

[00:00:00] Speaker A: Welcome to the Hope Church Glasgow Sunday podcast. We pray you encounter God's love afresh today. Find out more about us@hopechurchglasgow.org or find us on Facebook and Instagram. Now, please enjoy this week's podcast.

[00:00:17] Speaker B: So this morning we're going to continue our series in Luke, and this morning we're going to be talking about money.

What did you just feel then? I could tell people felt something because there was a mmm that went through the room. What did you feel when you heard this preach was about money?

Do you know money is a bit like preaching about sex?

It's a bit uncomfortable.

It's a bit of an uncomfortable subject for us because we view it as personal.

Actually. It's our own business.

It's, you know, we're the best judges of our money situation.

I think probably we're not alone in that because I think that sentiment was probably around in Bible times too.

So I did a bit of research and I found out that the Bible contains over 2,300 plus verses related to money, wealth and possessions, making it one of the most frequently addressed topics in Scripture.

These verses often emphasize that financial stewardship is directly connected to a person's heart, trust and spiritual life.

Roughly 15% of all Jesus teachings.

His recorded teachings, including 16 of His 38 parables, dealt with money and possessions.

There are nearly twice as many verses about money, possessions and wealth and stewardship as there are on faith and prayer combined.

Wow, that surprised me, actually. But that's amazing, isn't it? So money is an important subject to God too.

Do you know why is money such an important issue for us?

I think because it's a constant need.

Life needs money and the faithfulness of provision of God needs to be evident in our lives all the time.

Can we trust he'll do it or do we doubt that he will?

So that means if he's not going to rock up, then it's about me. I've got to sort it out for myself. I've only got mine to rely on. And many of us have been in those situations either because, well, we tried God, but it didn't really work or. Or I just need to provide for myself. I need to look after myself and my family.

And when I was preparing this, actually, it was a bit like doing my Christmas food shopping. And anybody in here who does Christmas food shopping will know exactly what I'm talking about. You go with your list and you go with what you need. And then as you go up and down the aisles, things jump in your Trolley, don't they? Things that. You think I might need one of those. Shops are shut for two days. I'm probably going to need one of those.

What am I going to. What if Auntie Mary comes and she wants those biscuits? Or Uncle Jimmy comes and he wants that bottle of wine and we find that we get to the end of the checkout and we have a huge trolley, and our first thought is, how are we going to pay for that? But the second thought for me is, am I going to put all this. And this was what it was like, actually preparing to speak this morning, had a huge trolley, 2,300 verses, you'll be pleased to know. I'm not going to go through them all.

That I thought, what am I going to do? How am I going to. I need a bit of that. And I need a bit of that in. And I need that verse in. And I was sitting one morning in bed and I was talking to Holy Spirit, and I said, holy Spirit, I've just got this. This going around in my head. What. What am I going to do?

Where am I going to even start?

And I found myself saying this exact sentence to Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, if you were preaching this, where would you start?

And before I had time to think, what a stupid question, Holy Spirit came back to me and said, I'd start with God.

So that's where we're going to start this morning.

I'd start with God.

So if you want to stick it on for me, Hamish. So this morning we're going to be thinking about, where is our treasure?

I'll let it come up in a minute.

So 2 Corinthians 6 says, I will embrace you.

I will be a true father to you, and you will be my beloved sons and daughters, says the Lord, Yahweh, the Almighty.

So God's going to embrace us, and we are true beloved sons.

I am a child of God.

My identity is that I am a child of God. I am chosen and loved, and I inherit the promises of God.

And I also experience the goodness of my Father.

I experience that in tangible ways. That's who I am. I'm a child of the king, and the king looks after me.

I want to remind us, just as Holy Spirit said, let's start with God. I want to remind us of some

scriptures this morning. Now, I'm not going to read out all 2,300.

In fact, I'm not going to read out any scriptures because it would take too long. I'm just going to make statements and I'm going to tell you where those statements are so that you can perhaps go and look later.

