

0 (1s):

All right. Who's in, who's out. We are starting today with this new series, because that is the question that most religion is about. That's what people look at religion. If you're in a religion, you think, okay, it's about who's in, who's out. Who saved. Who's not saved. Who's going to heaven or whatever you believe. And who's not. And there's different ways that we delineate it. Sometimes it's based on a belief or a profession that you've got to claim this certain thing in order to be in or out in some religions. It's about doing certain things, certain rituals, you've got to pray. You've got to attend a service. You've got to fast during a certain time of the year. You've got to meditate, whatever it is. There's these practices. If you do them, you're in. If you don't do them, you're out. Might even be clothing. Have you seen this? Okay. If you wear a certain type of hat or a hijab, or if you wear the special underwear, I'm not going to tell you which religion that is.

0 (45s):

But there's these things. If you have that clothing you're in, if you don't you're out, but, but whatever it is, there's all these ideas who's in. Who's out. Some of you are like, well, that's why I hate religion and I'm not religious. Okay. But even if you're not religious, we all have a standard of who's in and who's out. Who's good. And who's bad. It might be along political lines. People who have this political persuasion are in everybody. Else's just foolish and ruining our country. Okay. People who have this certain social idea, okay? If you've got, you've got to recycle and care about our environment or you're terrible and destroying everything for the generations to come, okay, we have different ideologies, beliefs. And we say, these are in, these are out or some people, and this is most people I talk to. When you ask them, how do you get into heaven?

0 (1m 26s):

They'd say, well, you have to have a good heart. People say this, but then who judges who's in? Or who's out because there's some delineation. Well, that person has a good heart. That person definitely doesn't. But the craziest thing is whenever you hear an interview with the mom of a serial killer, they're like, he was such a good kid. He has such a good heart. I'm like, no, he just murdered like 18 people. Right? Okay. You see this all the time. He had a good heart though, underneath everything. It's like, yeah. Some somewhere in there maybe. Right? Because when we're trying to figure out, who's in, who's out, who's good. And who's bad. It's really hard. And everybody disagrees. And if you look the world over, there's not one standard is there. So it makes it really challenging. I saw this cartoon this week and I thought, if it pretty well with our series, if I can throw up this, this cartoon on the screen, you can see here at the pearly gates here St.

0 (2m 13s):

Peter with his laptop saying, sorry, your username and password don't match. What if that was the standard? Right? None of us would be getting in, got like 18 characters and thousand different passwords. Like, oh no, I got the wrong one. Right? The wrong combination. It's so hard. Like to know, okay, who gets in, who gets out. So that's what this series is about. Who's in, who's out. And the way of Jesus is actually different than what people think about Jesus and what the world says. We're going to learn from him about who he says is in and who's out. That's what this whole series is about. It's five weeks. What I ask you to do, if you're here,

even if you're brand new, commit to this five week series, say I'm going to be here for five weeks.

0 (2m 53s):

If I'm coming in person, I'm going to be here in person. If I'm online, I'm going to be there online five weeks, I'm committed to it. So I can really learn what Jesus said about who's in. And who's out say, you're like, well, man, I know I'm traveling. I got this great trip planned. Cool. You can join us online. Right? You can join us online. You can even subscribe to YouTube or our podcast app. So you make sure you don't miss a single message in this series. So commit to this five week series that we're starting today. And today's message is called the price of admission, the price of admission. We're going to be in Luke chapter 18, starting in verse 18. So if you have a Bible, a physical Bible or a smartphone, you can go ahead and get there. If you're using the YouVersion Bible app, you can find our rise church, Denver event, and you can follow along there and take some notes.

0 (3m 38s):

And we are going to start to passage. And in case you're wondering, some of you have been here for this, but we have actually been going through the gospel. According to Luke, since December of 2019, we've kind of gone in Luke and then gone to another passage. And then going back, because Luke is the longest of the gospels, these accounts about Jesus's life. And Luke was a doctor and he was a historian. So he went himself to investigate, to interview eyewitnesses and write down his historical account of what happened with Jesus. And because it's the longest one we've kind of been going on and off. We're going to finish Luke this upcoming spring. Okay. So stay tuned for that. But what we've been doing is like a series of Lucas series somewhere else. Okay. That's just kind of been our pace that we've been doing. And we're going to be five weeks in Luke chapters, eight and nine, 18 and 19 in this series.

