

Sunday Morning Message

October 25, 2015

Title – “*Wisely Investing Your Life*”

Topic – Rewards

Text – 2 Timothy 4:1 - 8

Congregational Reading – 2 Timothy 4:6 - 8

Introduction

Read the text

There are a lot of ways that we can invest the time, talents, and treasure that the Lord has entrusted us with while we sojourn on this earth. We could consume all of our resources and expend all of our energy for the present. This is the “live for today” philosophy. “Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die.”

Jesus told a story about a man in the Bible that had this very same philosophy:

"And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." (Luke 12:15-21)

The man in the story enjoyed his life and he even accumulated enough for his retirement years, which brings me to the second way that many people spend their life. They work hard, and enjoy some of the fruit of their hard work while they are working, but they are very careful to invest some of their hard work and earnings so that they will have enough and can enjoy the years when they are no longer able to work.

Illustrate – Gary – when he was 20 years old, he determined that he was going to save enough early on so that he could retire at the age of 50.

We would all agree that it is foolish to spend up all of your resources today with no

forethought for your future, and it is very wise to invest and save for the future.

However, I submit to you that there is an even wiser way to invest your life's resources – your time, talent, and your treasures. In eternity.

Illustrate – Lester Roloff – Shortly before he died he stated that he didn't have enough money to pay for one day in the hospital. People said that he was a bad businessman, but he claimed that he just invested his money into a different bank – the bank of eternity.

Disclaimer – I am not saying that you cannot enjoy the journey of life while you are young. It is not wrong to try to have a nice home, drive a nice car, and enjoy some of the comforts that life here in America can provide.

It is also good for you to invest and save for your earthly retirement.

It is best for you to remember that your eternal life will far exceed your earthly life, and the rewards that you receive for your service to God and your investment in God's kingdom will follow you into eternity.

Additional Verses:

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." (Hebrews 11:8-16)

In our text today in 2 Timothy 4, we read about a man who gave his entire life, spending all of his energy and substance for the cause of Christ. When he wrote 2 Timothy, the Apostle Paul was literally just days away from being executed by the Roman governor Nero. He was imprisoned and later put to death because his Christian faith was deemed to

be too radical, too extreme. Nero wanted to silence Paul's voice, so he killed him. The thing is death could not silence Paul's voice. It only amplified it and carried it further for the cause of Christ. Paul wasn't afraid to die, because he knew what he had waiting for him on the other side.

Paul sacrificed greatly, not so that he could enjoy life in the present, or even enjoy his retirement years, but because he knew that he would be rewarded for all of eternity for the things that he sacrificed on the earth.

Why did Paul do what he did?

Why do we do what we do?

Why do we give our tithes and offerings? We could use that money in other ways – we could buy things that we could enjoy today – maybe have a nicer car – a bigger home – finer clothes – go out to eat more often.

Why do we sacrifice our time and strength? Why do we spend our days off working here at the church, or going out into the streets winning souls, or visiting somebody who is sick?

Why do we go to church Sunday School, Sunday morning worship service, Sunday evening, and Wednesday nights for Bible Study?

Why do Bob B. and Bob F. spend their Thursday evenings at the Youth Detention Center?

Why do the people that serve in our R.U. ministry spend every Friday night here at the church? They could be home enjoying their families.

Why does Bob, Jane, and Julie spend every Monday at Senior Care?

Why does Wade visit his bus route?

Why does Rich and Kelly drive the bus and van? And why do the bus workers give their time to help serve on the bus?

Why does Ashley spend hours each week keeping the finances in order?

Why does Katelyn spend hours doing bulletins and the order of service?

Why do the deacons, Phil, Pastor Stahl, and Ashley spend one Wednesday night per month, sometimes ate into the evening administrating the business of the church?

Why do the Sunday School teachers study and prepare and visit their members?

Why do the choir members get here early on Sunday and stay late on Wednesday?

Why does James, Faheim, and Naheim come here every Saturday to cut grass, and keep the church looking nice?

Why does the first impression team, the ushers, and greeters volunteer their time each week?

Why do we do what we do? Why did Paul do what he did?

I Because Of Our Return of His Love

"We love him, because he first loved us." (1 John 4:19)

"For the love of Christ constraineth us;" (2 Corinthians 5:14)

The Bible tells that God commended, or demonstrated his love for us by dying for our sins. He also demonstrates his love for us by providing for our needs, and protecting us from a lot of harm.

Ought not we want to love him back by serving Him and sacrificing for Him.

II Because of the Rewards Here and In Heaven

A God takes care of those who put Him first:

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33)

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts." (Malachi 3:8-11)

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." (Luke 6:38)

Matthew chapter six tells us that we will be rewarded openly for doing "alms" and for

praying and fasting.

"Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

(Mark 10:28-30)

B God gives crowns in Heaven to those who serve Him on earth:

In our text Paul said:

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Timothy 4:8)

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." (James 1:12)

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Revelation 2:10)

God promises a special crown to those who surrender to serve Him full-time with their lives:

"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." (1 Peter 5:4)

The bottom line is that we will be rewarded greatly for all eternity for the things that we do for the Lord today:

"Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets." (Luke 6:23)

"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." (Revelation 22:12)

III Because Of The Reaping of Souls

"For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy." (1 Thessalonians 2:19-20)

"What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel. For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you. Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." (1 Corinthians 9:18-25)

The money that we spend and the work that we do here at the church helps to advance the cause of Christ primarily through the propagation of the gospel. In short, our investment of time, talent, and treasures helps in the winning of souls. People will be in Heaven someday because we sacrifice here on earth.

Illustrate – Adoniram Judson sweated out Burma’s heat for 18 years without a furlough, six years without a convert. Enduring torture and imprisonment, he admitted that he never saw a ship sail without wanting to jump on board and go home. When his wife’s health broke and he put her on a homebound vessel in the knowledge he would not see her again for two full years, he confided to his diary, “If we could find some quiet resting place on earth where we could spend the rest of our days in peace...” But he steadied himself with this remarkable postscript, “Life is short. Millions of Burmese are perishing. I am almost the only person on earth who has attained their language to communicate salvation.”

Conclusion

I want to encourage those of you who are sacrificing now for the cause of Christ – keep going – we’re almost home – the rewards will be awesome.

To those of you who are living for today and are not giving as you should, and not serving the Lord as you could – there is still time for you – get on board and start serving Him; begin to tithe and give offerings. You’ll receive a great return on your investment for all of eternity.