

“Healthy Selfishness”, John Kliewer, Matthew 6:19 - 24, February 7, 2015

Good morning, it is great to see you all. Hey, I don't know about you, but this year, 2016 has been off to a great start for me. You know, it hasn't all been easy, but I love what we've been doing here on the weekends, asking ourselves how do healthy do you want to be, how healthy do you want to be? And then letting God press into us, change things; make really make meaningful, powerful changes in our lives. You know, it's just been a start, but for me, I've seen in my life, in my spiritual, emotional, even physical health improvements. I've been exercising more, eating better, reading my bible more, and I just want to thank you all for going through that with me. It is a powerful thing.

Well, today, we're going to start out today by asking ourselves a question. What if there was something really unhealthy about us and we just don't see it, we just don't see it, and it's hidden. What if there was some way that we were hurting ourselves, some big problem that we have, sin issue but we were basically blind to it, we couldn't see it. Do you get this? This would be different from the other problems in our lives because it would come as a surprise to us. You know, no one is surprised that they are out of shape or that their emotions are out of control or that they are committing adultery. It's never, what? You're not my spouse and I just had sex with you? I must be committing adultery. It's just unbelievable right? I'm sure some fool has said that but it's just not believable right? If there was some problem that hid its very existence from us, I think that Jesus, you remember him, he's the guy that loves us so much and is so smart, and he would warn us about this problem. He would actually talk a lot about it, he would help us to try to see it and to get to a healthy place and we need to talk about it here. It's something we need to talk a lot about

This idea, I don't know about you, but it kind of frightens me a little that I can have something seriously wrong with me and just don't see it. Some giant blind spot, sure enough, that's the case and Jesus he's lovingly warning us about it. It's as though I look in the mirror and I look totally normal to myself, I look normal but if we could actually see, if we could really see ourselves is that we are greedy bozos. We are slaves to materialism, seriously if we could really see ourselves looking back at us, it'd be more like Mr. Burns from the Simpsons looking back at us, it would be like Ebenezer Scrooge, that's what we'd see in the mirror but we don't see it. You know, that Bible is full of warnings about greed and materialism for a reason but we're blind to it. What do we say, oh, no, no, no, that guy over there, he's got way more money than me, he cares about money way more than I do, it's him, he's the greedy guy. Or like, yeah, ok, our culture it's full of materialism, I see that on super bowl Sunday, but that's not me, hmmm. If we're honest, I bet most of us don't want to talk about financial health, about greed today. You don't believe me when I tell you that Mr. Burns is our guy that we look like him, you probably don't see it. You know, I'm a pastor, so people share their problems with me, they confess some real struggles, some private things going on in their lives. I've had people tell me about

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addictions to porn, adultery, and their struggles with premarital and homosexual sex, but you know what? I've never had anyone tell me exactly how much money they make and how much they give, that they struggle with greed, oh no, that's way too private. Blind we are, what does Jesus say? Jesus says the eye is the lamp of the body, if your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light but if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness? This is kind of a weird, hard to understand passage. Let me tell you what Jesus is talking about, he's talking about greed and he's saying if we are greedy, we are in the dark, we are seriously in the dark. Could it be true? Could we be blind? Maybe Ebenezer Scrooge, Mr. Burns, that is what we look like, if that was the case, we might not be able to see it but you think we'd be able to grope around a little in the dark and at least feel what's going on here, that there'd be some consequences here of being so greedy. If you know anything about Mr. Burns or Ebenezer Scrooge, it sure comes out in the way they conduct their business, the way they do their jobs is all about their greed. Really the only question they ask themselves is will it make me money? They never ask is it right, will it hurt people or the environment?

