



Sermon Title: PURSUING THE KINGDOM: All In

IN *Opportunities to connect and pray as a group*

1. When someone asks you about where you attend church, how do you describe Centre Street Church?
2. What is something in your life that you have been 'all in' for?
3. What factors did you consider when deciding how you will support Christ's Kingdom financially?

UP *Time that is devoted to the Word of God*

1. Read Matthew 6:24. Jesus in this one verse says twice, "No one can serve..." and "You cannot serve..." Why did He give this emphasis?
2. The King James Version (1611) of this verse (Mt 6:24) refers to 'mammon.' What is the definition for this word? How does it give a fuller explanation of what Jesus is saying?
3. Pastor Henry used Mt 6:19-21 to explain how 'Trusting God alone means finding your identity and significance in Him.' What metaphors in these verses help to clarify what this means? Why are they significant?
4. The metaphor in Mt 6:22 is a person's eyes. How does Jesus use this illustration to relate to having God's eternal perspective?
5. Pastor Henry referred to 'Christ's Kingdom' and the 'Culture Kingdom.' Explain how the word 'treasure' is a significant word for both kingdoms.
6. Pastor Henry said, 'Giving is a trust issue, not a money issue.' Discuss what this means to you.
7. Take a look at the statistics (summary). Based on these statistics, what are the possibilities for change in our world?

OUT *Seek to be the Community of God's people in your community*

1. What 'potential' exists for you to impact change in our world this year?
2. In what area of your life do you need to explore what it means to 'trust God alone'?
3. What is one thing you can do in the coming week to 'seek first his kingdom and his righteousness'? What is God saying to you? (James 1:22)
4. How can the group pray for you?

UP – IN – OUT reflect a balanced life including a focus on our personal relationship with the Father (UP), staying connected to the Body (IN), and reaching our world (OUT).

Resource:

<https://www.buildmoreroom.ca/>

THE WORD (NIV)

Matthew 6:19-33

¹⁹ "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. ²² "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. ²³ 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! ²⁴ "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. ²⁵ "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

²⁸ "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? ³¹ So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

James 1:22

²² Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.



Many people today haven't stopped to consider what they are giving their life to and why. Even though most Canadians believe in God, they don't really know God and have no TRUE NORTH—no basis for truth. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life" (John 14:6). He is our spiritual TRUE NORTH—not only to help us be free from confusion, fears and regrets, but to show us how to live a full and satisfying life.

In Matthew 6:33, Jesus contrasted two kingdoms: the kingdom of this world and the kingdom of God. The kingdom of this world attempts to convince us that life is all about us: the more power, status and stuff we have, the more respected, happy and satisfied we will be. Jesus' Kingdom is the polar opposite: it's about seeking to please God and God alone. The kingdom of this world is about getting: the kingdom of God is about giving and being radically generous.

It's impossible to serve both King Culture and King Jesus; you can't serve God and "mammon" (Matt. 6:24, KJV). Mammon means more than money. It includes those things our culture defines as success—money, power, positions, even people and pleasure. Notice that Jesus did not say you "must not serve two masters". He said you CANNOT—because each master requires ALL OF YOU. Which king will you trust? The Lord alone or yourself? Christ or Culture?

But how do we serve Christ, not Culture? Jesus helps us discern what it means to trust God and trust God alone (Matthew 6:19-33).

1. Trusting God means finding our identity and significance in Him. Jesus warns against allowing earthly treasures to become the basis of our identity (vv.19-21). Our hearts follow and worship what we treasure. We are distraught when our treasures are lost, or we struggle with being generous. On the other hand, as Christ-followers, our identity is based on Jesus. When our heart is attached to Him, we hold our treasures loosely, and that frees us to be generous.

2. Trusting God means embracing His eternal perspective (v.22). Physical vision is a metaphor of spiritual vision. The key to being generous and avoiding self-centered thinking is to have a singular focus, keeping our eyes on Jesus. It makes sense to send our treasures on to heaven rather than store them on earth. We can take only three things to heaven: friendship with Jesus, the people we introduce to Jesus, and the things we did for God's glory.

3. Trusting God means surrendering to Him and serving Him alone (v.24, 33). Seek first HIS kingdom. The Church has a limited impact because too many who call themselves Christians are trying to serve both King Jesus and King Culture. If we do so, we'll miss God's victorious life, and we'll miss His faith-building adventures. But even more tragically, we won't see the full potential we could have as individuals and as the church. Our priorities are wrong.

To get a picture of those whose priorities are wrong and who don't support the Church, statistics (from healthresearchfunding.org) indicate:

- The total income of Evangelical Christians in the US is estimated at \$2.66 trillion.
- The total income of those who identify themselves as Christians is \$5.2 trillion—nearly half of the world's total Christian income.
- Every year between \$1-3 trillion will change hands within the Christian Community from one generation to the next.
- 80% of Americans give 2% of their income or less to any charity.
- Those who identify as Christians give 2.5% of their income, while during the Great Depression people gave 3.3%.
- 37% of people who attend church every week and identify themselves as Evangelical don't give any money to their church.
- Only 3-5% of Americans tithe or give 10% of their income to their local church.

If all Christians in America were to tithe, their local church budget would more than triple, and \$139 billion would become available every year for additional ministry work. That means the church would have the financial resources to:

- Eliminate Global hunger, starvation and deaths from preventable diseases.
- Eliminate illiteracy in 5 years.
- Solve the world's water and sanitation issues, especially in poverty-stricken countries.
- Fully fund all overseas mission work.
- And still have \$75-100 billion left for additional Ministry and Mission work, including facilities needed.

Research reveals that Canadians are less generous than those in the United States. Our world continues to be needy because we're not generous with what God has given us. Giving is a heart issue, not a money issue. The global church could have a great impact if all Christians honoured God's starting point: tithing 10% of their income.

Which King are you living for? If you want to make an impact, if you want to experience the amazing adventure God has for you, if you want to experience the amazing fruit of sacrificial generosity, then make a decision about who your Master and Lord will be. Be ALL IN. Surrender to Him alone. He can be completely trusted. Examine your life, lifestyle and giving. Don't just hear the Word but be doers (James 1:22).