

How money makes you stupid (and what to do about it)

Luke 12: 13-21

#17 in our series "Stories Jesus Told"

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Message

We've been preaching through stories that Jesus told. Our last story was the story of the Prodigal Son. It was about a boy who asked his father to divide (*morizo*) the inheritance between him and his older brother. Today, we're looking at a story Jesus told in response to the same request: divide the inheritance.

Luke 12: 13

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." But he said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator (*meristes*—divider) over y'all." ¹

Now that's a fascinating response. As far as I can tell, its only here, and in one other place, that Jesus addressed someone as "man" (in Hebrew you'd say "Adam." In Luke 5:20 He says to a paralytic and a crowd: "*Man (Adam) your sins are forgiven you.*" And here: "*(Adam) Man who made me judge over y'all?*" Who did that? That's just a wild question, and I think we would all answer: "Well, Jesus, God made you judge."

In John 5:22 you said, "*The father judges no one but has given all judgment to the son.*" Jesus might respond: "Yeah but, how about John 8:15? For I then said, and I quote, '*You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one.*'" And we might say, "Yeah, but Jesus, next verse, 8:16, you said, '*Yet even if I do judge, my judgment is true, for it is not I alone who judge, but I and the father.*'" It's like He's saying, "The father and I judge by not judging, and our judgment is not like your judgment."

On Palm Sunday, just before He is crucified, in John 12:31, Jesus says, "*Now is the judgment.*" And in John 3:19 "*This is the judgment: The light has come into the world and men loved darkness rather than the light.*"

See? It's like our judgment, of the Judge, is the judgment.

In other words: Jesus hanging on a tree, in a garden is the judgment.

It reveals evil—that we would judge the Judge.

And it reveals the good—that He would let us sin.

That we would make him "last and least" is evil.

That He would let us... That's Grace!

So Jesus says, "*Adam, who made me judge over you all?*"

Answer: We did. You did. It's original sin. You did Adam.

You did when you took the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in order to judge God, yourself, and all creation. I think Jesus is saying, "Adam, you made me Judge and divider when you divided me and judged me."

¹ *Meristes* means "divide"

Mesites means "unite," "meditate," or "reconcile."

Now, that's some fascinating theology that you ought to ponder! But for now, I hope you see that Jesus seems to be rather ambivalent about judgment and whether or not you understand theology. If you're a dad, of more than one child, you understand the reality.

When my children were children, it would take us one full day to drive to Salt Lake City, or Junction City, Kansas on vacation. For a full day, my kids would constantly beg me to judge them and divide them² Over and over, they'd beg, "Daddy, John touched me. Daddy Elizabeth looked at me. Daddy, tell Becky it's my turn!" And I didn't want to, but I would I divide: "OK Jon, you're not allowed to touch Elizabeth. Elizabeth don't look at Jon. And Becky, I'm setting the timer, and Coleman, stop hitting people just because you're bored."

I would do it just to keep the kids from killing each other before we got to Junction City. I did it, but I hated it, and I wasn't satisfied with it, for those laws didn't make anyone good, and so those laws were not my final judgment. They might constrain evil, but they couldn't transform evil into good.

I do issue law, and in a few moments, I'd hear: "Daddy, Elizabeth put her finger over the line. Daddy, Jon looked at me in the mirror."³

I remember turning to Susan, on numerous occasions, and saying, "Dang! If we installed the very best video surveillance equipment, monitored the children night and day, and then hired a Supreme Court justice to constantly judge, we still couldn't sort this out:" "He looked at me. She touched me. He crossed the line."

² *krisis* that's judgment, it means to divide.

³ Actually, Christmas could be the worst time because I was handing out gifts, and it truly wasn't a lot of gifts and was about identity, respect, and power. One Christmas, one of my daughters- junior high aged daughters-wanted a punching bag, and I thought, "Hey! Punching bags are expensive, and I doubt she'll wear it out, and we all could use it." So I got everyone a punching bag and discovered that my daughter didn't want to punch the bag as much as me and her brother and sisters. She wanted her own possession. It had to be "mine"- my punching bag, my football, my gold, my party: "It's my party, and I'll cry if I want to!"