How about in our jobs, do we ever really ask those questions or are we just going with the flow, gotta make money. Or how about this one, raise your hand if you have a job where you make money, come on, raise your hands if you have a job where you make money, keep your hand up. If you have a job where you make money and you're actually good at it, keep your hand up. I saw few hands go down. If you have a job where you make money and you help people, keep your hand up, if you help people too. Ok, how about this one, if you actually love your job, yeah, why are there less hands up? It's because of materialism, it's because we make compromises, we all have jobs, all those hands are up, we all have jobs where we make money, but we compromise in our jobs for the sake of money. You know, greed it also stops us from asking hard questions about our lifestyles. You know, if we weren't blind, if we didn't have this willful blindness going on, we'd ask ourselves things like, how much do I really need to spend on clothes, or gadgets, or my hobbies, my car or my dream home? Or does anyone ever ask themselves this? How can I give away more money? How can I change my life to be more generous? Do we ever question our own spending? Do we ever let anyone else question our spending? Here's something we as Americans just don't say. I'm about to buy that new whatever it is thing do you think I should buy it for myself? Do you think that would be greedy? Trust me, people outside of America, outside the western world, they can answer that for you, they really can. They look at us Americans and they think, hey if you guys just didn't think you needed that new fancy pair of shoes or that newest iPhone, you could do so much in this world. You could end hunger; you could fight disease and human trafficking. It's kind of a crazy thought actually that we live in the wealthiest country in human history, that by comparison to different countries outside of America, different parts of the world, we are incredibly rich, every single one of us and yet we never stop to think about the possibility that we're greedy. Materialism blinds us.

This is a hard topic today, but let me tell you, Jesus, he doesn't warn us about this because he doesn't like us. No he loves us. I'm sure there are some of you that are thinking why did I have

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to come to church this weekend, it's snowing out, I could've just stayed home. Others of you, you just want to fight this, you're just like, I'm not blind, I'm not greedy, there's no way I'm like Mr. Burns, look at my posture, I'm good. Or following Jesus, it's not about our money it's about our hearts. That last bit there, that's kind of true. Following Jesus is less about our money and more about our hearts. But you know they're connected right? What does Jesus say, grab a bible, let's take a look, we're going to look at Matthew 6. It is on page 679 in the bibles we have here. Let me pray, and then we'll look at Jesus's words.

God, I just welcome you here even more, Holy Spirit come, we need you, shine your light, show us what's really going on in our lives, show us our greed. God, it's hard to face so I ask for your love and your grace. God, I love the tender way that you show us the truth about us, you bring health and wholeness to our lives so I ask for that now, I ask for radical change in people's lives today. And God, money, stuff isn't bad, but making it the most important thing in our lives, that will kill us. So I ask for real change in our hearts. Come Holy Spirit. Amen. Alright, Matthew 6:19, here's what Jesus said, Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness! No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money America. I added that last word. Jesus, he's talking about money, but what he really cares about is our hearts.

So how can we tell if our hearts are healthy? Wouldn't it be great if we could have a map of our heart, like if there was google maps for our heart? You know, maybe if there was some cool app, you could pull out your phone, look at it and go hey, my hearts in a healthy place or uh oh, that's not a healthy place, my hearts in a destructive place. Well, you know, it's even easier than that. Remember what Jesus says, Jesus says, for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Treasuring is the google maps of our hearts. Everyone has treasures. Humans, we treasure things. We put value on things; we prioritize them in our lives. We want to keep them and protect them and invest in them. That's not a good or a bad thing, that's just the way we are, the way we were made. We gain intimacy with other people when we reveal to them what we treasure because like Jesus says, what we are showing them is our heart. Why does this work? Well, I'm no psychologist but I bet it has something to do with the way we are built. What our deep inner needs and desires are. Because I do know something, treasuring shows us the source of our significance and our security. We give our hearts to the things that make us feel important and safe. So Americans, Americans all have someone that's poorer than them and we don't like to admit it but most of us, what we do is we look down on people that are poorer than us. And most, of us, we don't really know people that well who are poorer than us, it's not them, it's us. It's in our hearts, we get significance, we get value and approval and we think we're important

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because we have money. Also, lots of us get security, false security from our money, I say false because we're just one bad diagnosis away from losing all of our money but yet we seek security and money. Really what we want is a sense of control over this chaotic world through our money. Again, why this works; why our treasures are such a good map to our hearts is because of the way we're built. This is way more accurate than google maps. I also should say, treasuring being linked to our hearts, that's totally in the bible. The bible talks about how important treasuring is, in fact, treasuring lies behind the greatest commandment. You remember the greatest commandment? Jesus was asked what is the greatest commandment, what is the important one we should follow? Here at the Vineyard we simplified it, we slapped it on those coffee mugs you've got, Love God, Love People, Period and it's about treasuring.