0 (4m 22s):

So we're going to start in verse 18 of that chapter. We read that a certain ruler asked him in him is Jesus good teacher? What must I do to inherit eternal life? He wants to know who's in, who's out. How do I get in? How do I make sure I have eternal life and enter into heaven? Now, when we talk about who's in, in this series, we're not always going to talk about who's in heaven. There's more than that because it changes our lives now. But this is a pretty big question, right? Who's in, how do you get into eternal life? This is a great question. He's asking. We should all be asking, how do you get eternal life? Jesus, you're a religious teacher.

0 (5m 3s):

You've been teaching all these people. You're you're good. Tell me about it. It says here in Luke that this man was a ruler. Now this story occurs in three of our four gospels, Matthew, mark, and Luke. So it must be pretty important, right? But here, Luke is the only person to say that this man was a ruler elsewhere. We learned that he was young in this passage. We learned that he's very rich, but here we learn that he's a ruler. We don't know exactly what that means, but it meant he had a prominent position. He's an important

dude. And if he's young and rich and important, okay, this, this guy is, he goes somewhere and people recognize him. That's maybe why his name is not mentioned in this passage. So here's this man.

0 (5m 43s):

He's a ruler. He's got a position. He's got money. He's he's young. So he still got his looks and his hair. So he comes in and when we see someone like that, what do we say? That person's gotta be in? And that society of the day and in our society, those people are in. If you have money, you're in guys. I don't know if you knew this. If you have a position you're in, you can go to whatever restaurant you want. You can get backstage passes. You can go, you know, wherever you want you're in because people know you or know of you. Oh yeah. We'll let you in right to the front of the line. That's what this guy is. He's already in, according to societal standards. And yet still he asked the question to Jesus.

0 (6m 24s):

Who's in, when it comes to heaven and how do you get there? How do you get there? An important question. So Jesus responds to him in verse 19. Why do you call me? Good luck. Jesus answered. No one is good. Jesus says, except God alone. Jesus has this great way of like diverting people's questions. Have you noticed this? Like they asked him a question. He's like, well, let's redirect that to where you need to be going. He does this so well. So he isn't coming out right away and answering the question. But he is kind of subtly because he says, why do you call me good?

0 (7m 4s):

Now Jesus here. Isn't saying that he's not good, but he's directing this guy because this guy is saying, you're a good, how do, what can I be good enough? And Jesus is saying, no, no, no, you've got it all wrong. It's not about who is good enough because only God is good. Only God is good enough. What Jesus is saying is that you've got this, this idea in your mind that you have to be good enough to make it into eternal life. He knows this. He, he reads people's minds. He knows their hearts. He's saying, you're wanting to know how good do you have to be? How good is good enough to make it into heaven. And Jesus has actually, no one is good enough, except God himself.

0 (7m 44s):

Jesus would teach elsewhere in Matthew 5 48. Be perfect. Therefore, as your heavenly father is perfect. Be perfect. The standard isn't being good enough. Where's the bar in there. He's saying no, no, no. You have to be perfect. You're aiming for right here. No. Perfect. Is the bar to entry into the kingdom of God. So Jesus says you're calling me good. No, no, no. You've got it all backwards. It's not about being good enough. It's about being perfect in the kingdom of God. So here he will completely redirect this guy. Did anybody have to do fitness standards when they were in like middle school? Does anybody remember this fitness standards? I don't even know if they do it anymore because everybody gets a blue ribbon.

0 (8m 25s):

Right. Okay. Right. But we had fitness standards that we had to do in middle school. And it was like, you had to be able to like jump a certain height and bench, press a certain amount or do pushups or pull-ups or whatever. And then we had to go run out for like 10 minutes straight and run. And you had to run as many laps as you could. And then when you're super sweaty and stinky, they sent you back to class, pray for middle school teachers. Right. Okay. Pray for them. But that's what it was. And you had to reach a certain standard. If you got a certain amount of laps, if you jumped a certain height, you were fine. And everybody else had to either retake the test or they got a bad grade or whatever. Does anybody remember this? There was like certain standards. And I don't know how they determine the standards. Was it like the average? Was it like, this is just like good enough to get by.