I mean what she wanted was a division between her and her siblings - not a punching bag but her *own* punching bag. She needed to possess what they didn't possess. She wanted to be "bad ass" for lack of a better term. And the irony was that she already was, in the good sense of the term. I mean, I already knew that she was courageous, determined, long suffering, and fearless. She didn't need the punching bag to tell her who she was. She just needed me-her father-and I had told her.

Well, just the fact that my kids wanted me to judge revealed the truth that they had believed my judgment: "I love you. I validate you. I know you're awesome, and I know your brothers and sisters are awesome. There is nothing you could do to make me stop loving you. That's my final judgment. You're my kids. All that's mine is yours."

So you see, when they made me judge between them, it revealed that they didn't believe my judgment about them, and so I would issue judgments. I would divide and draw lines, but it tore me apart and drove me a bit crazy. And it never really worked. It just kept the kids from killing each other - before we reached our destination.

If you were to map all the boundaries in our family van on vacation, it would look something like this:

[Image of a map]

This is a map of the Middle East around 1500 BC according to God, or the divisions revealed by God in the book of Joshua. Now, scholars debate details, but this much is clear: Every country is a man's name or associated with a man's name, and the Bible goes out its way to inform us that they are all brothers.

The 12 colored countries are all the signs four grandsons of a man named Israel, and they fought with each other. 10 of the tribes eventually formed the ancient Kingdom of Israel, also called Samaria. In the 8th century BC, they were dispersed and lost, or in some cases became the Samaritans.

Judah and Benjamin became the southern kingdom of Judah, and they are known as "the Jews." In the 7th century BC, they were exiled and then later returned. All 12 are brothers, but the surrounding countries are brothers as well. Adam is Esau—Israel's brother.⁴

The father of Aman and Moab were cousins to Israel. Aram was brother to Israel's ancestors Arpachshad. Arpachshad means: "He cursed the breast bag."

The Armenians are also called Syrians. There were also some nomads wandering around the desert known as Ishmaelites or Arabs. Ishmael is Israel's uncle and Isaac's brother. These all fought each other. It must have broken the heart of their mother. And Scripture says, *"The Jerusalem above is our mother."*

At the center of this map is a city named Jebus. It was called Jebus because it was built and occupied by the Jebusites who were Canaanites. Canaan and Israel's ancestor, Arpachshad were cousins; their dads were brothers. Jebus is also called Jerusalem—city of peace. It had been called Jebus because it was settled and found by Canaanites. Yet, old Jerusalem has been easily the most violent city in the history of this world. All these brothers are still fighting over Jerusalem.

Americans often wonder: "Why do some of these folks seem to hate us so?" Well, at least in part, they hate us because since World War 2 we've jumped into the ancient argument on the side of Judah.

Now, you may say, "Of course, because God gave the land to Judah," and that's true. Yet, Jesus—the King of the Jews said that God was taking it away, or at least the kingdom away. He said that Jerusalem would be destroyed. And you may say, "Yeah, but God told them that it would be theirs in perpetuity," and that's also true.

And in fact, in Ezekiel, God even says he'll raise the whole house of Israel from their graves and bring them into the land.

Wouldn't you like to be part of the house of Israel?

⁴ Esau is the first born who lost his inheritance to Israel. He "hated," so to speak, that Jacob would be blessed. Like Jesus, the first-born bore our curse and was hated that we would be blessed.

And in the Revelation, a New Jerusalem comes down from Heaven. It looks like old Jerusalem, and yet all things are new. It looks like the back of the minivan on summer vacation, yet it's entirely different. Not because the kids are more perfectly divided, but because they are all united. In the New Jerusalem everyone has a new heart.

Everyone has a new heart, and so no one asks the Father to divide the inheritance. The New Jerusalem is on the other side of God's Final Judgment. Or, maybe, it *is* God's Final Judgment.

Well, for now, I'm just pointing out that asking Jesus to judge or divide the inheritance between you and your brother seems to kind of tick Him off or at least break His heart.

I hope you remember that it was the original sin in our last parable: The son asked, and the Father divided His Life and Substance between them. It broke His heart. It was the original sin in the parable of the Prodigal Son. It was original sin in the garden long ago: "Father, I want to know about the good. I want to take the good and make the good my own precious possession." That is: "I want to make myself in your image. So divide the good between me and my brothers."

It broke the heart of God.