So God chose me and made me. Psalm 139 God has a plan and purpose for my life.

Psalm 139 Ephesians 2 God richly supplies all my needs.

Philippians 4 I am united with Christ.

Philippians 2 I have access to the same vision and perspective as Christ because I am seated in heavenly places with him. Ephesians 2 I am not an orphan. I have a father who loves me and loves to give me good things.

John 14 Luke 11 God wants to share his wisdom with me. James 1 God gives me the ability to produce wealth to confirm his covenant with me. Deuteronomy 8 God is able to bless me abundantly so that I can do good works. 2 Corinthians and on and on and on. I don't think you'll be able to look in many parts of Scripture and not find the promises of God because of his children.

This is our God. This is the loving Father who's our provider, the one who gave all so that we could be his.

So we're going to look at three three bits of Luke this morning. We're not going to read them all, but we're going to dip into them.

And as I was, as I was preparing this, I realized as I looked it up that Luke is a money gospel.

Luke has 24 chapters, and about one in every six to seven verses deals with money, wealth, riches, poverty, possessions, generosity, debt, wages and stewardship.

That's more than any other gospel. By a noticeable margin.

Luke uses money a bit like a diagnostic tool.

It reveals what rules your life.

Money isn't neutral in Luke.

It competes for loyalty.

Wealth is treated as dangerous, but redeemable generosity is not optional. It's evidence of a transformed life.

Luke is Less money is bad, and more money tells the truth about you.

So we're going to start in Luke 12 and we're not going to read it as a bit. I'm just going to pick verses out a bit. And this is the first verse here.

This is Jesus in Luke 12 so don't ever be afraid. Dearest friends, your loving Father joyously gives you his kingdom with all its promises.

It is the Father's joy to give us everything, his everything, not our everything.

And then Jesus goes on, I repeat, don't let worry enter your life.

Live above the anxious cares about your personal needs.

People everywhere seem to worry about making a living, but your heavenly Father knows your every need and will take care of you as you passionately Seek his kingdom above all else. He will supply your needs.

So I want to do, if you were here, I think probably a couple of months ago when Ian was preaching, he did this wonderful illustration of, as believers, where we stand.

So if I could have my Holy Trinity out, please, and I'd like you to stand in a circle here.

So Ian showed us this illustration of the Trinity, Father, Son and Spirit joining hands together face to face with each other.

And then he put the believer in the middle.

He put that believer in the middle. And that's where we live. We live face to face with the Father, Son and Spirit.

We live in union with Him. We are seated in heavenly places.

And that means that this, which is my little money pot that my believer needs for life, that goes in the circle too.

That's where your money sits. Now, we can have loads of things sitting in there just this morning. It happens to be money, but everything can go in there. And what happens is the Trinity take that and they turn it over and they keep it for themselves. Because you're loved.

That's why God meets your every need. If you just want to stand there for a minute, guys, Jesus says, provide money belts for yourself that do not wear out an unfailing and inexhaustible treasure in the heavens, where no fear thief comes near and no moth destroys.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

If your treasure is rooted in God, that's where your heart will be also. Thank you, guys. If you just want to sit down for a moment, I might need you again in a minute.

So Jesus tells us that money is a heart issue, not a pounds issue.

God is asking, where is our heart?

Is it orientated towards him, trusting him for inexhaustible and unfailing provision? Or is our heart vested in our own ability to provide for ourselves?

Now that can be because we want to, because we're good at it, or that somehow we've got disappointed in God. But either way we determine to look after ourselves.

So that brings us to our second passage in Luke.

And this is Luke 16. I'm not going to read this one because it's quite a long passage, but it's a bit of a strange parable, actually. Jesus tells a bit of a strange parable about a dishonest manager who, to ensure his own survival when the Master comes and asks him to give an account of his stewardship, and by his shrewdness and ability to make money out of a bad situation, relies on his wits and reaps a reward for himself.