0 (9m 6s):

Like, just get over that. Right. But there was always a standard and we compared them to each other. Right. Just be good enough to get by. Most of us live our lives, thinking that that's good. As long as I'm better than a few other people, I'm fine. We, we treat standards and then we interpret that for eternal life as well, as long as I'm better than most people it'll be good enough. But Jesus is like, no, no, no, no. Okay. No more middle school standards. Okay. No more college entry standards. Hey, the expectation is perfect. Who in here would have gotten into college if perfection was the standard, right? None of us. Right. But that's what Jesus is saying. God's standard is perfection. It's way up here.

0 (9m 47s):

You're missing the mark. If you think anything less than perfection is enough. That's how he opens up this conversation of who's in who's out. Perfection is what you've got to go for. He goes on in verse 22 to make this even clearer. He says, you know the commandments, you shall not commit adultery. You shall not murder. You shall not steal. You shall not give false testimony. Honor. Your father and mother, do you know where he's quoting from anybody? 10 commandments. Okay. A few of you got it. Okay. These are five of the 10 commandments that he's and these are the 10 commandments that are about interacting with other people. He's like, okay, look at your life. If you murdered, have you okay? This, this is the standard. God set the top 10 rules in verse 21.

0 (10m 31s):

The man replies all these. I have kept since I was a boy. He said in that day and age, when you were 13 was considered the age that you would be held accountable. So this man is saying since I was 13, since I went through my bar mitzvah, right? I am now an adult and I have not broken any of those 10 commandments. We have no reason to doubt this guy. We have no reason to doubt him at all. He's an upstanding religious person. He's a ruler. He's respected. We say, okay, you probably haven't murdered him. When you haven't had an affair, you have honored your father and mother. But then in verse 22, when Jesus heard this, he said to him, you still lack one thing, one thing that's missing, sell everything you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven.

0 (11m 24s):

Then come follow me. Now, this invitation to follow Jesus is his standard invitation, right? In fact, that's our mission statement here. Helping people follow Jesus Jesus throughout his ministry. If you read Luke, if you read Matthew, mark and John Jesus calls people, Hey, come follow me. This meant to learn from him to follow him, to actually be with him and to do what he said to follow him. As, as he was the rabbi, you are the disciple, the student to learn from him. But this is the only time that Jesus tells somebody to do this, sell everything and give to the poor and then come follow me. He says other stuff to other people, but that's the only time he says it to this guy. I don't know if it's because of what's in his heart that he knows, or maybe I think is more likely.

0 (12m 7s):

Jesus actually says this to every single one of us because Jesus is going through the old Testament laws right now. He's already said you have to follow the 10 commandments, but do you know what else is a commandment in the old Testament? Love the Lord, your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Love God with everything. So he's saying, if you want to be the goodness of God, perfection up here, give up everything to obey God with everything. I don't think that this is just for the rich young ruler. I think it's for all of us just saying, if you want to follow me, it means letting go of everything to come with me.

0 (12m 48s):

See the standard with Jesus is perfection. According to Jesus here to be good enough to be considered in is to be as good as God to be good enough is to be as good as God. That's the standard. There's no good enough. There's God. It means giving up everything to follow him, to obey him, to love him with all your heart, soul, mind straight. That's what the scriptures have already told us. That's a high standard. Isn't it? If you're thinking, wow, Matt, I don't know if I could do that. Yeah. I think that's what everybody was thinking right? When they heard this.

0 (13m 29s):

And in fact, look at, look at what it says with this rich young ruler in verse 23, it says when he heard this, he became very sad because he was very wealthy. He was very sad because he, he was very wealthy and to give up everything, to sell, everything was too much. He had so much, he had positioned, he had a 40, he had respect. He had money that made him comfortable and secure. I can't give that up to follow you. That's too much. The standard is too high. He was very sad. Now we're told in some of the other gospel accounts that this man actually went away. He didn't follow Jesus.

0 (14m 11s):

And if you read through the scriptures, this is the only clear account at all that Jesus invited someone to follow him and the person turns away. So we're supposed to learn something from this. Cause this is the one guy that couldn't do it. Couldn't give up everything, set that standard of perfection. That's too high. He was sad. Very sad because of it. And he's very sad because it's talking about his money, right? Let's be honest.