Smart guy, philosopher, Dallas Willard, he says the most important commandment in the Judeo Christian tradition is to treasure God and his realm more than anything else. That is what it means to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. It means to treasure him and to hold him and his dear and to protect and aid him in his purposes. Our only wisdom safety and fulfillment lies in so treasuring God. Then we will also treasure our neighbors rightly as he treasures them what we treasure really matters for followers of Jesus. It does, so what do we actually treasure? Is it God? It can be someone, God, daughter, son, spouse, fiancé, boyfriend, girlfriend, or here, we can put a little twist on that is what gives us meaning in our lives being able to fix people, being able to rescue a loved one from their problems, their addiction. Here's a common one in America, do we treasure our career, our ministry, our reputation, our fitness, for many of us, if we're honest, we treasure money. We treasure material things. What do we actually treasure? This isn't that hard actually, just ask yourself, self, what is that thing, if I had that, my life would be good. There'd be meaning and purpose and fulfillment in my life. I'd be safe and secure if I had that thing. If I just had a man in my life or a woman or that job or that position, if I just had that GPA or if I just had a certain look or body type, if I could just do a certain thing or if I was an expert at something that's our treasure. Or flip it into the negative, what's in your life that if you lost that thing, your life would be over or wouldn't be worth living? That's your treasure. What's your treasure? Holy Spirit come, come show us what we treasure. Not what we want to treasure, not what we think we should treasure, show us what we actually treasure.

Well, Jesus gives us some really good advice on picking what we should treasure, you can think of it as Jesus's investment advice. Let's go back to verse 19 where Jesus says, do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. Put another way don't be stupid. Invest in things that last. Earthly treasures are lousy long-term investments. That's because they can't last, they just can't and if you think about it, that's actually a depressing thought that all our earthly treasures will fail. If there is no God, they're all doomed because you know the sun's going to burn out right, and all life on this planet will end. It'd be over. If there is no God, all of this, everything is worthless and meaningless in the vastness of time and space that is this universe. If

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that doesn't depress you, think about your own life, in your own life, physical fitness is good but these bodies are failing us right, they are falling apart. The roofs on our homes are preparing to leak, the belts and mechanical gizmos in our cars are wearing out, the gadgets that we buy they're pretty much obsolete the minute we buy them. Even our money isn't safe from cyber-attacks and inflation and unexpected and uninsured tragedies. Earthly treasures are not smart investments, they're not and yet so many of us we're blind.

We're like Mr. Burns; we're pouring our money and our effort into those things. Greed is so powerful. So many of us are sitting there thinking, that's not me, I'm not blind. I'm not greedy. You know, I'm pretty sure thinking that you're not greedy, that there's no greed in your life, that's a huge red flag since you have a hidden problem. Be brave. Let God show you the truth about your heart. Here are a couple of questions we can ask ourselves, how do you react to rich people? Do you resent rich people and their money and their stuff; lots of people do that today. Or do you envy rich people; you want to have their money and their stuff? Which one is it? Maybe it's both, either way, it shows our greed. It shows that we treasure what they have. If we stopped loving money, we would be free to love rich people like Jesus does. Or how about this, do we respect poor people. How many of you look down on poor people? Raise your hand, one, two? Two honest people? We're not as blind as I thought we'd be, we're pretty blind though. Seriously, when is the last time we actually shared love with someone that's poor? Not just pity. But actually loved someone that's poor? Are you thinking, well I don't know someone that's poor. Well, you know they come here right? The food shelf, right across the hall is open 2 days a week, you could come and serve and meet some folks that are really in need. Or how about this, maybe this goes even deeper. Let's say you had a child that you loved and imagine they are graduating high school and they came to you and said mom, dad, Jesus is inviting me to move to Africa or India and to live amongst the poorest of the poor and to pour my life out to love them and to give my life to them. How many of us would say, Yeah, great but before you go, how about you get a college degree, an education you could fall back on or how about if you take a little time so you could save up some money here, so you have a nest egg, so you have some security in case you need it and then you can go and have your adventure. Yeah, could we respect our child's choice to be poor? Voluntary poverty in service of the kingdom of God. That's a hard one, as a parent, this one hits me. But you know your answer shows what you treasure right?