So that's the basis. Somebody's been defrauding his master. When his master comes back, the steward makes sure that he's feathered his own nest before his master catches him.

And it says here, even though his master was defrauded, when he found out about the shrewd way the manager had feathered his own nest, he congratulated the clever scoundrel for what he'd done to provide for his future.

Jesus continued, remember this, the sons of darkness interact more wisely than the sons of light.

So is Jesus applauding this way of operating? Does it look like. Or is he flagging up how easy it is to fall into the trap of self reliance and self trust when it comes to our money?

Do you know you can survive, you can prosper and be wealthy outside of the kingdom of God by your own effort, but how much more effective is if we live from the place of the kingdom of God's resources in our lives? I think Jesus is flagging up there. Yeah, that's great. You can do that. But how much more, if you live in me, can you do that?

God's kingdom resources come out of seeking his presence and influence first and then they're released. We don't strive for them, we don't own them. We recognize that they come from God.

This is an ownership issue.

Jesus is clear.

No servant can serve two masters.

Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stand devotedly by the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and mammon.

That is your earthly possessions or anything else you trust in and rely on instead of God. That's the amplified version.

And the Aramaic word for mammon is the Greek. Aramaic and Greek actually have the same meaning is mamona, that in which one trusts or that of which is deserving of trust.

So Jesus is saying here, you cannot put your trust in me and put your trust in money which you think is deserving of your trust.

Jesus is saying, you can't put your trust in God wholeheartedly and also put your own trust and reliance in money. Both require 100% of our service.

We can entrust ourselves to God and believe he'll provide for us, or we can take responsibility, responsibility for ourselves and provide for ourselves.

Which master are we loyal to?

Because Jesus is saying here we can't be loyal to both.

Looking after myself and trusting in my own ability to resource myself leaves no room for God. I don't actually need him because either I feel he's not trustworthy, he's letting me down or I'm pretty good at this on my own.

But trusting in God and his ability to resource me leaves no room for self reliance.

I don't need to look after myself.

That illustration earlier God does it for me and God resources me.

Which brings us to our last passage this morning from Luke and this one we are going to read together because all that I've talked about comes together in this story.

And this is the story that we'll all know very well. It's the story of the rich young ruler.

And it says one day a wealthy Jewish nobleman of high standing posed this question to Jesus, Wonderful teacher, what must I do to receive eternal life?

Jesus answered, why would you call me wonderful when there's only one who is wonderful and that is God alone?

You already know what is right and what the commandments teach. Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not lie and honor your father and your mother.

The wealthy leader replied, these are the very things that I've been doing for as long as I can remember.

Ah, said Jesus, there is still one thing you're missing in your life.

What's that? Asked the man.

You must go and sell everything you own and give all the proceeds to the poor so that you will have eternal resources. Then come and follow me.

These words devastated the rich leader, for he was extremely wealthy.

Jesus saw his disappointment and looking right at him, said, it is next to impossible for those who have everything to enter into God's kingdom. Nothing could be harder. You could compare it to trying to stuff a rope through the eye of a needle.

Those who heard this said, then who can be saved?

Jesus responded, what appears humanly impossible is more than possible with God, for God can do what man cannot.

We all know this story really well, and if you've been around Christian circles for a long time, you'll know that that lots of people have taken theories and things that we should do from this passage. You know, like Christians being poor honors God and God will make me give up all my money if I follow him.

And you know, Christians need to give away everything to follow Jesus. Rich is bad, poor is good.

But that is really what's happening here.

So could I have if I could have my holy trinity back up again, please? And my believer, who's now morphed into the rich young ruler.

Okay, so if you want to get in the circle, rich young ruler, this is what Jesus sees initially.

Here's the rich young ruler he calls Jesus Wonderful. And Jesus says, you, you're acknowledging me as God you're calling me. Wonderful.

You've followed all the commandments. You have a heart to follow me.

You have a heart to follow me.

So there he is.

She is in the circle.