We like our money hard to give up our money. But that's what it takes. Verse 24, Jesus looked at him. Can you imagine this encounter? The guy is still there at this point, very sad face downcast.

0 (14m 51s):

Jesus looks at him and says how hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God. And if hard wasn't enough, he says, indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God. It's not just hard. It's impossible. Okay. There's there's this theory going around that there was this gate in Jerusalem called the gate of the needle or the gate, the camel, the I'm sorry, the needle gate that if a camel to go into it had to take off the bags in order to fit in. Okay. That's probably not true. In fact, almost all Bible scholars say there was no gate by that name in Jerusalem of the day. What Jesus is saying is there is a needle which was the smallest opening in the ancient world.

0 (15m 36s):

And there's a camel, which was the largest animal in Israel. At the time you think the largest animal for the smallest opening. I just want you to imagine trying to put a camel in there. It's not going to work. This was the saying of Jesus's day because in India, they said it's easier to get it elephant through the eye of a needle because an elephant was the biggest animal there in India. This saying the biggest thing through the smallest opening, it would be like today, if we were like, you got to get the blue whale through your kitchen sink, Hey, that's not going to fit in the drain. Is it right? It's like, I want to get Mount Evans into my backyard. And if you're here in central park, that's not going to happen. It's the biggest thing into the smallest opening.

0 (16m 16s):

The biggest thing he said, it's impossible. And it should be absurd for you to imagine this Jesus telling a joke here. And if you think about it, you're like, whoa, it's, it's impossible. It's impossible for those who are rich to enter into heaven. That's what Jesus says. And this should be a wake-up call for every single one of us because we are Americans and we are rich. Did you know the poorest 5% in our nation is richer than 70% of the world. We see homeless people with iPhones. I saw a homeless guy living just over here with the nicest tent. I was like, man, I want a tent like that. The poorest in our nation are wealthier than most of the world.

0 (16m 57s):

Over 20, the lowest 20% of our nation are richer than the average person in Canada even did you know that we're the wealthiest nation in the history of the world. And I'm not saying there aren't people struggling with food, struggling with housing and all that stuff. I'm not saying that. But what I am saying is that we are the richest people. If you can hear me right now, you are very rich because you have internet connection. You have a smartphone, you have a computer, whatever it is, you're watching this on your big screen TV. We're rich, every single one of us. And the only reason why you don't think you're rich is because you're comparing yourself to somebody who's richer down the street with a million dollar home, right?

0 (17m 37s):

Not looking at the people who live in Haiti, who are barely making it by. We are rich. We have comfort. We have clothes more than one set of clothes. We have a place to sleep at night, we have more than one meal. We don't have to worry about it. We are very, very rich. So when Jesus says it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God, he's talking to us, he's talking to us. Here's the reality money. Can't get you in, but he can keep you out.

0 (18m 19s):

That's what Jesus is saying here. Money. Can't get you into heaven. It doesn't matter how much you have, but it could keep you out. It could keep you out. Jesus makes that so clear here. Money could keep you out. And the reason money could keep you out is because money changes. Our behavior begins to control our minds and hearts. It really does. Did you hear the story about the woman? I'm sorry, the man who called up a church office and the secretary answered the phone and the man said, I'd like to speak to the hog at the head of the trough secretary. He's like, excuse me, the man repeated himself. I would like to speak to the hog at the head of the trough.

0 (19m 2s):

The woman said, Hey, if you're speaking about our senior pastor, you need to be a little more respectful, sir, the man responded well, I was calling because I'm going to make a hundred thousand dollars donation to the church. The secretary looked up and said, I think I see that fat pig coming right now. See money changes us. Doesn't it. It leads us to change our behavior. We change our actions because we want to make more money. We want to keep the money. We have money changes us because money becomes for us in idol becomes for us an idol. An idol is a fake God. So there is one God of the universe, but we create these little gods in our hearts.

0 (19m 42s):

And the reason why they're gods is because it changes our behavior. We do things for the idol that we wouldn't even do for God. And it changed like just the thought of tithing for some people. There's no way I could ever tie. Why? Because money for me, it's too important. I've got to keep it for myself. Money changes our behavior. It changes our hearts. It's idle. And there's three ways that I think that money becomes an idol for us. This might not be exhaustive, but these are three ways that I think are pretty clear for all of us. The first is that we turn to money to bring us happiness. There's something that God is supposed to provide for us. True joy, true happiness. But we turned to an idle money. We say, okay, if I have money, then I can eat out at nice restaurants.