It tore Him apart, but He did it saying, "This is my body broken for you. This is my life poured out for you."

It turns out that all His judgments, all His decisions: creation, the law, the curse, they were all part of His final judgment: "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." "From the bosom of the Father." He is the heart of the Father, crucified on a tree for each of His children: "Take and eat. Take and drink."

Verse 13-15

"...Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." But [Jesus] said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or [divider] over y'all?" And he said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness ("wanting stuff"), for one's life does not consist in the abundance perisseuo—"surplus") of his possessions." ⁵ ⁶

Jesus says, life does not consist in, or come from, the surplus of possessions. Life. So what is life and where does it come from?

⁵ In first Timothy Paul writes, "If we have food and clothing we will be content." That's hard to believe, but my experience tells me it's true. Beyond food and shelter, things really don't make a person happy. And wanting those things—covetousness—can make you miserable. Paul goes on to write "the love of money is the root of all evil."

⁶ Well I don't think God has anything against gold, silver or printed paper... But money is the way we try to hang on to "the good" as if it was our own possession... and that is original sin.

Well it's important to clarify terms at this point. In this passage, Scripture uses the word *zoe*. *Zoe* is translated life, but *psyche* is also translated "life" and also "soul." Jesus is the life and we each have a soul, or we are a soul that has life. In the beginning God took *adamah* (dust) and breathed into it the breath of Life, and Adam became a living soul—a living *psyche*.

No one can adequately explain this but the soul is like an earthen vessel—a clay container—that can contain Life, like breath, but if you hold your breath, in a few minutes, the life dies and you die.

The soul is like a container, or better, a conduit for life.

Well Jesus said, "One's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions"—stuff you hang on to.

Verses 16-19

And he told them a parable, saying, "The land (chora from chasma, meaning empty space) of a rich man produced plentifully (euphoreo—where we get our word "euphoria")

The chasm produced euphoria! That sounds like creation doesn't it?
Well the rich man didn't produce it. It showed up by grace—just like you and all creation.
All creation is grace.

and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops (literally: "fruit")'

He's asking, "What do I do with the abundance of grace?"

And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain (literally: 'my produce') and my goods (agathos)

"My good." He thought the Good was his own precious possession. "In my barns, I will store my produce, my fruit, my goods..."

And I will say to my soul (psyche), "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry."'

He's talking to himself and everything is "mine;" he kind of reminds me of this guy.

Clip of Gollum from *The Lord of The Rings*

[Smeagal, who will become Gollum starts out as an ordinary man. He takes a ring out of the hand of his brother. He looks at the ring and with relief and adoration, he holds it gazing at it in wonder.]

Smeagal/Gollum: *My, precious!* (Gollum puts on the ring and disappears.)

[The scene changes to a dark and mysterious forest. Gollum now looks dark, evil and corrupt, ravaged from the influence of the ring.]

Gollum: *They cursed us.*

[The scene then changes again to Gollum crawling over a landscape of barren mountains. He looks disfigured, unrecognizable, and filled with darkness.]

Gollum: *We forgot the taste of bread, the sound of trees, the softness of the wind. We even forgot our own name.*

[A slight dark smile emerges on the face of an unrecognizable Gollum. He hold the ring loosely in hand...then clutches his fingers tightly around it staring blankly ahead.]

Gollum: *Mine!* (growling) *Precious....*

Well, as you may know. J.K Tolkien got the name “Gollum” from the Hebrew word *golem*. It means unformed substance, unfinished vessel, like a soul without much life.

In Psalm 139, David writes, “*My substance was not hidden from you when I was being made in secret, intricately wrought in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my golem.*”

Maybe we’re all *golem* until we learn to give.

Maybe my kids were *golem* in the back of the van.

But maybe that’s why they were in the van, and maybe that’s why we were placed on the earth, and even in the earth, so that here, in all this pain and suffering, we’d learn to give, for unless we learn to give, we cannot receive (that is inherit) the Kingdom of God.

Verses 18-20

And [The Rich Man] said, “I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my produce and my goods. And I will say to my soul “(Psyche), Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.” ’ But God said to him, ‘Fool!

Notice that He doesn’t say, “You bad man,” or “Think of the plight of the poor.”

He says, “You’re an idiot! Just stupid! You don’t get it!”

That’s not what grain is for.