Here's another one, are we radically generous? Do we change our lifestyle so we can give to others? Now when I say radical generosity, I think a lot of us think about really rich people giving away billions of dollars, no, no, this is for everyone. Jesus, he had everything but when he was here, he was poor. He was a poor man from a poor working class family, and Jesus was radically generous. Think about it, Jesus gave away everything. On the cross, he died for others and he's our example. How much do we actually give to the poor? To the church? To our neighbors and friends in need? You know the math is simple right? Jesus gave 100% and many of us struggle with giving 10%. He's our example, right? If we're apprentices, if we're his students, he's our example, not in theory, following Jesus means following his example. Is

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this making anyone uncomfortable? I sure hope so, good, because what's happening here is we're falling into the furniture, we're in the dark and we're bumping our knee and scraping it up and feeling it, that's good. Hopefully it wakes us up to the fact that we're in the dark, we are greedy. But this is good news. This is good news.

Let's talk about that for a minute. It's hard for us Americans to confront our greed, it's really uncomfortable but it's good news it's really good news. Go back to what Jesus said in verse 19 do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, and then yada yada but store up for yourselves, maybe underline that in your bible, treasures in heaven. See Jesus is not saying don't be selfish, he's not saying stop storing up those treasures on earth, store up your treasures in heaven for God. No, he's not saying stop doing what's best for you, do what's best for God. Those little words there, that little phrase, for yourselves that points to a healthier, a better selfishness. That might sound odd but Jesus is appealing to our self-interests, to a selfish motive and we don't expect that. We expect when Jesus talks about money, when leaders talk about money, two things are going to happen. Number one is we're going to feel guilty and ashamed; Jesus has done so much for you. Can't you give more back to him you selfish bozos? Or, two you just put yourself up so high can't you think of other people first, you little worms, come on be selfless. Now come on, guilt, shame, tearing ourselves down these things are dumb but being thankful to God for what he's done, to put other people ahead of ourselves, those things are good for us, you get that, they're good for us.

If you're confused right now, don't blame yourself, blame Immanuel Cont, it's always good to blame a dead German guy. Cont was a humanist philosopher and folks like Cont have tried to tell us, they tried to convince us that the highest human motivation is selflessness and really if I do anything good and I get something out of it then somehow it's tainted. Well, that sounds right, isn't selflessness better than selfishness? But you know that's not what Jesus says, sure you bet Jesus says put God first, put other people ahead of yourself but he doesn't say do it because it's bad for you, no he says do it because it's good for you. Come on, following Jesus is about doing what's good for you, not doing what's bad for you, otherwise it wouldn't be good news. Following Jesus does require sacrifice but it doesn't require selflessness. This is actually important because this whole selfless business, it gets all mucked up into our motivations, it goes to the depths of our motivations we start to think that there's a tension. There's a tension between doing what God wants and doing what's best for us and we start to think well, yeah maybe if I love God enough or if I feel guilty enough then I'll do what God wants but the whole time I'll feel like doing what's best for me. No, Jesus is saying they're the same thing, there is no tension, be selfish, but be smart about that, really be selfish. Do what's best for you. You see, this actually works with all the areas of our lives, not just with our money. When we do what Jesus says, when we obey him, sure we do it because he's king and because we love him and because it's right, but we also do it because it's best for us, otherwise it wouldn't be very good news. So here's an example, premarital sex, why don't we have premarital sex? Just because Jesus doesn't want us to and we're supposed to be selfless? Well let me tell you, if you've ever been young, horny and alone with your boyfriend or girlfriend, you know that selflessness is not a great

