

**Psalm 34:17** “The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles.”

- God is a just God

**Ecclesiastes 8:13** Yet because the wicked **do not fear God**, it will not go well with them,

- We must trust that God is good or we will **never** feel safe.

**Daniel 3:17-18** “If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. **But even if he does not**, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods...”

## 2. WE MUST PREPARE OUR HEARTS

**Colossians 3:16** “Let the teachings of Christ live in you richly.”

- We must take the responsibility for preparing our hearts.

**Ezra 10:4** “Arise! For this matter is **your responsibility**, be courageous and act.”

- We must be willing to **‘raise the bar’** in two major areas of our spiritual lives.

### 1) Listening to God’s voice

- We must first **see the value** that reading God’s Word provides.
- **Nothing beats the Bible**. We must trust the original for establishing our faith and preparing our heart.

*“Down through the years, I have turned to the Bible and found in it all that I needed.” - Ruth Bell Graham*

- We must take time to **reflect** on, **pray** about and **ponder** its truths. This is how you **actually listen to God speaking to you**.

### 2) Gratefulness toward God

- Without gratefulness we will never have a love and passion for Jesus -- and we will never see Him as enough.

**Luke 17:15-17** “When one of them saw that he was healed, **he went back** to Jesus, praising God in a loud voice. Then he bowed down at Jesus’ feet and **thanked him**. Jesus said, **“Weren’t ten men healed? Where are the other nine?”**”

- Take responsibility today to prepare your heart by “raising the bar” in your spiritual life.

## Digging Deeper

For personal or small group study

Week of December 28, 2008

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### “Be Rich Toward God”

“When you miss your devotions one day, you notice. When you miss them two days, your spouse and kids notice. And when you miss them three days, the world notices.” ~ Wayne Cordeiro

### GROUP DISCUSSION or PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. When difficulties come, like we are seeing today, how can we face them with confidence and hope? Do you really see Jesus as enough during these challenging times? If so, how? What are some things we tend to want to add to our faith in Jesus? [Matthew 6:25-34; Philippians 4:6-7]
2. Read Luke 12:13-21. Which images stand out to you and why? Describe how you can see this story being played out in our modern day world. What is the problem? What is the solution?
3. In Luke 12:21, Jesus urged people to be “rich toward God.” What does it mean to you to be rich toward God? How do we go about this in everyday life?
4. Pastor and author John Ortberg says, *“Being rich toward God begins with giving to God that which he desires most of all.”* What do you think he is referring to? How can we put this into practice in day to day living? [Mark 12:30-31; John 3:16; 21:15-17; Romans 6:13; 12:1]
5. Psalm 34:8 says, *“Taste and see that the Lord is good.”* What does it mean that God is good? Read Daniel 3:12-30. How does God prove Himself to be good? Why must we trust that God is good? If God is good, is He then also safe? Why?
6. Discuss some ways that you as a small group, as well as, an individual can “raise the bar” in your spiritual growth process. Why is it important to not only read God’s Word, but to reflect on it as well? [Psalm 1:1-3; Joshua 1:8]
7. Read Luke 17:15-17. What is the result if we fail to “raise the bar” in our gratefulness toward God and others? [Colossians 1:12; 2:5-6; 3:16; 4:2]

# Welcome to New Life !

We are very pleased you are here. It is an honor to have you as our guest today! This information is provided to help you feel welcome and "at home."

## Worship in Singing & Giving

- We leave how to worship up to you as an individual. During **singing** worship some people remain seated, some stand, others kneel, many clap, and some lift their hands. The outward expression is not the issue - it is what is in your heart that counts. Just relax and enjoy the presence of God.
- If you would like to receive personal **prayer** during worship with singing, you may go to one of the Prayer Teams located at the back of the sanctuary.
- Invitation is given for **tithes and offerings**. If you are our guest, please do not feel obligated to contribute when God's tithes and offerings are received.

## Worship in Sharing God's Love

Expressions of greeting and God's love are extended to all, especially to our guests.

## Worship in Meditating on God's Word

Teaching from the Bible for about 35 minutes.

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We encourage you to use our **staffed Nursery** [which has a private nursing room] and **Children's Churches** during the service. Please ask an usher for assistance in locating the various rooms.

{turn page over}

Pastor Roger Wendt

December 28, 2008

## Be Rich Toward God

*"Jesus is enough"*

Luke 12:16-21; Colossians 3:4

We are facing some very uncertain and challenging times ahead. We must face our future with confidence trusting that the Jesus we serve is enough.

**Luke 12:16-21.** Then Jesus told this story: "There was a **rich man** who had some land, which grew a good crop. He thought to himself, 'What will I do? I have no place to keep all my crops.' Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and other goods. Then I can say to myself, "I have enough good things stored to last for many years. Rest, eat, drink, and enjoy life!"

"But God said to him, '**Foolish man!** Tonight your life will be taken from you. So who will get those things you have prepared for yourself?' "This is how it will be for those who store up things for themselves and are not **rich toward God.**"

**Luke 12: 21NLT** -"Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich **relationship with God.**"

- Jesus tells us very directly that the **object of life is to be rich toward God.**
- It is that rich relationship with Jesus that is essential if we are to face the uncertainties of life.

**Mark 12:30** And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength."

**Colossians 3: 4** "When Christ, **who is your life** ..."

## "Some Key Helps for the Challenges Ahead"

### 1. LEARN TO SEE GOD AS **GOOD** AND SAFE

- One of the great questions of life is: "Is God safe?" The Answer: "Of course He is!"

**Psalm 34:8** "Taste and see that the LORD is good"

- Unless we feel safe in our love relationship with Jesus, we will never see Him as being enough.

- What you and I think about God is the most important thing about us. We will eventually be shaped by the **image of God** we carry in our minds.