

October 3rd, Unwrapped
Part 1 in the series 'The Gift of Life'

What were some things from last Sunday's message that resonated with you?

Was there anything you wrestled with?

Can anyone retell the story Jim shared at the beginning of the message about Bill who received a Bible as a High School graduation gift?

READ Luke 12:13-21

13 Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." **14** Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" **15** Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions."

16 And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. **17** He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'

18 "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. **19** And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."'

20 "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'

21 "This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God."

Can you relate this parable to the story about the graduation gift in any ways?

How are verses 18-19 relevant to the culture we live in?

Is there anything else you would like to share in regards to this parable?

Nowadays in the US and other countries, many people achieve a financial status that allows them to say "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." However, once they reach this point, they find they are not as happy as they thought they would be- and perhaps they are even less happy then they were before. Discuss why this might be.

Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19

17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. **18** Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be

generous and willing to share. **19** In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

If there is a life that is truly life, what would you describe artificial life as? Do you think it relates only to money?

What things, traits, possessions or lifestyles does the world view as gifts given or gifts worth striving for?

Why can these perceived gifts hinder us from truly recognizing that our lives are gifts from God?

How can comparison play a role in whether or not we view our lives as gifts?

How can we start looking at the lives God has given each of us and embracing them as the gifts that they are?

How does it make you feel to know that God purposefully decided to create you?