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motivator. No, we want what's best for us we're selfish. Well, God, he knows sex, he made it, he likes it, he knows what's best for sex, he knows that during sex in our brains, a substance, a compound is released that creates bonding with other people and that's great if you're married, it's bad if you're not. Because the more sexual partners we have, the harder and harder it gets to form a permanent bond with one other person. If we have premarital sex, what we're doing is we're training ourselves for short-term relationships. Why don't we have premarital sex? It's because short-term relationships are not best for us. Sure they may have momentary pleasure, but they often come with a lot of pain and emptiness. No, we're holding out for what's best. A lasting intimate joyful relationship with one other person in marriage where we can bond with them. Do you see this? We don't say no to premarital sex or earthly treasures because that is what God wants and we are his selfless slaves. No, we say no because we are his beloved children and he's showing us what's best for us. He's showing us, he's teaching us a better, a healthy selfishness.

Ok, where were we at, Matthew 6, Jesus is talking about treasures in heaven and how they are great long term investments because they're going to last forever. If we narrow our investments down to things that are going to last forever, we basically have God and his kingdom and in those you got the big three. Ourselves other people and God. So, ourselves, an example of a great treasure in heaven is a character in us that is becoming more and more like Jesus. Because you know that the only thing that you bring into the kingdom of God is yourself. So you know, your bank accounts, your degrees, cars and boats, they're not good long term investments, they're not coming. But our faith and our hope and our love, those things last. Paul talked about that. The apostle Paul, early church leader, he talked about how faith and hope and love last. Do we ever think about those investments? How much of our time and energy and our money are going towards developing those in our lives because we'll have those forever. How about other people? Here's an investment that will last into the kingdom of God, the people that we help find Jesus. The people who we make their lives better, the kids that we teach, the poor that we help in Jesus's name, the marriages that we help stay together, the kindness that we show in Jesus's name, the creativity that we bring into this world and yes, the money that we invest in kingdom purposes. How much are we investing in other people? In our budgets, we all have budgets right? In our budgets is there a line item for other people? An amount that we budgeted for because if there's not that tells us something about our priorities. And then the ultimate treasure in heaven Jesus himself. Jesus is the prize that we are fighting for. He's the ultimate treasure, not just the great gifts we get from him, his love, but Jesus himself. I kind of feel like I don't even have words for this, you know, I've been following Jesus for quite a few awhile and I'm just barely understanding this I think. For years and years, every day I would thank God, I would thank Jesus for his sacrifice on the cross for me, that he died for my sins, wow, I was overwhelmed by his love for me. And God has shown me that is just the price he paid for the actual gift. The gift is himself and if that sounds strange, if that sounds mystical, I guess it kind of is but this whole idea of being in Christ, of having through the Holy Spirit, Christ in us, it is very real and it is very practical and it is for all of us. It's the prize.

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Now, I should also say Jesus, when he talks about treasures in heaven, Jesus didn't think about heaven as this far off place that they were just waiting around to die and go to. No, for Jesus, heaven is like this other dimension that intersects and connects with ours and with God's kingdom breaking through into this time and space, all of God's treasures available to us now. We can experience them now and then when Jesus comes again, we can experience them fully for all of eternity. All right, let's step back for a moment, Jesus's investment advice; it's kind of like a no brainer, right? What idiot would invest in things that they know are going to become worthless when they can invest in things that are going to last forever? Well, I don't know, maybe an idiot who was blind to their greed in their heart. Maybe someone who just couldn't seem to do what's best for themselves. I'm sure there's no one like that here, wait, I'm here. I think maybe I've done this, no I'm sure I've done this and I'm probably not alone. What do we do about this? How do we see this change in our lives, how do we press into this? Well, I could tell you if you could just try harder and lick this thing; I'd have it licked by now. No, that doesn't really work. It can't work. All the real, deep change in us is a gift from God; it's an act of his grace. And yet, we've talked about this before in this series, there is nothing biblical about an attitude that just says, well, let go and let God and see what happens. No, repeatedly, over and over in the bible it says make every effort. Make every effort. The opposite of grace is not effort, its works. You know, on our own, we can't do anything without Jesus but with Jesus we still do something, we open ourselves up to him changing us.