That’s not what goods are for.

That’s not what your soul is for.

Brothers, that’s not what your inheritance is for.

Children of Abraham, that’s not what the blessing is for.

Golem that’s not what treasure is for.

It’s not what a ring is for.

It's not what Life is for.

Sometimes when my son was little, and I'd play catch in the basement with the kids, Coleman would grab the ball and run in to the corner and hold it like it was "His precious." And we'd say "Coleman that's not what the ball is for."

Imagine if this afternoon they hiked the ball to our new quarterback Brock Osweiler... and Brock cradled the ball to himself mumbling: "my precious, my precious..." then ran off the field clutching the ball... and we followed him to a secret hideout, where he had constructed barns that he was filling with footballs.

And we found him in this warehouse of footballs laughing hysterically and saying, "I'm rich, I'm rich, I'm rich."

We'd think you're not rich. You're a fool. Nothing against footballs, actually they're very nice. It's just that you don't seem to know what they're for. They're not for keeping. They're for passing. The euphoria comes from playing football, not possessing footballs!

You don't understand what football is all about!

And maybe we don't understand what life is all about, and what treasure is for.

We're all *golem* and all a bit insane.

We're all like the older brother in the story of the prodigal son, standing in outer darkness, refusing to party cause he doesn't want to share the inheritance with his younger brother; he's a fool; he's insane.

The world renowned psychologist, Karl Meninger, once wrote: "Generous people are very rarely mentally ill." The corollary might be: "To fight mental illness, just give stuff away." Money makes you stupid, cause you think it's yours and that you are yours. So the cure is to give it, and yourself, away.

One night, when Jon was four and Elizabeth was three, I let the kids ride with me to the store in the mini-van. It was just insane. They were fighting over territory—who got to sit in the front seat—and over possessions—who got to hold the slinky. And they kept asking me to judge between them. It was Hell!

Then for some strange and miraculous reason, Jon said, "Hey Elizabeth, I'll get you a car for your birthday." She said, "I don't want one." I suggested lipstick. And now keep in mind, at this point, I paid for all their presents—the presents they'd give to each other and to Mom and to Me. And I was happy to do so, for I wanted them to share my joy.

Well Jon said, "I'll give you lipstick," and Elizabeth said, "Oooh, I'd like that." Inspired by her response Jon started telling her all that he'd buy her for her birthday: "Cakes, and an Ariel cake, and a Pooh cake" (Winnie, that is). Each time Elizabeth would squeal, "Oh, yeah, I'd like that!" "Dark wing duck, pink lipstick, a zebra and a 2," Jon continued. Elizabeth interrupted saying, "And snow and dollies." Jon said, "Yes, I will get you twenty dollies, and twenty houses, and a stop sign, a lighted Bunchie, a Mr. Bucket, a slinky, the number 506..." Elizabeth interrupted again, "A campfire?" "Oh, yes," Jon said, "I will get you a campfire." Jon continued like this until we got to the store and Elizabeth said, "Let's hold hands," and "Jon, you can sit on my lap on the way home." Seat belt laws forbade that from happening.

However, on the way home, Elizabeth did tell Jon everything she'd get him for his birthday: "Exercise pants, a horse, snow, and a light." Each time Jon would say, "Oh, yeah, I'd like that."

When I got home I immediately wrote down the entire conversation, because it thrilled me and filled me with hope. My kids had discovered (and I was beginning to discover) what things are for.

The van had gone from hell to heaven and I thought:
"This is a party. This is euphoria. This is Life!"

What does life consist of? Taking or Giving? Possessing or Offering?

Is Life a thing you can possess or *Something* that must possess you and animate you?

Is it seizing control or surrendering control?

Perhaps Life is Love... and in this is love: "*not that we loved God, but that God loved us and gave His Life.*" Jesus is His Life—Love poured out—Grace.

Scripture says, "The life is in the blood."
Modern medicine has shown us that the breath is in the blood.
The oxygen is in the blood. In biblical language the Spirit is in the blood.
And Scripture says, "The Spirit is life."

So you see: Your soul is a vessel, it's a blood vessel, through which flows the life of God—all the life of God, for He gives His spirit without measure. It's a river of Life.

