

Do you remember the ad on TV
that went like this?

'Do you love someone enough to
give them your last Rolo?'

I'm rather partial to a Rolo me
and I'm going to be talking a lot about
them this morning.

Let's pray
*Father open hearts and our minds
Open our ears help us to hear
from you this morning. Amen*

There are two key words
I want to draw your attention to, in this ad.
LOVE and **GIVE**
and ask you this question,

How much do you think GOD loves you?

Personally, I'm amazed by God's love
and in John 3:16 a verse we know so well
we read:

God So **LOVED** the world,
that's you and me,
that he **GAVE**
gave his only son
Who died for us

That is amazing love
That's phenomenal generosity

And all because, He loves us

Another question, Do you,
do I, love God enough, in return

to give him one of my Rolos?

Today I'm talking about giving
Not giving
in terms of our time or our talents

although everything I'm saying
equally applies to them

But the regular giving of our money to God

And before you say oh,
here we go again,
CSK talking about money

the last time the subject
of regular giving
was addressed was early in 2019.

Oh, I know we've had a gift day since then
but it's not the same thing at all
that's like comparing giving someone
a birthday present with budgeting
your finances each month

I'm not talking about a one-off gift
but our attitude
to our budgeting behaviour,
our regular giving
to our Heavenly Father

And if this subject makes
you feel uncomfortable
please don't pick on me when we next meet
take it up with God
ask him why you feel like this

What do we mean regular giving?

Have you ever listened
to your heart beating?
There's a regular rhythm to it isn't there

Boom boom, boom boom

if our heartbeat slows down
or if it becomes erratic
we sure know about it

The regular giving
of our money to God
is an indication of the state
of our spiritual heartbeat

Giving to God
just when we remember
or when we have a little left over
doesn't help to keep us
spiritually healthy

Most of us receive our income
on a regular basis don't we
We know roughly the day it hits
our bank account
and our planned giving should be
just as regular

Rick Warren
A respected Bible teacher, says
"giving is the essence of being like Jesus"

In other words
we are most like Jesus
when we are giving

and we're are told in the letter to the Ephesians
That we should copy, imitate Jesus

and I love how the Message puts it.....

*Observe how Christ loved us.
His love was not cautious
but extravagant.
He didn't love
in order to get something from us
but to give everything of himself to us.
Love like that.*

Back to our Rolos.

In the ad
the man asks the cartoonist
does she love me?
Love you, he replies, she worships you
and then she gives him her last Rolo

When we give,
we are worshipping or
I like to think of it as
giving God his worth-ship
How much is God worth to you?
Because he didn't
just give you his last Rolo
He gave you the whole packet!

When we accept Jesus into our hearts
we become joint heirs with Him

we are adopted by God to be his children.
That's how much you're worth to him

So, how much is God worth to you?

I'm sometimes uncomfortable
when out with friends at a restaurant
when it comes to the tip
at the end of the meal
how much do you give?
What change have I got?

Giving to God should
not be like giving him a tip
looking at what's left over
with a "that'll do" attitude
That's not giving God his worth-ship is it?

The Bible tells us
that where our treasure is
that's where our heart will be

my grandchildren have a toy
which involves magnets
you hold a coloured stick
which has a magnet in it
and before you are lots of coloured
disks with metal rings around
They remind me of coins
and one of the ways to play
is to see how many of these "coins"
you can pick up at once

Money's like a magnet
Because....wherever it is
it pulls our heart

When we give to God
it's also like a magnet
but this time it pulls us closer to him
giving draws us, you see,
closer to the heart of God
because it's an act of worth-ship
And whenever we worship
We are drawn closer to him
Where's your heart
being pulled this morning?
Because where you prioritise your money,
time, efforts, thinking, life

that's where your heart will be heading

And
you cannot pull
the wool over God's eyes
He knows you, you see,
he knows where your heart is
where your treasure is
where your priorities lie.

The rich young man
in our reading today
was privileged, wealthy,
well educated
But there was sense in which
the young man only
paid lip service to God.
Oh, he desired, sought
the assurance of eternal life
but his heart, his trust, his priorities,
were all in his wealth
and possessions

so much so, that even face to face
with Jesus who, the Bible tells us
showed him such love
and promised him treasure in heaven
he couldn't let go
he wouldn't trust Jesus

If I was sitting
in your living room right now
And asked – do you trust God?
I wonder what your reply would be
More than likely, 'Yes of course I do'.

The Bible tells us to
trust Him with all our heart
Trust him completely

And I wonder
If Jesus looked
at your bank statements
would he be able to tell
how important he is to you?

Would he be able to see how much
You trust him

Now I cannot talk about giving
and not mention tithing.
The word tithe means 10%
and throughout
the Old Testament particularly,
God's people gave 10%,
a tithe of their income
as an offering to God

Tithing today is still a very
helpful method of regular giving
and many plan
their giving that way

It's interesting to note though
we don't hear much about tithing
In the New Testament
so why might that be?

Well, it's not because believers
weren't expected to give

No, I think maybe it's because
that as believers they – we -

are supposed to be
like Jesus
and to be as generous
in our giving
as we possibly can be
And for some
that may mean
Giving more than a 10%

I should point out
That Bible teaches
our giving to God should be
in proportion to the
material blessings
we've been given

and God understands
that for some, a 10% tithe might
be a really difficult amount to find

whereas
for others,
well you don't need me to finish
this sentence do you?

I said a few weeks ago I said
that giving God a little from
a comfortable way of life is
not good enough

I'm going further this morning
IT'S SHAMEFUL

How dare we take our pack of Rolos
and say to God, here you can have a lick
but I'm going to keep the rest for myself

Another quote from Rick Warren
*"There are more promises in the Bible
regarding giving than any other thing."*

He is so right,
Once we learn to trust God
To give him his worth-ship
Then we discover
We cannot out-give God

When we give to Him –
he responds with such
generosity, such blessing

Malachi tells us that
when we give properly
God opens the floodgates
and pours out his blessing
You cannot out-give God

In Phil 4
Paul tells us that God will meet
all our needs. ALL OUR NEEDS
You cannot out-give God

And Jesus himself tells us in Luke
Give and it will be given to you
a good measure,
pressed down, shaken together,
and running over
You cannot out-give God

So what about our giving to CSK

I believe that Peter and I
have been led to worship at CSK
It's our church
And we want to be

part of the good work
God is doing here don't you?
I hope you do.
CSK is faithful to the word of God
Our leaders are Spirit-filled and prayerful
CSK has a heart for the local community
and sharing the gospel both here and
further afield
but it can't do all these things on
fresh air.

You might think that
Because CSK is part of the Church of England
That you don't need to give much
That the C of E is rolling in it
They've got a warehouse full of Rolos tucked away
WRONG
As a church
We do not give enough the diocese
to even pay for Sylvia's salary,
her pension, her housing
And we're also blessed to have
Rachel and Joel,
I'm just saying

But to finish
Is God worth your last Rolo?
Oh I think he is

In fact, it's biblical to
give him your first Rolo

You give God your first,
If you give him your very best
I'm confident
You won't run out of Rolos

Do you trust Him?
Yes?
Good
OK then take a look at your finances
And let him speak to your heart

Now where did I put that packet?
Ah - want one?