to build my metaphorical empire or create riches now.

Jesus gives a strong warning here. He tells the crowd in response to this question from the guy who wanted more money. Watch out, be on guard! Our lives are not in our possessions or the abundance of how much we have. From this point, we can see the man's focus on the here and now—his possessions and money. Jesus wants to expand the view from the present to an eternal perspective. He does this by telling a parable.

***<sup>16</sup> Then he told them a parable: "A rich man's land was very productive. <sup>17</sup> He thought to himself, 'What should I do, since I don't have anywhere to store my crops? <sup>18</sup> I will do this,' he said. 'I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones and store all my grain and my goods there. <sup>19</sup> Then I'll say to myself, "You have many goods stored up for many years. Take it easy; eat, drink, and enjoy yourself.'"***

These four short verses illustrate the attitude of the man who wanted more inheritance from his brother. It is an attitude focused on the here and now, without caring for the things that matter.

Notice the first part of the parable speaks to the abundance that the rich man had yielded from his crop. *By the way, I love that verb where it says "very productive." That is the verb *euphoreō*, and it means "to yield a good crop." And we get an English word out of it, "euphoria." Now for us, euphoria has nothing to do with a crop. Euphoria is "elation," "being filled with joy," kind of "over the top satisfaction," "fulfillment," "feelings of happiness,"*

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<sup>3</sup> [The Rich Fool \(gtv.org\)](http://The Rich Fool (gtv.org))

*"feelings of well-being." But how interesting that that came in an agrarian culture from having a good crop, being successful.<sup>4</sup>*

This leaves the rich man with a conundrum: what do you do to? I have all these crops; what should I do with them? There is nothing wrong with things on their own. Deciding on how to deal with his surplus is something I'm sure we'd all love to have a similar problem with. This man decides that he's going to tear down his barns and build bigger ones. He will store the crop surplus and all his things in the new barns. Then, it is going to take it easy. There's one thing that stuck out to me while reading these verses. Did you notice that first, the man is having a conversation with himself, and in the midst of all of it, his focus is entirely on himself? That's why he says I 5 times in this short parable. It's a selfish pursuit, with a look at the here and now. Nothing else.

The attitude is best exemplified by the last line from verse 19: take it easy, eat, drink, and enjoy oneself. He is enjoying life on its own; it is not a bad thing. God has put many things in life for us to enjoy, but this enjoyment was coupled with the attitude of living for now, building up all the tressure that he could. The focus was not on honoring God, living for God, but for himself.

***<sup>20</sup> "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is demanded of you. And the things you have prepared—whose will they be?' <sup>21</sup> "That's how it is with the one who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."***

We've reached the climax of this parable with this verse. To this imaginary person, God calls him a fool. This person was mindless, ignorant, and ignored everything around him but himself. With this focus on himself, he missed everything, and that very night, he would come face to face with his Creator. And then God speaks in the passage, what about all those things you've built up for yourself? Who will get all the riches you spent a lifetime building and can not take with you into eternity? It is implying what a waste.

In verse 21, Jesus points out that those who store up now, those who are focused on the here and now and not living out eternal priorities, will spend a lifetime amassing things. When their time is over, when they die, their legacy will be given to someone else, and they will be forgotten as history moves on.

James puts it this way in James 4:13-15, ***Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will travel to such and such a city and spend a year there and do business and make a profit."<sup>14</sup> Yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring—what your life will be! For you are like vapor that appears for a little while, then vanishes.<sup>15</sup> Instead, you should say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that."***

The point is clear: our focus should be on pursuing eternal priorities and living out God's principles.

Another thing we need to keep in mind as we seek to live for God is that we have limited time.

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<sup>4</sup> [The Rich Fool \(gtv.org\)](http://gtv.org)

# Make Your Time Count for Eternity | Ephesians 5:15-16

*Pay careful attention, then, to how you walk—not as unwise people but as wise—*

In the previous verses, Paul told the believers in Ephesus that they needed to wake up; they were no longer unbelievers but now followers of Jesus. They need to wake up to the reality that they need to be imitators of God, as verse 1 of this chapter says, but they also need to be greatly careful as they do this. This reality has put us in a new position requiring excellent attention to the details of our lives. Living a Christian life is not easy.

“Be very careful” is actually from two words in Greek —( the main verb *Blēpete* and an adverb *Akribōs* *Blēpete* = “Be very careful” – this exact form of the Greek word is used 33x in the N.T. – by far the most common form of the root word *Blēpō Akribōs* =)

That means carefully, appropriately, extremely accurate, and researched to the finest detail. Paul is giving us a double exhortation...he is commanding us (*Blēpete* is a present imperative) to be careful and exact with our choices – to make sure we are not lazy in living a wise life. The adverb here (*Akribōs*) emphasizes that we must carefully apply the best – most optimal wisdom in our life!