So get the picture? You are the Body of Christ and individually members there of?
So when we ask Jesus to divide the inheritance between us, we're asking him to break His own body; we're asking Him to divide His substance and lose His own life.
We ask Him to divide the inheritance with our brother...
But our brother is our inheritance.
He is Christ's body to be filled with God's Life, which is our life.

When we ask God to divide the inheritance, we crucify Christ. No wonder Jesus is a little perturbed at the question. And then, when we hang on to life, as if He were our own possession, we stop the flow of life—we become a blood clot—a constipated psyche.

Your soul is a vessel that must constantly receive life and give life or it has no life.
Stuck on it's self, it's damned; it goes insane and dies.
Jesus said, "Whoever would save his life (his psyche) will lose it, but whoever loses his life (his psyche) for my sake will save it."

Verse 19-21

"The Rich man says, 'And I will say to my soul (psyche), (Psyche) Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you (apaiteo).'

Apaitéo: means “demanded back” as if it were on loan.
See? Even your soul, your self, your will, that thing you use to make choices—
You didn’t make it. You didn’t make you.
You belong to God. And you were placed in this world to learn Love;
 To give Life and receive Life—the breath of Life.
 God is Love, and His Word is Life.

But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.” (Literally: “is not treasuring treasure into God”)

How do you treasure treasure *into* God?

WELL, In the stone temple there was a treasury, in which worshipers put treasure.
Your brothers and sisters comprise a body that is a living temple.

Jesus said, “Whatever you do unto the least of these, MY BROTHERS, you do to me.”
So... give to them and you give to Him.

So who are “his brothers?”
WELL, He said to everyone, “When you pray, say OUR FATHER”
That means we all have one Father, and everyone is your brother or sister...
 in which, you can treasure treasure to God.

Now treasure, like gold rings, toys or Slinkies are not life,
 Yet they can communicate life, they communicate love.
 And that’s what treasure is for. It’s for loving God *BY* loving people.

Never use people to gain treasure. Always use treasure to gain people.
People are eternal, and that’s what treasure is for...
 It’s a tool, with which you are to Love.

In *The Lord of the Rings*, Smeagal kills Dengall, his brother (or technically cousin) in order to take the ring of power on his birthday, and that’s how he traps himself as Gollum (muttering to himself in the depths of the earth, in Hell).

When I saw that movie I thought, “Hey that ring looks familiar. It looks like my wedding ring.” I got the ring from Susan, but I didn’t *use* her to get the ring. She used the ring to get me, and I found a ring and happily paid for a rind to get her. She’s “my precious!”



“*She’s my temple,*” and communion in that temple is everything! And life.

And, check this out: When we exchanged the rings, rather than keeping the rings, we didn’t gain power and become invisible; we surrendered power and got visible. We got naked, and we discovered who we really are. We are two persons and one substance—one flesh. We are one body. And yeah, the giving is often painful, but the giving is life—our life—one life undivided—one inheritance undivided. “*The mystery is a profound one,*” wrote Paul. And Scripture says it refers to Christ and the Church. That’s His body; it’s His Bride, and She is also the New Jerusalem.

Now, I know you’re stressed about Syrians, and Ishmaelites, and losing our lives, and who controls Jerusalem, and we’d like the Father to divide the inheritance with bigger walls and more laws, but I dare you to believe the Word of God through the prophet Isaiah in chapter 62 verse 1.

For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not be quiet until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch. The nations shall see your righteousness, and all the kings your glory, and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give...You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolation, but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married...For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

Do you get it? We are Jerusalem, and we are the sons of Jerusalem—brothers. And just as Christ is married to us, we will be married to each other as one body—one. So, when this guy says to Jesus, “Divide the inheritance between me and my brother,” Jesus must want to scream: “Your inheritance *is* your brother! And I am the Life that flows between.”

Jesus said, *"Whatever you do to the least of these, my brothers, you do it unto me!"* So given to them, and you give to Him...His brothers! And He said, *"You must lose your psyche to find it."* *"You must lose your life to find THE Life."* So you see? Jesus did come to bring a sword. He did come to divide. He came to divide us from our old *psyche*. He came to divide us from our desire to divide. He divides soul from Spirit and makes the soul new. He makes us one as He and the Father are one. So he says, "Don't treasure treasure to yourselves; that's death, but treasure treasure into God.

In ten verses, He'll just say it very plainly.