0 (20m 25s):

And guess what? Eating a nice film. Minion makes me happy. Right? Taking my family to Disney world. That should make you happy, right? It does. But it's a very fleeting happiness. And that happiness has gone pretty quickly. See, we're wanting that happiness to last and last and last us what we need more money. But for whatever reason, all the stuff will we buy with our money to make us happy, just fails. We're looking to these

idols to do something that only God can do because only God can bring us eternal happiness. Did you know that there's been a survey that survey they've done every single year since 1956 is ask people, one of the questions is, are you happy? In 1956, 30% of people said that they are very happy.

0 (21m 7s):

30% of people in our nation. Do you know what that number is today? 30%. It's almost never changed. And yet we have more than double the personal income as people did in 1956. Shouldn't more money make us mean more happy, right? But it doesn't, it doesn't. I know some very wealthy people who are angry, sad, depressed, don't you money doesn't bring us happiness. So when we turn to money to bring us happiness, to buy us happiness, we are asking it to do something that only God can do. And that's why it's an idol that will fail us. Or the second thing that we turn to with money is that it could provide for a security.

0 (21m 47s):

You're saying, well, I know it won't make me happy. I can just be just as happy going on a walk at the park. But a lot of people say, no, I need money so that I can be secure. I've got to have a certain amount saved up and then I'm going to be fine. I need to have a certain amount ready for my kid's college. I've got to have a certain amount in my retirement account that I can be secure. And once I have that, I'm just going to be fine, or I need to make a certain amount of money and then I'll be fine. Cause I'll know I'll be secure. But as the inflation of the last year and a half has taught us, even if you're a great saver, your money is worth less today than it was a year ago. Did you know that? Even if you've been saving great inflation, okay.

0 (22m 28s):

I talked with my parents. They're like, yeah. When I was a kid, I used to be a nickel to go to the movies, a nickel, right? We know that our money buys less and less and less. Our money is not secure. You invest it. But the stock market, you're always worried about you have this great nest egg and then you're like, oh no, can I retire right now? Is there gonna be a stock market crash? Is this the right time? If I do retire, do I have enough to live on every single month? How long am I going to live? Do I take social security at the right time? If we're looking to money to provide a security, it always lets us down because it can not provide an eternal security. I mean, it is good to have a savings account. It is good to have money invested. That's a biblical principle, but to rely on us for security, that's asking you to do something only God can do.

0 (23m 9s):

Only God can provide us eternal security. And the third reason why money becomes an idol for us is that we turn to it for salvation. What is salvation? It's being rescued from something we're struggling with salvation. We look and we say, if I just built up that savings account, I'd be good. If I could just get out of credit card debt, then I'd be happy. I'd be fine. If I could just pay off my student loan debt, maybe in the next life, then I'd be okay, right? If I could just have that \$75,000 a year, if I could just make \$200,000 a year, there was one study that found that 41% of people who make \$200,000 a year or more have cried in the last year because they don't have enough money.

0 (23m 55s):

So if you think, if I just had this level, if I just have this level, there's somebody who's saying. If I just had your level, because we're always wanting it to provide a salvation. Even when we get there, there's a new problem that we have to get saved from. See money is terrible at bringing us salvation. It's terrible. Money is a terrible God, but it makes you change your behavior, your lifestyle, everything to worship it. And it always lets you down. But see God and God alone can provide you eternal happiness, eternal security, and eternal salvation. And that's what Jesus is telling us here. If you worship money, if you put your trust in money, you will always be let down.

0 (24m 38s):

It just won't let you into heaven. You're worshipping a false God. And it is changing your heart and leading you astray. I think Billy Graham was right when he said that there is nothing wrong with men. Possessing riches. The wrong comes when men, when riches possess men, right? Because our money starts to control us. We shift our behavior and we do things where like, I can't, I can't, I can't give that much. I can't do that. I gotta be secure. I don't know if I could take that job that I think God is telling me to go there, but that's dangerous. That's scary. Money becomes our God and not God. And that's why Jesus tells this rich young ruler sell everything. Did you notice if you read real closely, Jesus said, sell everything and give to the poor.