The command is for us to be very careful how we live, not as the unwise but rather the wise. Our lives are to be lived with wisdom.

What is wisdom? Application of knowledge

A stovetop is hot. If we touch it, we get burned. Knowledge is knowing that the stovetop is hot. Wisdom knows we will get burned if we connect the stovetop and don't touch it.

Paul presents ways to live our lives as either wise or unwise. How does a foolish person live – according to scripture?

Prov 12:15 *The way of fools seems right to them, but the wise listen to advice.*

Psalms 14:1 *The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt. Their deeds are vile; No one does good.*

The wise person's life will look the opposite of this.

Prov 2:6 *For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.*

Prov 3:6 *In all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.*

Paul calls us to live our lives filled with wisdom. The wisdom he is talking about is the application of the knowledge of God. It can be great to read the Bible, learn it, and memorize it, but if that is all we do, then it does nothing for us. We need to live out the eternal principles found in scripture.

## ***16 making the most of the time because the days are evil.***

We must make the most of every opportunity that God has brought. Our English translations are almost split in how they translate this phrase. Some say “making the most of every opportunity” (NIV, NASB, NLT, RSV, NRSV), while others say “redeeming/making the most of the time” (KJV, NKJV, ASV). Both translations are correct. The Greek has the idea of redeeming/purchasing / taking full advantage of the opportunity. The idea means buying back or buying out. It was used to buy a slave to see him free. This is where the concept of redemption enters into the verse. We are to take full advantage of the opportunities or time given.

The word choice for time or opportunity is very significant here. Many different words are used in Greek to mark the passage of time ( Hemera – day, Hora – hour, Kairos – Season, chronos – time, and Aion – age). The one we are most familiar with when speaking about time is the idea of Chronos, from which we get the word chronology. This is the idea of clock time, time that is continuously measured in seconds, minutes, hours, and days.

That is not the meaning of time being conveyed here by Paul. Kairos refers to a moment that is especially significant, a season of time. This concept is used chiefly to refer to the coming of Jesus. Jesus came down in the first advent at the very right time. Galatians 4:4 says, *“But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son.”* Jesus Himself used the same concept when He said, *“My appointed time has come Matt 26:18.”*

We are given a small period of time to live for our King. The verse we read earlier from James says that our lives are like a vapor. I’m a big fan of coffee. You can always find coffee near my hand throughout the week here on campus. Think hot coffee; you can see the steam coming off, and in a blink, it is gone. James says that’s the length of our lives. We are given a short time, and then it is over. We must use the precious amount of time to live out the commands God has placed before us as His followers.

### **The parable of the talents | Matthew 25:14-30**

The parable of the talents found in Matthew 25 also illustrates this point about living productive lives for the Kingdom with limited time to do it.

In this parable, the master leaves and gives each of his servants various talents. The first to take those talents and invest them, bringing great returns. The third buries his talents in the ground, choosing not to use them. The master returns, and each servant must give an account of how they used their resources. The first two are praised for using their resources effectively, fulfilling the master's wishes. The third is he gives an account criticized for not using his resources and suffering a loss of reward.

This passage shows that each of these servants is given a specific resource and a specific amount of time. We as believers are given many different resources (time, talent and treasure) to use for kingdom purposes and a limited amount of time to use for that purpose.

Just as in the parable of the talents, those who use their abilities wisely are rewarded, so do we, as believers who live out the eternal values of the Kingdom, will be rewarded as well.

## **Living for Jesus Now Will Be Reward In Eternity | 1**

### **Corinthians 9:24-25; 3:11-15**

*Don't you know that the runners in a stadium all race, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way to win the prize. <sup>25</sup> Now everyone who competes exercises self-control in everything. They do it to receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable crown.*

Paul uses an athletic metaphor to point out believers and that we are not going through our faith journeys in vain. In the Greek culture, sporting contests were huge. They started the Olympic games that we have revived now in our time. The Greek athletes competing would be working hard to win the prize. They would put a crown of wreath on the winner's head. Our Olympics have the winners' gold, silver, and bronze medals

Paul admonishes those believers and us here to run in such a way to win the prize. How do we run this race to win the award? What is our motivation? How we live our lives will determine if we are running away to win.