And if you could just move around a little bit, pivot a bit. But this is what's happening. Stick your arm out, Jan.

This is what's happening.

In this young ruler.

Jesus is embracing him, but the money is sitting outside.

So Jesus has a word of knowledge.

He sees this. This is what Jesus sees.

Jesus has already said you can't trust both. You can't be in there and out here looking after yourself at the same time.

Trust in Jesus requires the man to turn away from his trust in his wealth and trust Jesus enough to give it away.

Who is the true master? Who is your true master is the issue here, not the money itself.

If you fast forward to Paul, you'll find that in Acts and in Paul's letters, that actually Paul was supported by wealthy Christians.

You know, it wasn't a blanket, get rid of all your money.

This instruction was not a universal truth, just a personal challenge.

Thank you, guys. If you want to. Thank you. Hopefully that helped her.

Jesus said that it's impossible for the financially independent and trusting in their own ability to produce wealth to enter into into that relationship of love with the Trinity.

But Jesus reaches out and embraces those who submit their lives to him. A bit further on in Luke, I think there's a story of Zacchaeus where Jesus makes that same challenge to Zacchaeus. And Zacchaeus was obedient. Zacchaeus had a way in which he could honor God with his wealth.

So what's my response?

Only once in the scripture does God say, test me.

Only once. Most of the time he's saying, don't test me, don't test me.

But only once does he say, test me. And that's in Malachi 3 10.

And that word test comes from the word bakken, which means to scrutinize, to examine, to try the genuineness of something.

Often in the context of testing metal for purity, it implies a rigorous, thorough examination to prove reliability.

This is an invitation for believers to trust God's promises.

He wants you to take him at his word, lean into him, pull on him, and his desire is to show you that he's trustworthy.

God challenged the Israelites to bring the full tithe in the storehouse, promising to open the windows of heaven, to pour out overwhelming blessings.

It is an invitation to test him based on faith in his faithfulness.

It's an invitation to verify God's promise to provide, shifting that focus from our skepticism to an active, obedient relationship. And he makes that same invitation to us today.

And I want to finish off this morning by making this a bit more real. I want you to tell some stories and some testimonies.

You know, it's great when we read these scriptures, but it's even greater when we see it work.

And these are Ian and I's testimonies. Not so that we get a batch of you. We're great, but because we've taken God at His word on some of these scriptures and we have testimonies of His. His goodness and his amazingness in so many different ways. So I'm just going to pick out. Just pick out three of these. And if these speak to you, these are testimonies. So take them and apply them to your life. And the first one, we spoke right at the beginning. God is a good father.

Good father. When Ian and I had our third daughter and she was still a baby, my uncle left me some money and we decided that I would learn to drive. I'd got to my middle 30s, never had the opportunity, the money never seemed practical to learn to drive, but I said I would learn to drive.

We did have a family car, but Ian traveled quite a considerable way to work each day, so there was no chance of me ever being able to use that.

And we did live in quite a small town where you could walk everywhere. But having three children now, one that needed school half an hour in one direction, one that needed a nursery

half an hour in the other direction by the time I got home. So I thought, this is great. So as I was learning to drive, going through the process of learning to drive, I became more and more convinced of the timing of God.

And I would say things like, God, I don't believe I'm going through all this trauma to learn to drive, except that there is something at the end that I can drive.

So I began to think, okay, I'm going to believe for a car, which, if you had seen our finances at the time were totally impossible.

We only had one wage coming in the house, I wasn't working.

And I knew that if God gave me a car, I would need to tax insure it and run it as well. So I added that in the mix. So I said, God, I would love a car. I would love you to give me the money to tax insure and run it for a year.

I'm going to believe you for that. That's what I'm going to Confess. So that's what I did. We had small group at the time and they were around and you're going around saying what you're in faith for. And I said, I'm in faith for a car. And you know, there's some of the. Sometimes there's those parts polite smiles. Okay, okay.