0 (25m 23s):

He doesn't say give everything to the poor. Do you notice that? He's just saying, I want you to liquidate your assets and come follow me. You should be generous to the poor, but we interpreted as like give everything, oh my gosh, that's too much. But this guy couldn't even be generous with the money that he had. Even though he was very wealthy. He went away. Very sad because money was his God. And that's why money can't get you in, but it sure can keep you out chicken, keep you out because we've got to decide who will be my one, true God who will be my one. True God.

0 (26m 4s):

Now, if you're thinking this is shocking, this passage for Jesus to say it's impossible for rich people to get into heaven. It's shocking. I remember once Melissa and I were in the Cortez airport, Cortez, Colorado, anybody been there pretty tiny town. See Melissa's family lives in Moab, Utah. And we were there visiting, I think when Christmas and on our way back to Nebraska, where we lived, the flight got canceled at a Moab. So we had to drive into Cortez, Colorado so we can fly back his tiny little airport, if you haven't even heard of the town, it's tiny. So the airport is even tinier, right? So we're sitting in this tiny little air airport, you know, where we're sitting like on top of the other people on the plane. And there's only like 10 people on the plane total. Okay. And there's this other family?

0 (26m 44s):

It's, it's a mom, a son and the son's girlfriend there. And just by talking to them, they're very wealthy. We, you

know, it's very clear. And we were just talking about what are you doing? And they found out I was a pastor. I found out what they were doing. And they were like, oh yeah, we were in Moab too. And we're driving here to Cortez, just like you guys fly. And we're like, oh cool. So we asked them, what were you doing in Moab? And they said, oh, we went to this place called the hole in the rock. So there's this tiny little place called hole in the rock outside of Moab, where there is like, it's like a, just like a cheap, you know, highway amusement right on the side of the highway. And there's a petting zoo there. Right? Cause there's these houses built into the rock and there's this cheap petting zoo that you can go. And there's camels there apparently. And she told us, oh, there's camels there.

0 (27m 26s):

And this woman not being religious. But knowing that I'm a pastor, she says, aren't there camels in the Bible. I was like, well, there are, I can think of one story in particular. And I told her this story and I said, yeah, Jesus said, it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter into eternal life. And I had heard this story my whole life. It wasn't even stranger hard for me. But the look on this woman's face shocked. Jesus said, what? Why did he say that? And that's how shocking this should be what Jesus says, right?

0 (28m 7s):

It's impossible. And she's like, I'm rich. You're rich. We're healed my gosh, how are we going to get into heaven? That should be what you're thinking when you hear this. And that's why Jesus responded to all of us with what happens next. Those who heard this is probably the disciples verse 26. Those who heard this asked who then can be saved, who can get in. Who's in, who's out. How can you get into heaven? If nobody can get up to that perfect standard of God. How if I have money, I'm rich. How can I get in? And Jesus replied, what is impossible with man is possible with God.

0 (28m 50s):

I told that woman, this it is impossible for every single one of us to get into heaven. You cannot work hard enough. You can't be religious enough. You can't do enough. Good. You can't be perfect enough. You can't have enough money or position or power. It doesn't matter. The religious family you're from none of it matters. You cannot get into heaven on your own. It is impossible. But what is impossible for man is possible for God. What Jesus is teaching us here is that the way to get in the way into heaven is through God and God alone. See God has to rescue you. God has to provide your eternal happiness and eternal security. And it is God alone, who you can turn to and trust for salvation.

0 (29m 34s):

Your ticket into heaven. Can't be bought. You must be brought by. God is get this your ticket into heaven. You can't do enough. You can't buy enough. There's nothing you can do to get into heaven. You must be brought by God. He must pick you up. And in faith, you trust him to take you all the way. That's what faith is. That's what believing is. That's what trusting is saying. God, I'm gonna let you do all of it. And it's not even that we

have to work real hard and then God will take care of the rest. No, God takes care of all of it. You're like that. Camel trying to squeeze in that tiny needle hole. It's not going to happen, but God, the God of the impossible, this is the God who did not just make something as small as a needle, but made Adams and nucleus and little corks inside of Adams that we can't even see.