So here, let's talk about 3 really practical things we can do to opening ourselves up to God changing what we treasure, really what we're after is having Jesus as the ultimate treasure in our lives. Not that those other things are bad, it's just that they need to be below Jesus and his kingdom. How do we get there? How do we allow him to change us? Well, here's the first one, break the silence. Get a financial accountability partner, someone that can ask us the hard questions about our spending and how we use our money. Someone who can look us in the eye and say, hey, you know you can only serve two masters right? What's going on here, let's talk this through. What a great way to let God speak to us through another follower of Jesus. What a great way to come out of the darkness and into the light and see what's going on. What a great way to see what we treasure change, if you can think of a person that can do that for you, write that person's name down right now. If you can't, just write a line on your paper and just ask God and he'll show you who can do that, we can find someone who can do that for you.

If you're married, this is something you can lovingly do for your spouse. But I would say, in a marriage, as a financial unit, it is helpful to get perspective from outside your marriage. But be sure to do it together, it should never be, hey surprise honey, my mom's here and she's here to tell you how you spend too much money and we think you might be greedy and your heart might be in the wrong place. That's not going to go well, I'm just warning you. Second thing you can do, sign up for Financial Peace University. Sign up, it starts this Tuesday, Feb. 9, 6:30 p.m. see you there. This really is a powerful tool to get control of your money so you can actually invest it in what matters. Earlier in my life, I was a Wall Street attorney and I learned a few things about money. I took this class last year and I tell you, I learned some really practical tools to use in my

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life and I've talked to lots of folks who Financial Peace really changed their lives, radically changed their life. I can introduce them to you if you want; a few of them came up to me after the last service. This is a powerful tool, how healthy do you want to be? If you want to be financially healthy Financial Peace University can help.

Ok, one more, one more really practical thing we can do, we can give. Give, give to the poor, give to our neighbors and friends who are in need, give to all sorts of good causes and organizations and give to the local church where you're being spiritually fed. God, he asks us to give to him, not because he needs our money, think about it, he's God he doesn't need our money; he's after your heart. Give more than you're giving now, give so that you have to change the way you live your lifestyle and that will change your heart, it will because you will have to have some hard conversations with Jesus about what's important to you and whether you're actually greedy and your priorities. Start with just giving a tithe, start with giving 10% of your income to the church and here at the Vineyard, we like to call tithing the training wheels of generosity. Because you know, in the bible it never actually says to give your tithe, no it talks about bringing the tithe, presenting the tithe, paying the tithe. Why is that? Because the tithe actually belongs to God, you can't give him something that already belongs to him. Real giving starts after the tithe, in the bible that's called offerings. Here is something real practical you can do. Go to the website duluthvineyard.org and sign up for online, automatic, recurring tithing and giving. This is something that I've done, went online, signed up, I have my tithe automatically transferred, I have my offering, my gift to the building communities of hope, the capital campaign automatically transferred out and yeah, it's practical, it's more convenient, you don't have to mess with the checks and all that business, but it can go deeper, I know it has for me. Because what's happening here is, when the money comes into my bank account, the first money that gets transferred out automatically goes to the church. God is getting the first fruits of my labor rather than just what's left over at the end of the month. What it's doing is, it's making real my priorities, it's establishing what's important, what's best for me and my family is to invest in the kingdom of God and treasures in heaven.

Ok these are some really practical things you can do and I encourage you to do things to open yourself up to God changing you. Again what we're after is God making Jesus the number one treasure in our hearts. But to have that happen, the other thing I think you have to do is you have to experience Jesus. There's lots of ways to experience Jesus. The Holy Spirit is super creative. In prayer, in reading our bibles, in worship, in nature, lots of ways to experience him, but one way that has always gone straight to my heart and changed what I treasure is this. To take time with God and think about what does Jesus treasure, what are Jesus's treasures. So let's spend a few minutes on this right now, thinking about what does Jesus treasure, what are his treasures? Well, think about Jesus before he came to earth. He was in heaven, he had everything. You can't think of anyone who was more wealthy more accomplished, more famous, more successful than Jesus. No one else can put on their resume created universe. As the Son of God, no one had more significance and security than Jesus and then he comes to earth. And when the King of the Universe comes, basically he loses everything. When he goes to the cross,

