Our scripture comes from Luke 16:14-17. While you’re finding that, A man phoned a lawyer and asked, "How much would you charge me for just answering three simple questions?" The lawyer replied, "A thousand dollars." The man exclaimed, “A $1000!! That's pretty expensive, isn't it?" The lawyer replied, “It certainly is. Now, what's your third question?" Jesus didn’t charge the people for answers the way the Pharisees did.

**Luke 16:14-17** **14Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him. 15And He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. 16“The law and the prophets *were* until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it. 17And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail.**

 Chapter 16 opens as Jesus tells the parable of the unjust steward. The people are following, listening, and changing. The Pharisees are supposed to be the spiritual leaders, the shepherds of the sheep, but, last week, we saw how Jesus had compassion because the sheep were weary and scattered. Jeremiah 23:1-2 says - “Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!” says the Lord. Therefore, thus says the Lord God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people: “You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings,” says the Lord. The Pharisees have scattered the sheep, laid heavy burdens on them, demanded of them what they themselves are not willing to do. They love the best places. They love the way people glorify them. God sees this and God will attend to them for the evil they do.

In verses14 & 15 - **Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him. 15And He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.** They derided Jesus – they literally snuffed their noses at His teaching. They couldn’t contradict Him, so they made fun for Him. It’s the same today for those telling the Truth. People love their sin – the world loves the darkness. The world is flowing towards destruction and most people are flowing right along with it. In verse 15, Jesus rebukes the Pharisees because they worship rules, traditions, money, position, and things. They love the way the crowds part in the market place. They love their power. Jesus is fulfilling Jeremiah 23! God expects us to bear fruit - love, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control. He expects humility – so thankful that He first loved us that we feel an urgency to love others as praise to Him.

The Pharisees were highly esteemed before men. Among other abominations, Jesus is pointing at them and the way they have perverted God’s word to honor themselves. And it’s the same today. People will take God’s word and religion and pervert it, never honoring God, but bringing honor to self. We must always examine ourselves, being sure that our motives honor God – our hearts are open books for Him to read and that should give us all pause this morning.

Verse 16 - **“The law and the prophets *were* until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it.** Sunday nights, we study how the Old Testament interlocks with the New Testament. From Genesis to Malachi, prophecy after prophecy foretold the coming of the Savior these Pharisees now look upon. The Pharisees were all about the law and the prophets, but they’ve failed the people. The law and the prophets were until John the Baptist and now Jesus has arrived. Everything is changed. Matthew 3:1-2 In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” He prepared the way for Jesus, just as Isaiah foretold. There’s a new Shepherd! Before Jesus, people needed a mediator. Now, the veil is torn top to bottom – Jesus stands within the veil and provides us direct access to the God of the universe. A**nd everyone is pressing into it**. Pressing into it has the idea of crowding in – pushing – making sure we’re on board! There’s urgency in these words!

I want to ask today – are we pressing into the Kingdom of God? We press into our jobs, into Starbucks, into our vacation. Do we have an urgency to press into the eternal Kingdom of Almighty God? Do we have an urgency to spread the gospel to all who will hear? Do we see, with clear eyes, the forgiveness God has graciously given and are we hungry to make sure our brother knows all about it? We’re all pressing into something. Is it the Kingdom of God?

Jesus finishes - **17And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail.** There are still Old Testament prophecies to be fulfilled. Jesus says in Matthew 5:18 - For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. It will all be done in God’s time.

Belief in Jesus is the only way. He says - Press into the Kingdom. We must press urgently, incessantly so more might be saved! Be urgent with love, urgent with forgiveness, urgent with compassion, as we seek the lost of this world. We will be derided, be urgent anyway! Jesus doesn’t say – everyone is passively waiting, pleasurably riding, comfortably ready – He says they’re urgently pressing. Are we urgently pressing today? (**Are you Saved?)**