0 (30m 19s):

And he's the same God who made black holes and galaxies. Nothing is impossible for our God. So we must turn to him in faith. If we want to be in, you're taking into heaven, can't be bought. You must be brought by God. So Jesus is teaching us, put your faith in God and in God alone. So how do we respond to a message like this? I think Jesus is challenging us with our money because money is for most of us are idle, especially in our nation might have other idols, but this is one that your heart keeps turning to keep changing your behavior because you're putting it second or I'm sorry, you're putting God second to money.

0 (31m 3s):

So I think just like Jesus looked at the heart of the rich young ruler and said sell everything you have. I think that we need to be generous and to give to the poor that we need to say, God, everything is yours and I will give generously. So that's what I'm going to challenge you guys to do today. And did you notice that this is sacrificial giving? When you give it's hard? That's why this man went away. Very sad. It's too hard for him. It should be hard. You should be choosing God over something else in your life to make this happen. Perhaps it's by saying something like, okay, I'm going to not go out to this meal once a week. I'm going to stay home and eat a little sandwich with bologna and cheese.

0 (31m 45s):

And I'm gonna give that money away. Maybe it's giving up your Starbucks every day. I can make coffee at home for a lot cheaper. There are things that we can sacrifice. Maybe it's bigger things. The clothing you buy, maybe it's the size of your home. That when we sacrifice these things, we're doing it because we're saying everything is yours. God. Now I'm going to give some of this to those in need. I'm going to give generously. And I believe that's one way that we continue to say to ourself again and again, God, your God and money is not. God is my God. Money is not. I'm going to put money in it's place. It's a good thing. God gave us this gift, but I'm not gonna let it possess me. I'm gonna give. So I want to challenge you here today to give, to put God first, because it is the way in to put God first and everything you think, oh, I thought you said you can't buy your way and you can't.

0 (32m 33s):

This is just reminding yourself daily, weekly, monthly, every year that it's God who alone brings my salvation money. So I'm going, just going to, I can give away a little bit of my money, right? It's nothing. So my challenge to you today is to give and to give generously. So if you have never given in, you're like, man, I'm new to this church. Or I don't know. You're just a religious coop trying to steal my money, give anywhere else. But here I really mean that I don't care where you live. I just want you to give, I want you to pick your

favorite charity organization, whatever. And I want you to give generously. We have a thing here that we start with. The first step of giving is what we call generosity team. We say, give \$25 a week or a hundred dollars a month. This becomes a regular part of giving. I mean, that's like eating out once a week or five days of Starbucks, right?

0 (33m 18s):

Okay. I'm given that once a week, once a month so that this is a regular part of my life. So I encourage you guys to become part of our generosity team. A second step for you might be saying, I want to give a percentage of my income. So I'm saying this money, isn't mine to begin with this whole percentage of it is taken away. Whatever my income is, I'm going to give away that percentage. And that leads to some people to take the step of tithing. Tightening just means a 10th. So if you make a thousand dollars, you give away a hundred, you just move the decimal 0.1 thing over, remember that, okay? And you're gonna say, I'm going to give a 10%. So some of you need to take that step of a type that I'm going to tie the way some of my money. And some of you need to go even bigger than that because that's easy for you. You've been doing that for awhile, but you still need to remind yourself who is God.

0 (33m 60s):

So I encourage you to give even bigger and beyond that, whether it's a higher percentage or a higher amount. One thing we talked about this week in our elder board was we would love to have a sign up here on the side of the building. Every year has been cut from my budget because I'm like, okay, we can't get forward this year. It's \$4,000 to put a nice backlit sign up here. So I think somebody in here might be led to give \$4,000 today as their generous step, because now we can put a sign out there so that everyone in the community knows that hope is found here that we're a light into the community, right? But what I'm saying is give and give here, give somewhere else. I don't care. Just give generously, give it to the poor. If you want to give to the poor here, we have something called the benevolence fund. Every dollar in goes out a hundred percent in a hundred percent out. Okay. Do you guys hear that?

