**Putting God First**

**Luke 12:13-21**

* **God should be the #1 priority in the life of every Christian.**
* Jesus - *“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”*(Matthew 6:33 ESV)
* **In this season of spending and giving (Black Friday, Christmas, etc…) we need to be intentional about prioritizing our giving to the Lord and His work.**
* **How you spend your money reveals the priorities of your heart.**
* Jesus - *“Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.”* (Luke 12:34)
* **Every spending decision is a spiritual decision.**
* **Money, in and of itself, is not evil.**
* *“For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.”* (1 Timothy 6:10)
* **The rich man in Jesus’ parable wasn’t condemned because he was rich. He was condemned because he wasn’t rich in his relationship with God.** **(Luke 12:20-21)**
* **There is nothing more important than our relationship with the Lord.**
* ***What will it take to put God first in our lives?***

***PUTTING GOD FIRST REQUIRES:***

**GUARDING AGAINST GREED**

* Jesus - *“Then he said, “Beware! Guard against every kind of greed.”* (Luke 12:15)
* **Greed is defined as intense and selfish desire for something, especially wealth, power, or food.**
* **Many people get upset in church when we talk about money because they’re more focused on acquiring wealth and possessions than they are on helping others.**
* *“So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don’t be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world.”* (Colossians 3:5)
* God promised to meet all of our needs, not all of our “greeds.”
* **There is nothing wrong with having money and possessions as long as your money and possessions don’t have you.**
* Jesus - *“Then He told them a story: “A rich man had a fertile farm that produced fine crops.”* (Luke 12:16)

***PUTTING GOD FIRST REQUIRES:***

**UNDERSTANDING THE DECEPTION**

* Jesus - *“Life is not measured by how much you own.”* (Luke 12:15)
* **Too many people have bought into the lie that money and possessions equal success and happiness.**
* *“But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction.”* (1 Timothy 6:9)
* **Possessions can never make us permanently happy and they will always leave us wanting more.**
* *“Those who love money will never have enough. How meaningless to think that wealth brings true happiness!”* (Ecclesiastes 5:10)
* **When we put our trust in money we are no longer trusting in God.**
* *“Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment.”* (1 Timothy 6:17)

***PUTTING GOD FIRST REQUIRES:***

**VALUING THE RELATIONSHIP**

* Jesus - *“Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God.”* (Luke 12:21)
* **We should value our relationship with the Lord over everything else.**
* *“Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ.”* (Philippians 3:8)
* **We should value the Lord over everything because of His love for us.**
* *“But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.”* (Romans 5:8)
* **Christians are not only given abundant life on earth, but a guarantee of eternal life in heaven.**
* *“You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of Your presence and the pleasures of living with You forever.”* (Psalm 16:11)
* **The more passionate our faith is, the more consistent our giving will be.**

 ***We Demonstrate Our Love For The Lord By:***

* **1) Accepting Jesus as the Lord & Savior of our Life. (Acts 4:11-12; Romans 10:9), 2) Worshiping corporately with other Christians. (Psalm 122:1; Acts 2:46; Hebrews 10:25), 3) Gathering with other Christians for discipleship and accountability. (1 Thessalonians 5:11; Acts 2:42-47), 4) Serving the Lord in the local Church and outside the walls of the Church. (1 Samuel 12:24; Colossians 3:23-24), 5) Giving faithfully and giving generously to advance His work on earth. (Malachi 3:10; Matthew 23:23; 2 Corinthians 9:7), 6) Sharing the Gospel with nonbelievers. (Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; Philemon 1:6)**
* **The Lord always takes care of His children when He is first in their lives.**
* *“And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 4:19)
* *“Once I was young, and now I am old. Yet I have never seen the godly abandoned or their children begging for bread.”* (Psalm 37:25)
* “If you have not chosen the Kingdom of God first, it will in the end make no difference what you have chosen instead.” - William Law
* ***In what areas do I need to put God first in my life?***

**Connect Group Discussion**

**Understanding:**

* What does Luke 12:13-21 teach us about God/Jesus?
* Why was the rich man “condemned” in this parable by Jesus?
* What is a key message Luke 12:13-21? There may be more than one.

**Digging Deeper:**

* What are some of the lies that people believe about money and possessions?
* Does this parable from Jesus teach that being rich is sinful? Why or why not?
* What do I understand Jesus to be saying to me in Luke 12:13-21?
* What are some areas that I need to “put God first” in my life?
* What are some steps that I can take to prioritize the Lord in my life, especially when it comes to giving to the Lord’s work?

**Loving Outward:**

* Who do you need to share the gospel with this week?
* Who do you need to follow-up with regarding the gospel?
* Who are you bringing to church next Sunday?