**A Sermon Plan for Luke 12: 32-40**: **Your Treasure & Your Heart**

*32 “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

*35 “Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, 36 like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. 37 It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. 38 It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the middle of the night or toward daybreak. 39 But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. 40 You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”*

**Notes**

This passage is essentially about being ready – ready for the return, or 2nd coming of the Son of Man. And Jesus suggests one way of being ready is to sell our possessions and give to the poor.

That can sound a bit frightening, so we can take comfort from the fact the passage starts by telling us not to be afraid. And far from launching in to a heavy directive to give, Jesus actually starts by talking about what we have received. And it’s past tense )v32) – what we have been given, not what we may get in the future.

Understanding what God has given to us must always be the foundation from which we can then consider what we ourselves should give.

The text does not allow us to conclude the words were spoken into a cultural context of thinking Jesus would return after just a few weeks or months, so giving away our possessions for such a short time wouldn’t really matter. The references to purses that don’t wear out and treasure that will not fail indicate Jesus is taking a long-term view, not just giving us advice to tide us over for a few weeks.

It’s tempting to think, maybe even sub-consciously, that we are ok because we are essentially people of good character who don’t lie and are honest, so we are as ready as anyone could be for the return of Jesus. But then Jesus gives us the acid test: where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”. (v34)

That means we can carry out a little self-test: look at what we’re doing with our money, and that will tell us where our heart is. Am I giving cheerfully, making sure I make time to review my giving annually to make sure it is keeping up with my income, or am I giving grudgingly, always finding a reason to defer reviewing my giving or starting to give. There never is a good time, and will always be a reason to put it off, but when we give cheerfully we are aligning ourselves just that little bit more to the values of the kingdom of heaven.

What about people who are genuinely struggling? Assure them it is not about how much they give. It is more to do with the way we live and think. Jesus judges our hearts by the strength of our determination to be generous where and how we can. That’s why the widow who gave her 2 small coins (Mark 12: 41-43) did so well.

Finish by inviting people to consider 3 questions: a) Am I a person of faith, b) Are we seeking to live by the values of the Kingdom of Heaven and c) Is my treasure where my heart is? If the answer to question c) is “not sure” we can gently suggest a “re-set”, ie privately and prayerfully review our current giving, and in so doing, increasingly and without fear, prepare ourselves for the coming of the Son of Man, the King of Kings.

**End**