0 (34m 41s):

You give to the Pinella benevolence fund, it goes to somebody in need who is struggling. So give it to that. You can find that online on our website [arise, denver.com/give](https://arise.denver.com/give). You can click the link for benevolence fund, or you can write that on your envelopes. There are boxes on the way out of the auditorium. If you're here in person, you can slip cash or checks in there. There's envelopes that you can write. If you want to designate it to the sign or to the benevolence or whatever. Okay. But I want you to give and you give generously and it will be sacrificial and it will be hard. And some of your like Matt, that's way too hard for me. I don't know if I can do it, see what your heart's doing right there. But there's a really cool thing that finishes out this passage in verse 28, because this is what the disciples were feeling too.

0 (35m 25s):

In verse 28, Peter said to him, we have left all. We had to follow you. We did it. We followed you. Peter had

a great successful fishing business that he inherited probably from his father. It was going well. He had guys working for, and he left all of that to come follow Jesus. But Jesus replied to him in verse 29. Truly I tell you, Jesus said to them, no one who has left home or wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age and in the age to come eternal life Jesus saying, you're trying to store up money. You're trying to invest money and give this is the best investment strategy ever. Not because you're going to get rich.

0 (36m 5s):

That's not what Jesus is promising, but he is promising the God. Our God will provide. And you will have way more in this life and the one to come than you ever give away. I wish I could go into more of that, but we're going to talk about it on our podcast that 10,000 this week, if you're like, how does that work? Okay. Stay tuned for that. But the point is Jesus is promising us. It's a promise from him that whatever you give God will give you back more many times more like, well the dollar amount, no, that's not what he's saying. Something even better. That's what it is in the kingdom of God. So if you're worried, like, I don't know if I can do it, you can do it. And God will bless you generously if you do. So we're going to take a minute here.

0 (36m 46s):

Now, as we close out this message, we're going to give together, we're going to get out our phones. We're going to prayerfully. Consider how much we should give, whether it's to write a check cash, go online to rise, denver.com/gift you're on here. You can even text to give it 4, 3, 2, 1, okay. Just give the dollar amount. And I want to challenge you to give in response to God because you cannot buy your tickets, right? It can't be bought. You can only be brought by God in heaven. And we need to remember that always. So let's close our eyes together, Lord God, we come before you. We declare that you are God, that money is not, but sometimes money grabs our heart.

0 (37m 28s):

Again, we want to trust into it. We want to find happiness and security and salvation in it. Lord God. We re repentive that we throw down that idol and we stead declare that we worship you and trust you alone because you are the way to eternal life. And we know that you sent your son Jesus Christ to become poor, to die on a cross so that we could have eternal life through faith in him. Lord, I'm so glad that you did everything and you brought us the entire way and salvation into heaven so that we are the one who are in. So lead us right now to give and to give generously. Now with eyes closed right now, and heads still bowed. There's some of you who have never put your faith in God and God did pave the way through his son, Jesus Christ, dying on the cross.

0 (38m 14s):

He was perfect. He did everything right. He was good. And yet he still suffered a sinners criminal's death on a cross. And when we put our faith in Jesus Christ and what he did for us on the cross, we are given eternal life in heaven. By God himself, you are brought into heaven. So some of you need to declare Jesus Christ as

your Lord and savior today. So with eyes still closed going to give you a prayer that you can repeat so that you can know that you're in today. And if you're already a believer, you're already a follow Jesus. Say this prayer aloud to give courage to someone who needs to pray it for the first time. Would you please repeat after me, dear God, I'm a sinner. I need a savior.

0 (38m 54s):

Forgive me, save me in faith. I declare Jesus is Lord. I accept your gift of eternal life. I receive your spirit. Help me to follow you and live generously for the rest of my life. Now with eyes still closed. If you prayed that prayer for the first time in metal, if Jesus is your Lord and savior today, if you're in just slip your hand in the air, nobody's looking. I just want to see your hand. I want to be able to encourage you and pray for you. Slip your hand in the air. If you prayed that for the first time, if you're online, you can go to a rise, denver.com/follow. We want to encourage you, challenge you in your step of faith.

0 (39m 38s):

Lord God. We're so grateful for you and what your son Jesus did for us on the cross. And right now we are asking your holy spirit to lead us to know how much and how often we should give Lord God. We want to be generous. So please lead us in this moment. And Lord help us obey because you are God and money is not pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. So take a minute right now. Give they're going to start the song once you're done giving stand up and we'll finish the song singing together. Okay.