Luke 12:32-34

Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give—eleemosune—literally: "acts of eleos, mercy." Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail...For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

And this is the point that the pastor says, "So give your money to the church," by which He means me, and the institution I manage. Some people think I'm scared to talk about giving, and I suppose I am scared to talk about giving money, to the church, for several reasons.

1. I'm greedy, and I like to hang on to my money.
2. Sometimes it sounds like folks are asking me to "divide the inheritance between them," which means we're fools, and we just don't understand.
3. Sometimes it sounds like I (or the church) am asking to divide the inheritance: You get 90%. We get 10%. They did something like that in the Old Testament, but not in the New Testament.
Sometimes it feels like asking you to give so we (the church) can get, like we're asking you to *not* be greedy so I *can* be greedy.

Well, you see, the church shouldn't be about getting. The institutional church should be a means of giving—a way that we together give—*eleemosune*—mercy to God in each other and in the world.

A board governs this particular church. They set my salary, and the church budget. I don't know what you give unless you tell me what you give. And that's because you're not giving it to me.

This past year, our expenditures have been under budget, yet our giving has been about \$130,000 under expenditures. A gap is normal this time of year, but a gap that big is not normal this time of year.

I don't know why the gap is there. It could be that we haven't mentioned it enough. It could be folks think we're doing well because of this building, when, in fact, the building is helping us cut expenditures.

It could be any number of things. I don't know. There are some things I do know like: "God is Salvation," that is Jesus. And I believe that I'm called to preach the Good News. And I think that the institution that we call The Sanctuary is to be a worshipping

community that proclaims that Good News, together, for many years. I *think* that (and I have great reasons to think that), but I don't know that. And I suppose that's because God wants that to be *our* decision—that we own *together*.

So, if we decide not to give in this way, we won't do church in this way, and preach the gospel through these means, but I hope we do.

There are many theologians, philosophers, and leaders that teach what we teach, but I know of very few worshipping communities that preach what we preach. I get numerous messages asking, "Where can I find a church that preaches this in my town?" And it's really hard to give an answer.

SO many people connect with us on line. As of yesterday morning (12/6/2015), 1,039 people watched part or all of the last sermon about the Prodigal Son. About 20,000 have watched our Downside Up video *Hallelujah in Hell*. 12,800 subscribe to the Facebook page where we post sermons and devotionals. 3,800 recently read a post from a sermon about the blood red moon.

I'm telling you this because you are doing this! And I hope that those who watch, listen, and read online will help give. We're preaching the forgotten gospel—that "*there is one God and Father of all who is overall, through all, and in all.*" So no man is your enemy, but all men are your inheritance.

Evil is your enemy, but evil was defeated on the cross—where we took God's Life, yet God gave God's Life. Jesus is God's Life, and God is Love. LOVE, AND ALL THINGS FILLED WITH LOVE IS OUR INHERITANCE! But as long as you insist on dividing that inheritance, as long as you reject the gift—that is Christ and all things with Him, including your brother, You will stand in outer darkness weeping and gnashing your teeth—refusing to join the party. You will hang on to your treasure and hide yourself in the depths of the earth and remain a *golem*.

You know Israel committed a great sin. The land was given to Israel, but Israel was "*blessed to be a blessing to all the nations of the earth.*" And the temple was to be: "*a house of prayer for all people.*"

And I think the Church has committed a great sin. We've asked God to divide the inheritance. We judge others out to judge ourselves in. And yet, they're all our brothers.

At the final judgment, in Matthew 25, Jesus says, "*Whatever you do to the least of these my **brothers** you do to me. MY BROTHERS!*" And He's the only reason to be in. Judge them out, and you judge Jesus out, for He has chosen to be with them. That is His Judgment—God's Final Judgment—Relentless Love—Grace.

So repent! The Kingdom of Heaven (the undivided Kingdom of Heaven) is at hand. That's what we preach.

At the end of the Revelation, John see the New Jerusalem "*coming down, out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*" And check this out: The city is a cube. The Sanctuary in the temple was also a cube (The Sanctuary of the Covenant in which we commune with God and each other).

The city is a cube 12,000 stadia on a side. That is 1, 380 miles on a side. Did you get that?

So this is a map of Israel and old Jerusalem:



See it's that little star in the middle.



