

I. The Christian gospel can be framed many different ways.

- A. God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit has existed for all eternity in perfect love and communion.
- B. Though he did not need our love, he created us to share in his love.
- C. And he made man male and female.
- D. God created us to participate in his self-giving, others-centered love.
- E. But we did not choose to live in such a world.
- F. How can the world become a place where people live for others?

II. The story ...

- A. Setting: in Jericho, near Jerusalem
- B. Problem: the disciples still expect the kingdom to come very soon.
- C. Jesus tells a parable, and bases it on a true story. (Archelaus)
- D. In the context of this true story Jesus weaves another. (see Matthew 25:30)
- E. It's possible to read too much into this story.
- F. *The kingdom of God will mean a reckoning between you and the king. Therefore prepare by investing all that you have been entrusted with in other people.*

III. How shall we do this?

- A. What should we invest?
- B. And who should we invest in? (there is prioritization – not based on who deserves but on proximity)
 - i. self (1 Corinthians 6:12-20); spouse (Ephesians 5:22-33); children (Ephesians 6:1-4)
 - ii. church (Galatians 6:1-2; Romans 15:14; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Thessalonians 4:10-11; 2 Thess 3:10-11; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Titus 3:14; 1 Peter 4:9)
 - iii. those outside of the church (Galatians 6:10; Luke 10:29ff.; Isaiah 58:1-12; Matthew 2:13-15)
- C. If you decide to opt for self-preservation rather than self-investment ...
- D. We must hesitate to judge other Christians for their refusal to invest their gifts.
- E. Knowledge of what to do with your life is one of God's gifts.
- F. This promise of the kingdom of God is the only path to a world of self-giving.

IV. Judgment and Grace

- A. This king is profoundly unfair from the world's perspective. (Luke 16:10-11)
- B. In the last analysis we're unable to do what Jesus wants us to. (Luke 17:10)
- C. But Jesus ...
 - i. He invested himself in us in a way that we never could repay.
 - ii. And died the death of a rebel that we deserved.