

## Sermon Wesley Box Hill 10 August 2025

### WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS ... – Luke 12: 32-40

Greetings once again in the precious name of our Lord Saviour Jesus Christ.

When do you feel most afraid?

When we read the opening words from our Gospel of Luke text this morning, we are told, "Do not be afraid." We are not to be afraid, as followers of Jesus, because God delights in giving us the kingdom.

And, what is this kingdom? The kingdom is the presence of God, and it is close to us, and it is within us: we will often feel the presence of God within us, and at times we will experience an intense longing to find our rest within God's eternal kingdom.

The focus then immediately shifts to descriptions of people who build up treasure upon treasure on earth, and really only think about themselves. The response that Jesus typically gives to this type of attitude is quite severe: "Sell your possessions, and give to the poor."

We often think about this phrase in the context of the Rich Man from Mark 10, to whom Jesus says, "Go sell what you own, give the money to the poor, and come, follow me." We find these difficult words, and we tend to think that these words would have been specifically for this man, in his particular situation, and probably not for us.

We know that when people in the early church community in Acts were busy selling possessions, not everyone did, because they still had houses to meet in. The risk we run, however, is that we all too easily become specialists at justifying our own beliefs, and begin to lose sight of the Gospel message.

I like this particular story: A prominent preacher once received a written invitation from a church secretary to preach in his church to help raise money to pay off the church's debts. The church secretary wrote a delightful invitation to this famous preacher, offering free use of his country house, or his townhouse or he could even stay at his beautiful seaside house. The preacher declined the invitation, and wrote back a lovely suggestion: "Why don't you sell one of your houses and pay the church debts off yourself!!"

Like most people in Australia, I invested money into superannuation in my working life, so I might be able to fund retirement. And yes, that has found me looking up my super balances every few months and following the share-market to see how we are going financially. I am one who needs to be continually reminded: Peter, where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Another image I like is this: if you look through a window, you can see people everywhere. If you look into a mirror, you can only see yourself. Both a window and a mirror are made of glass, but the difference is the mirror has a layer of silver on it, and no sooner is the silver added than your view gets distorted, and you cease to see others, and begin to only see

yourself. So, when treasures like silver and gold distract us, we cease seeing the people of the world who need our compassion, and we begin to only look inwards.

And so we ask ourselves, "Where is my heart?" Do you have a heart that goes out to other people? Do you have a heart that reaches out to those in need? Do you have a heart for the poor? Are our hearts close to God's heart? And as we store up treasure, will that treasure be found close to God?

We need to ensure that our hearts are not being seduced by earthly possessions, and that we are focusing on the Word of God, rather than being distracted by the temptations of the world. At times we can become so absorbed in our daily routine that we forget about the one, who in his grace, allows us to actually have a routine, the one who has given each of us life. God loves you, and when you let go of your distractions for long enough, we begin to see that we will receive abundantly more riches in our lives if we truly open ourselves up to God.

The other strong teaching coming through our text today is about being watchful. The message is clear: You need to be watchful and you need to be ready. Some people, when it comes to being watchful, are very watchful of sport and movies. Other people are very watchful of medical programs, reality TV, or gardening and home improvement shows. But this is not the watchfulness that Jesus is calling us to.

Watchfulness means being in tune with what God is doing; being dressed for action, if you like, and not stuck in your pyjamas. The Jewish people with Jesus understood the idea of being ready: when Moses was leading the people out of Egypt, they needed to be ready to go. And the Christian church understands the knocking on the door to be like Jesus knocking on the door of our hearts, and us opening the door to receive him.

Watchfulness means having your lamps lit. Being ready might mean being ready for the final return of the master, or it might mean being ready to serve God in whatever way he calls us to. We might think of it as being actively engaged in our faith, and not just a person who stands on the outside and quietly watches the world go by.

We talk of being ready to serve God, but if we crank it up a notch, we might consider seizing opportunities to serve God.

We talk about reading the Bible, but we can crank it up to having the discipline to read a chapter each day, and making sure we focus on the teachings of Jesus.

We talk about praying for people, but we can crank that up to prioritising prayer, and setting aside 3 specific times each day to pray for people.

We talk of showing grace and mercy to people, but we can crank that up to actively demonstrating God's love in difficult situations, and bringing a positive outlook into people's struggles.

So, I leave you with those two particular thoughts this morning:

Where your treasure is, there your heart will also be found.

And, be watchful, and alert, and ready to serve God, with all of your heart.

Amen.