Now this is a map of the Footprint of the New Jerusalem, 12,000 stadia on one side.



But this is an even more accurate representation because the New Jerusalem is a cube.

12,000 stadia on a side, 12 brothers x 1,000, which represents infinity,
Which implies all creation!

Whatever the case, the New Jerusalem is very big, as well as eternal! And Revelation 21:25a says, *"Her gates are never shut..."* 21: 24b *"...and the kings of the earth will bring the glory of the nations into her."*

It's true that God gave some land to the Jews, but it's also true that you're married to the King of the Jews, which makes you pretty Jewish. So Jesus needs a big house. It's also true that *"the plan for the fullness of time,"* (Ephesians 1:10) is to *"anakephalaio—unite all things in him"*—to unite all things under one head.

Ephesians 4:4-6 *"There is one body and one spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all, and in all"*—one undivided inheritance.

1 Corinthians 3:21 *"For all things are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's."* All things!

Now you may be saying, "Whoa! Wait a minute. I can't party with a terrorist from Syria." Well you won't party with terrorists from Syria, but you will party with people who *used to be* terrorists from Syria.

You know, Saint Paul used to be a religious terrorist from Syria. Actually, the worst one that ever lived: "The chief of sinners." But Jesus met him on the road to Damascus, Syria (where he was going to hurt Christians), and He judged the Hell out of him, and He judged Himself right into him. He gave him a new heart. You cannot inherit the Kingdom until He does so. And how does He do so?

Well, Jesus *is* the heart of the Father. *"...from the bosom of the Father."* That's what the gospel of John says.

Jesus *is* the First Born of all creation.

Jesus *is* our older brother, and we are His little brothers.

He gives us His birthright.

He gives us His inheritance.

He gives us all things.

Communion

On the night that all His little brothers betrayed Him, He took bread and broke it saying, *"This is my body divided for you. Take and eat. And in the same manner, after supper, He took the cup and said, "This cup is the covenant in my blood."* The Life is in the blood! *"Poured out for the forgiveness of sins; take and drink."* You know, He dies, and He RISES from the dead in you! So come to the table and receive your inheritance. Amen.

Prayer

Father, I thank you that you saw my unformed substance, and you spoke your life into my *golem!* And Jesus you are that Life. Together we rise from the dead into another world—another Kingdom that is this world, yet entirely new, for You have given us Your heart!

Benediction

I don't know what exactly you're supposed to give to the church, but I do know that when you give, something amazing happens. I remembered this legend that I read a long time ago, and then I reread it this past week:

A certain man had two sons. One was rich and the other was poor. The rich son had no children while the poor son was blessed with many sons and many daughters. In time

the father fell ill. He was sure he would not live through the week so, one Saturday, he called his sons to his side and gave each of them half of the land of their inheritance. Then he died.

Before sundown the sons buried their father with respect as custom requires. That night the rich son could not sleep. He said to himself, "I am rich, my brother is poor. I have bread enough and to spare, while my brother's children eat one day and trust God for the next. I must move the landmark, which our father has set in the middle of the land so that my brother will have the greater share. Ah--but he must not see me. If he sees me he will be shamed. I must arise early in the morning before it is dawn and move the landmark!" With this he fell asleep and his sleep was secure and peaceful.

Meanwhile, the poor brother could not sleep. As he lay restless on his bed, he said to himself, "Here I am surrounded by the joy of many sons and many daughters, while my brother daily faces the shame of having no sons to carry on his name and no daughters to comfort him in his old age. He should have the land of our fathers. Perhaps this will in part compensate him for his indescribable poverty. Ah--but if I give it to him he will be shamed. I must awake early in the morning before it is dawn and move the land mark which our father has set!" With this he went to sleep and his sleep was secure and peaceful.

On the first day of the week--very early in the morning, a long time before it was day, the two brothers met at the ancient land marker. They fell with tears into each other's arms. And on that spot was built the city of Jerusalem. [Source: Through Peasant Eyes, p. 73 Kenneth Bailey]

Now, that's not true, and yet it's incredibly true because when you give--not in order to give (because we do that all the time. That's just called buying, or paying your taxes!)--when you love, the New Jerusalem comes down.

So come Lord Jesus, and bring Your City with You! In Your name we pray, Amen.

Disclaimer: This document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.