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he is stripped naked, all of his possessions are gone and that's just an echo of what's happening in the spiritual realm when the Father turns his back on Jesus. Jesus loses it all; he loses all of his treasures, why? Why Jesus would you do this? There must have been something that you were after, something that was more valuable than all of your treasures. Yeah, it's us. It's us. Jesus must've said to himself, him, her, you, he must've thought of all of our names and said you know what; it's worth it to lose of my treasures. It's worth it to go to hell for them and this was no surprise to Jesus, the prophecy, Isaiah 53, Jesus saw the suffering and he was satisfied, he knew what he was getting into and he knew it was worth it, he knew that you are worth it because you are Jesus's treasure, you are Jesus's treasure.

We need to get that; we need to know that, not just in our heads but in our hearts. When we start to experience that, when we start to live in that reality that Jesus gave up all of his treasures to make us his treasure what happens is our hearts naturally respond. As we start to experience the greatest love we will ever experience, our hearts turn toward that love. We start to love him back; we start to put him as our highest treasure. That's what frees us from greed. That's what brings us into the light and puts everything in perspective because that's what's best for us; there is nothing better than Jesus. Why don't you stand up with me and let's press into that even more. We're going to move into ministry time, we're going to take some time to talk to God about the things we've been talking about this morning. So God I welcome you here even more, Holy Spirit come. Even now Holy Spirit, open the floodgates of heaven and pour out your love in this room. We all need to experience Jesus's love, we need to know, we need to live in the truth that we are your treasure. For God so loved the world, for God so loved me, just put your name in there, for God so loved me that he gave his one and only son. Hear Jesus whisper into your ear now, I would've done it, I would've given it all up, I would've gone to hell just for you, you are my treasure. Holy Spirit there are so many barriers that we put up to experiencing the love of God. Our sin that we hold on to so tightly, our pride, we're just not willing to humble ourselves and open our hearts and our minds and our souls to you pouring out your love, just break down those barriers, break them down and pour your love into our hearts. Pour your love. God, us Americans, we are so greedy, we are, I confess it. On Super bowl Sunday, I think we are obsessed with materialism God, please forgive us. But our materialism, it just shows us that we are desperate for your love, we haven't experienced enough of your love, help us to receive your love. Pour it out on us. God, if we could live differently, if you could break the greed off of our lives, off of our community, oh my goodness, we would stand out. People would see that and they would be shocked by it and they would turn to you and your love. That is a recipe for revival. God, I ask for that, I ask for that, in our hearts that we would experience so much of your love that it will just shine out of us and so many people come to you and experience it as well. Holy Spirit come.

I'd like to invite the ministry team to come forward and I guess I'd like to invite everyone that's greedy to come up and get prayer but that would be all of us, not sure that we would all fit up here. If you don't want to be blind anymore, if you want to see the truth that's going on in your life, if you want to be free, free from greed, if you want to actually do what's best for yourself,

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why don't you come up and let someone pray for you. We're not going to shame you because of your greed, there's no point in that, it's stupid. No, we want you to actually experience Jesus's love in a powerful way. Maybe you've never experienced that, maybe you want to know what that's like, we would love to pray for you this morning and have that happen in your life. I feel like there's some folks here today, we need some Paul moments on the road to Damascus where Jesus just throws us down in our lives and overwhelms us with his love and his presence so that we can come out of our darkness, the darkness of greed in our lives. So if there is anything in your life that you need prayer for, whether it's physical healing, you're struggling with your relationships, any kind of problems, we would love to pray for you today. Be brave and let someone pray for you. They're going to lead us in some more worship and I would just encourage you to stay and listen to God. Let him talk to you about how much he loves you, how much he treasures you and how much he wants to bring you out of the darkness of greed in your life. Thanks for coming to the Vineyard.