So I learned to drive past my test and it wasn't very long afterwards, probably a month or so afterwards, I'm at home in the day and the postman comes and puts an envelope through the door and I open it up and it's from a solicitor's firm with a check inside for quite a considerable amount of money.

My first reaction was, this is probably like one of those Reader's Digest checks. Do you know the ones? I mean, they look really real, but they're not.

But anyway, I thought, oh, I'm going to have to ring up. So I rang up the lawyers firm and said, I'm just ringing up to see if this check is real. Now you can imagine the reception. I got the other end. Of course, you know we've sent it, madam. Of course it's real. Do you not know who it's from? No.

Oh, well, we can't tell you who it's from, but we'd just like to tell you it's real.

So amazing. So we use the money to buy a car.

Not the most swished car in the world, but I loved it.

Big enough to put the kids in and all the stuff in the back.

We had enough to tax insure it and put petrol in it for a year.

Isn't that amazing? Isn't that amazing? Throughout that year, I thought, okay, God, what are we going to do about year two? Because we still didn't have any money to tax insure it and run it. And halfway through the year, towards the end of the year, actually, one of the kids at my daughter's school, one of the parents of the kids, said they would like some tutoring. And as I was a teacher, they asked me if I would do it.

So Saturday mornings, for quite a considerable time, I got up and that money paid for tax, insurance and petrol for that year.

Now, I would have loved to have come through the letterbox again, if I'm honest, but God said, no, you have a talent, you can go and work for it this time. But God is amazing. God never lets you down.

My second story is, again, God's intention is for me to overflow so that he provides for me and he provides for other people too.

That was one of those scriptures we read, God gives me the ability, blesses me, so I can bless others. So this is a story about that same small town we lived in.

And my friend Carol, who, if you've heard me preach in the last year or so, you'll have seen Carol's face up there.

She and her two sisters lived in the small town and they had married local people, but their parents lived up in Newcastle.

And so the parents were going to come down to Christmas for Christmas, and then a couple of months before, decided they couldn't afford to come. They were both pensioners, couldn't afford to come, come.

Carol and her sisters, very much in the same stage that I was. Small kids, not a lot of money coming into the house.

And so Grandma and Grandad said, we're not even going to let you. We won't let you give us any money because you need the money. We'll stay in Newcastle and you can.

You can have Christmas. We'll have Christmas on our own and you have Christmas together.

And they just refused to take any money at all. So. So I was listening to this thought, no, that's not right. That's not right. I think families should be together at Christmas. So I tell you what, God, this is exactly what I said. Tell you what, God, you give me the money and I'll give them the money.

I'll tell them it's from you, and then they can't argue.

True. And so shared it with Ian and said, Ian, if anybody wants to give us any money, this is how much we need and we're going to give it away to somebody else.

But bless Ian, he's always been wonderfully supportive. So, anyway, one night I'm up putting the kids to bed, so I don't see any of this. One of the single guys from our church comes with his checkbook and he says, God's told me to come.

He's told me that you need some money, and he says, you'll tell me how much you need and then I'm going to give you a check for it.

And so Ian said, well, actually, we don't need anything, but I know Anne's been praying for a certain amount of money.

So if you give it to us, is it all right if we give it away to somebody else? And he said, great.

So there was the check.

I was just, do you know, we pray these things and we trust God, and then when it happens, I

was like, what?

What?

So anyway, I cashed the check and I put the actual cash in a card and sent it to them.

With this. This is from God, so you can't argue. And sure enough, they didn't and they came down for Christmas. God is amazing. God will use you. If you don't have the resources to bless other people, God will use you and he'll give you those resources to bless others. Don't let your. Your financial circumstances limit you in what a blessing you can be to other people.

And then the last, the last one is the hardest one, actually. The last one is God asks for obedience, just as we saw in that rich young ruler. God asks for obedience because it's about our love for him primarily, not what he's going to give us.

