



HOME
LOVING THE CITY
LONG TERM

Home Campaign Core Group Study

Week 3: Priorities

READ: Luke 16:1-13

SERMON SUMMARY: In the middle of his dinner with his disciples, tax collectors, and Pharisees Jesus tells a parable about a dishonest manager. After having been caught for mishandling the property entrusted to him by his master, the dishonest manager quickly calls in his master's debtors. He ingratiates himself with these debtors by reducing the amounts they owed and in so doing makes his master appear to be a generous man. Though the manager is clearly dishonest, he is commended for having his priorities in order – he shrewdly secures his long-term welfare and exalts the public reputation of his master.

This parable confronts us with three questions about our own lives that can help us clarify our priorities. First, do we have the priorities of an owner or a steward (v. 1)? Scripture calls us to be stewards and therefore to prioritize God's interests in managing the goods he has entrusted to us. Second, do we prioritize the temporal or the eternal (v. 9)? Christ calls us to use the temporal goods of this life to secure our eternal dwelling and to find rest from our anxious need to accumulate. Third, are our priorities merely idealistic or do we translate them into daily habits (v. 10)? Jesus challenges us to convert our godly priorities into simple daily habits so that he may form us into humble, generous, kingdom-minded stewards.

1. Do your day-to-day priorities reflect those of an owner or a steward? In what ways have we been good stewards of God's gifts? In what ways have we failed as stewards?
2. Where do you invest your time, energy, talent, and treasure? What motivates these decisions? Do these reflect temporal or eternal priorities?
3. Where may God be calling you to give in new and potentially uncomfortable ways? How may God be challenging your own sense of what it means to "have enough?"

4. Read John 6:38-40. Reflect on this passage and others about Jesus' life and ministry. How did Jesus' priorities reflect the eternal will and purposes of his Father? How were these priorities reflected in Jesus' daily habits? How does Jesus' example challenge and/or encourage us?
5. Where does Church of the Advent fall within your priorities? How is God's call on your life and the life of our parish reflected in your giving and your daily/weekly/monthly habits?

PRAY: Pray that God would expose the ways that we fail to serve his priorities. Meditate on how God has faithfully provided for you in the past and rest in the assurance that you are secure in his Kingdom. Pray that God would grant you the courage to trust him more deeply now.

DO: Take time each day this week to examine how your habits and decisions reflect the true desires and priorities of your heart. Commit to practices that will help to align your priorities with God's and to cultivate the wise and selfless generosity that God calls us to embody as his stewards.