

SERMON NOTES

SUNDAY 28.09.25

PREACHER: PS NATHAN BEAN

Contentment in All Things

BECOMING CHRISTLIKE

BEING [HEART], THINKING [MIND] & DOING [BODY]

[A PERSONAL REFLECTION]

Conviction of a Disciple:

A disciple recognises that all we have belongs to God. We live not as owners but as stewards, allowing our hearts to be formed by generosity, trust, and the eternal purposes of Christ.

OVERVIEW

The parable of the shrewd manager confronts us with a surprising truth: how we handle possessions is a spiritual matter. We are called not to stockpile wealth or serve money as a master, but to use what we've been entrusted with for eternal purposes. True discipleship means recognising that everything belongs to God and learning to live with contentment; open-handedly, investing in people and relationships that will last into eternity.

ACTION

Step 1: Where do you see the mindset of "mine" operating in your life?

Step 2: How could your generosity become more intentional, reflecting God's ownership of all you have?

Step 3: What relationships or kingdom purposes could you invest in this week with your time, money, or possessions?

THOUGHT

SCRIPTURE: Luke 16:1-15

In Luke's gospel, Jesus tells a really odd parable that has unsettled students and bible interpreters through the centuries. He speaks of a dishonest manager who, facing the end of his employment, scrambles to secure his future. Instead of stockpiling money for himself, he sneakily reduces the debts of others. When his master finds out what he has done, rather than punish, he rewards him—not for his dishonesty, but for his shrewdness. The manager used his very temporary position of power to secure what mattered most: relationships.

This somewhat strange story carries a piercing truth. The way we handle money reveals the orientation of our hearts. Even more than that, it shapes who we are becoming. Jesus' warning is clear: "You cannot serve both God and money." Only one gets to be first. When money sits at the centre, we live under its rule — securing, protecting, and consuming for ourselves. But when God is our all in all, possessions take their rightful place as tools employed for love of the other.

Discipleship to Jesus calls us to a radical shift: from seeing ourselves as owners to seeing ourselves — every aspect of our lives — as stewards. Everything we hold, our homes, bank accounts, cars, even the breath in our lungs, comes from God and belongs to Him. We are not rulers of our possessions; we are entrusted managers. This is not a burden on us, but paradoxically it's the key to setting us free. When we cling to "mine," we are chained by scarcity, always needing more. But when we open our hands, we discover that our lives are already rich in Christ and as members of his glorious Body.

This freedom releases us into a new economy: one where generosity is the currency, relationships are the investment, and eternal life is the return. Every act of open-handedness—sharing a meal, welcoming someone into our home, giving away resources—becomes seed sown into eternity. Stories of friendship and transformation outlast any possession we could hope to cling to.

Too easily we can get caught up in the details: "How much do I give?", "What amount is the 'correct' amount?" But the real question, the one that gets to the heart is, "Who am I becoming through the way I give?", "What does my giving say about where I've placed my deepest trust?". And again, this isn't a trap for more religiosity.

Grace triumphs over all.

But if we decide in our hearts to give God our first and best, not out of guilt, but trust, he sees and is pleased. It is not the amount that matters, but the priority. And every time we choose generosity over greed, stewardship over ownership, we are being formed into the likeness of Christ.

To follow Jesus is to swim upstream from our culture's obsession with accumulation. It is to live as though everything already belongs to God, because it does. And in that reality, we are free to build what truly lasts: loving relationships, radical generosity, and a hospitality of heart and possessions that echoes heaven itself.

DISCUSSION

[A GROUP REFLECTION]

- 1) What strikes you most about the parable of the shrewd manager?
- 2) How can we as a group live more as stewards than as owners?
- 3) What might it look like for our community to use possessions in ways that echo eternity?

PRAYER

Lord,
Everything we have is Yours. Free us from the lie that we are owners, and teach us to live as stewards of Your generosity. Shape our hearts through giving, hospitality, and trust. May our lives echo eternity as we use what we have to love others and to glorify You.
Amen.