And so this story is, Ian and I moved up to. When our eldest was about 8 or 9, we moved up to Newcastle to be part of a church plant.

And Ian had had to change his job. So he'd had to take a pay cut of about a third.

Houses were more expensive than we thought. So we arrived in Newcastle with not a lot of resources, faithfulness of God, but not a lot of money in the bank.

And so I decided, when our youngest daughter went, about a year or so, our youngest daughter went to school and I decided I would go back on the supply list. Now, supply was a bit different than it is now. It was a bit more competitive and you had to sort of work your way through the foothills of going into any school that you were called to to make a name for yourself. And then you could get a bit choosy. So I'd put my name down for this supply list and I was waiting for the office to ring me with a bit of dread, a bit of. It was nice when the money came through the letterbox, God.

But I was praying one day and there was a couple who'd moved up with us who had given up jobs to move up on church plant. And they were having real financial difficulty. Neither of them could get a job. And so they were living on benefits. And so I was praying, I think I must have been praying for them. And God said, I want you to give them some money.

Want Ian and I to give them some money.

I thought, great, okay, I'm happy to do that. God, when you give me some money, when I. When I get some work, then we can give them some money.

God said, there's two things wrong with Anne.

The first thing, I don't want you to give it as a lump sum. I want you to give them something every month, or Ian and I to give them something every month.

And secondly, you give the money and I'll give you the work.

That was a challenge. That was a challenge because this was committing ourselves to do something monthly. This wasn't just in the months where we had some work or not had some work. So I rang up Ian and I chatted to Ian, and we decided we were going to be obedient, we were going to obey God.

And so I, in the afternoon I rang up the bank, because you had to ring up the bank in those days to do a standing order. Made a standing order to go out as soon as possible. So it's two or three days and.

And then sat back and thought, whoa, it's a bit of step of faith there, but God, I've been obedient.

And about. It was about two hours later the phone rings and it's the supply office. And they say to me, Mrs. Hawkins, we'd like to offer you to do half a term in a local school now. Eight weeks. So it's eight weeks going to the same place, getting back into the swing of teaching again.

What a blessing.

What a blessing.

And then towards the end of those eight weeks, I managed to get some supply work at the school that my daughters were at and spent the next, I think it was about 13 or 14 years in the same school doing supply for them.

When God asks you to be obedient, he is overflowing in his goodness to you. What a great God that we have.

What a great God.

So if you're believing for something impossible to happen that there's no way it could happen, trust God, start to believe God. If you're wanting to be generous and you don't have the resources, ask God.

If God's asking you to be obedient in something, step out. You will never, ever miss out in being obedient to God.

So, Tim, if you'd like to come up, I want us to respond because it's great hearing these stories and it's great hearing the scriptures, but I want us to respond today. So whatever way is comfortable for you to connect with God, if you like to walk around, pace around, lie on the floor, pray with family, whatever is the best way for you to do that? I want you to connect with God. I want you to ask Holy Spirit some questions. First question is, where is my treasure?

Where is my treasure?

The second one is, which master am I serving?

What would handing over my trust to Jesus look like for me in this area of money?

Is he asking me to do anything.

And do I need a miracle in my finances? What is the way forward for me?

So I want us to just, just be quiet for a few minutes and I want us to look at those questions and just access the one. Just talk to Holy Spirit about, the one that's suddenly hit you running out a little bit of time to respond to those. But I would encourage you just to ask God those questions yourself.

Away from this morning, I just want to leave you with this verse that I started with.

This is God speaking to us.

I will embrace you. I will be a true father to to you and you will be my beloved sons and daughters, says the Lord Yahweh Almighty.

[00:37:09] Speaker A: Thank you for listening to this podcast from Hope Church Glasgow. There are loads more to listen to wherever you normally find your podcasts or from our website at [Hope Church glasgow.org](http://HopeChurchglasgow.org) if you'd like to know more about us, we are on Facebook and Instagram. Just search for Hope Church Glasgow. Have a hopeful day.