**Where Your Treasure Is, There Your Heart Will Be**

**The Word**

Read together Luke 12:13-34

**The Big Idea**

Recognizing that greater wealth does not actually lead to greater joy and fulfillment in life, Jesus invites us out of a posture of greed or anxiety regarding wealth and into a posture of open-handed generosity with what God gives us.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. On Sunday, we talked a lot about greed and anxiety as two postures towards wealth that are unhelpful to the human heart. A) What was most helpful or impactful in that conversation for you? B) And where specifically do you see either or both of those postures in your own relationship with money and possessions?

2. Consider the various parables and metaphors Jesus provides in response to greed and anxiety: the wealthy landowner, ravens, and wild flowers. What is one key insight or renewed appreciation you gained from any of those?

3. Read v. 32-34 together and discuss what you think those verses mean. How would truly believing those verses change the way you live your life and approach your money and possessions?

4. Can you think of anyone who lives with that open-hearted generosity that Jesus encourages us towards? How specifically have you seen them live that out, and what impact have they had on your life?

5. On Sunday, we were challenged to sell a possession and give the money away to someone (or an organization) that could use it. For those of you who want to take up that challenge, what’s one thing you plan to sell? Why did you pick that thing?

**Digging Deeper: Sermon Outline**

I. Introduction

A. Jesus invites us into a way of relating to wealth that is very different from Orange County. If we follow him in this, our lives will look different from those around us.

 B. What Jesus has to say is relevant for all, regardless of income or net worth.

C. Nowhere does Jesus condemn making lots of money. It’s what we do with the money that is the issue.

II. Jesus’ Basic Truth: Life does not consist in the abundance of possessions (v. 15)

 A. Jesus is simply stating a basic fact of reality: being richer doesn’t make you happier

 B. But an alternative story is very ingrained in us as Western Americans in 21st century

C. Yet, the studies don’t lie: greater assets don’t lead to deeper fulfillment in life. The human heart was made for more than money can fulfill.

III. Jesus warns us against two unhelpful postures towards wealth

A. Greed (v. 15)

1. The Greek word means “more.” Greed is that constant craving for more; that restlessness inside that says, “it’s never enough” (more clothes, toys, money, etc).

 a. The Advertising industry capitalizes on this

 b. The comparison games we play feed into this

2. Jesus uses strong language about greed: “Watch out, be on your guard” (v. 15)

He knows how harmful greed is to our hearts: leaves us unsatisfied, restless, never present to all the good that God is already providing.

3. Examples of greed in the passage

1. v. 13: the death of a loved one leads to greed in dividing the estate

2. v. 16-21: a wealthy land owner who decides to build bigger barns. Instead of using that excess to bless his workers, he keeps it all to himself

B. Worry and anxiety (v. 22, v. 25, v. 32)

1. Some of us experience anxiety in a very day-to-day immediate way (rent payment, utilities), others more long term (college funds or retirement accounts)

2. Our level of financial anxiety has very little to do with how much money we make. We are always comparing ourselves to those who have 10% more

3. Anxiety is also harmful to the human heart: leaves us choked, turned in on ourselves, not free to see the needs of others around us

4. The rich landowner was actually motivated by a desire for security. From the outside, people would have thought of him as greedy, but from the inside he was simply seeking security. (v. 19

 5. Excess storage to gain security. We have an entire storage industry.

C. Our greed and anxiety play off each other

 In our greed, we live on more than we can afford, and that then causes anxiety.

IV. Jesus invites us into a different relationship with wealth

 A. “Fool” (v. 20). Fool = someone who lives as though God doesn’t exist

 B. But God does exist

 1. He is our authority: we don’t actually have control over our lives (v. 20)

 2. He is our loving father who will provide for us

 a. Consider the ravens (v. 24)

b. Consider the flowers (v. 27-28)

c. Consider Hebrews 13:5-6

d. Consider sheep (v. 32)

1) Followers of Jesus are like sheep (fearful, defenseless) who in reality are so incredibly privileged and wealthy because they have inherited the kingdom

2) If we could see ourselves from Jesus’ perspective (just how rich we truly are) it would change how we relate to our money

C. Since God exists as our loving Father, we are invited into open-handed generosity

1. We have freely received from God, so we can freely give

2. v. 33: selling possessions and giving to the poor

3. v. 21: being rich towards God

4. v. 31: seeking first God’s kingdom