What's our focus? What's our motivation? Are we focused on living out the eternal principles of God, or are we focused on ourselves and just the here and now? Are we the guy from the first parable who is building the bigger barns so that we can enrich ourselves, or is the focus on seeking God's will and living out His plans for this life?

Notice here that we are not competing with other believers but with ourselves and ourselves alone.

Those Greek and even modern Olympic athletes worked hard to win those wreaths or the current gold medal. But those prizes will not last. They are perishable crowns, Paul would say. Those athletes from 2000 years ago received all the acclaim and fame that went with winning, just like our athletes do. When was the last time you heard of an archeologist digging up one of the winner's laurel crowns from 2000+ years ago? We don't, that's the point. Who won the gold medal for the men's 100m race in the last summer games (2020 Tokyo)? I don't know, and I had to look it up. It was Lamont Marcell Jacobs from Italy, who had a time of 9.8 seconds. However, Paul says believers who believe in Jesus compete to win an imperishable crown.

Believers will have to give an account for our works here on Earth. We will face a judgment, not a judgment about our salvation, but how we lived for Jesus or didn't while here on the earth. This judgement is called the Bema Seat of Christ. Paul speaks about it in 1 Corinthians 3. If you want to know more about this judgment, Pastor Steve spent a sermon on it back in our revelation series at the end of last year.

***For no one can lay any foundation other than what has been laid down. That foundation is Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup> If anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, or straw, <sup>13</sup> each one's work will become obvious. For the day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire; the fire will test the quality of each one's work. <sup>14</sup> If anyone's work that he has built survives, he will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup> If anyone's work is burned up, he will experience loss, but he himself will be saved—but only as through fire.***

All believers will stand to give an account of how they lived. It's called the Bema seat of Christ judgment. But it's not a judgement about our salvation, that's assured if we have put our faith in Jesus. Rather this is a judgment that looks at our works here and now and rewards are given for those works that matter for eternity.

Those competing to win an imperishable crown are building up treasures in Heaven. Believers receive these crowns as rewards for their faithful service to God here in this life. Faithful service includes our lives guided by and reflecting God's eternal principles.

## **Apply It...**

What are some of the Eternal Principles that God has given us to follow?

### **Make following Jesus the Priority for our Live**

It's interesting how Jesus defines His followers. He calls us disciples and He says that if you want to be His disciple you need to die to yourself. **(John 8:31-32)**

### **Be a disciple maker - We are called to make other disciples – the Great Commission – Matthew 28:19-20**

***Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."***  
***We are called to go and preach the good news of Jesus, the Gospel, to the world.***

For us here in Oro Valley, those are people in our circles. Those eight to fifteen people that we do life with. There should be people in that group who don't know Jesus. Those are the ones that we need to share Jesus' good news with and invite to church. And asking someone to go to church is so much easier now. It's as simple as sending them the link to this week's livestream service on YouTube. Meet up and watch it with them. Ask them if they have any questions.

For us as a church, sharing the good news of Jesus is done in several ways. We support many missionaries worldwide who are engaged with sharing the Gospel in Arizona, across the US, and even in many international locations. We can help keep them by praying for their ministries and continue to give to them financially. If you ever get a chance to go on a mission trip and serve in a location outside your normal area you live, do it. They can be life changing as you see how God is moving in other parts of the globe.



Another thing we can do as a church to help preach the Gospel is the church plant to which the church leadership has committed. In a sermon last year, I think Pastor Steve mentioned that one of the quickest and most effective ways we reach an area with the Gospel is to plant a church. And that's what we are going to do. You can be involved by praying for this new endeavor. Maybe you're even being called to help support it by going and being a part of it when we do launch it. More details will continue to come out this year as we progress.

### **Be Recognized For Your Love - John 13:34-35 – The Great Command**

In the last hours of His life, John quotes Jesus in the upper room discourse. He states people will know their followers by their love for each other. The love that we have for other believers. This is the same kind of love that would send Jesus to the cross to die for our sins within hours of Him making this statement. This is the sacrificial, putting others' needs first and serving them kind of love.

If you want to look it up, 1 Corinthians 13 offers more examples of this kind of love.

-There dozen's of one another commands in the new testament – they are ways that we live and act and by doing these we show our commitment to Christ and His priorities

### **One Another Commands (59 in the NT) – several**

- Love one another (John 13:35)
- Honor one another (Romans 12:10b)
- Forgive one another (Ephesians 4:32)
- Comfort one another (2 Corinthians 13:11)
- Bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2)
- Encourage one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11)
- Serve one another (1 Peter 4:10)

**-What are your priorities this year?**