



In today's passage, Jesus highlights the fleeting nature of earthly possessions, which are vulnerable to decay and theft, contrasted with the imperishable nature of the treasures of heaven. The words of Jesus underscore the importance of living with a spiritual focus (e.g., a healthy eye). He emphasizes the impossibility of serving God and wealth, urging us to focus on God as our ultimate master. Today's passage encourages us to reflect on our priorities, considering how we live in pursuit of heavenly treasures and wholehearted devotion to God.

Key Passage: Matthew 6:19-24

Discussion Questions:

1. What does Jesus mean by "treasures on earth"? Why does Jesus warn against storing them?

Jesus refers to "treasures on earth" as material possessions and wealth, such as money, physical goods, and properties, which are temporary and susceptible to decay, loss, and theft. He warns against storing these treasures because they are impermanent and can divert focus and devotion from God, leading to misplaced priorities and divided loyalties. Jesus emphasizes that what people value most reflects where their hearts lie, urging them to seek lasting, eternal treasures in heaven that align with a life devoted to spiritual growth and God's purposes.

2. How do you understand the concept of storing "treasures in heaven"? What might these treasures be?

Storing up "treasures in heaven" refers to investing in actions and values that have eternal significance and align with God's will, such as acts of love, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, and spiritual growth. These treasures are not subject to decay or theft, representing the lasting impact of living a life dedicated to serving God and others. Such treasures might include building loving relationships, practicing compassion, growing spiritually, and spreading the gospel. By focusing on these eternal treasures, we can align our hearts with God's kingdom and ensure that our pursuits contribute to everlasting rewards.

3. What does Jesus mean by, "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"? What might this look like in our lives?

Jesus means that whatever we value most highly—our "treasure"—will capture our attention, desires, and devotion, thus directing our hearts and shaping our priorities. This principle suggests that if we prioritize material wealth and earthly possessions, our thoughts and energies will be consumed by acquiring and protecting these things, often at the expense of our spiritual well-being. Conversely, suppose we value spiritual growth, acts of love, and service to God and others. In that case, our hearts will be oriented toward these eternal pursuits. This might look like dedicating time and resources to

helping those in need, cultivating a deep prayer life, participating in community and church activities, and making decisions that reflect trust in God's provision rather than a relentless pursuit of material security.

4. What does Jesus mean when He says, "No one can serve two masters" (verse 24)? How does this relate to serving God versus wealth?

When Jesus says, "No one can serve two masters," He emphasizes the impossibility of giving full devotion and loyalty to two competing priorities. This statement highlights the inherent conflict between serving God and serving wealth (often called "mammon"). Jesus teaches that trying to serve both will ultimately divide one's heart, leading to compromised values and priorities. Serving wealth can result in greed, anxiety, and a focus on material success at the expense of spiritual growth and obedience to God. True devotion to God requires undivided loyalty, where one's actions, decisions, and values are aligned with God's will and purposes rather than being influenced by the pursuit of material gain.

5. Why does Jesus link these two sayings about money and God (Matthew 6:19-21, 6:24) with a saying about the good and bad eyes? What are the spiritual implications of this metaphor regarding possessions?

Consider the following from Pastor John Piper: The key is found in Matthew 20:15. Jesus had just told the parable of the workers in the vineyard. Some of them had agreed to work from 6 am to 6 pm for a denarius. Some the master hired at 9 am. Others at noon. Finally, some he hired at 5 pm. When the day was done at 6 pm he paid all the workers the same thing—a denarius. In other words, he was lavishly generous to those who worked only one hour, and he paid the agreed amount to those who worked twelve hours. Those who worked all day “grumbled at the master of the house” (Matthew 20:11). They were angry that those who worked so little were paid so much. Then the master used a phrase about “the bad eye” which is just like the one back Matthew 6:23. He said, “Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?” (Matthew 20:15). Unfortunately, that last clause is a total paraphrase, not a translation. “Or do you begrudge my generosity” is a very loose paraphrase of “Or is your eye bad because I am good.” The “bad eye” here parallels the “bad eye” in Matthew 6:23. What does the bad eye refer to in Matthew 20:15? It refers to an eye that cannot see the beauty of grace. It cannot see the brightness of generosity. It cannot see unexpected blessing to others as a precious treasure. It is an eye that is blind to what is truly beautiful and bright and precious and God-like. It is a worldly eye. It sees money and material reward as more to be desired than a beautiful display of free, gracious, God-like generosity. That is exactly what the bad eye means in chapter six of the Sermon on the Mount. And that meaning gives verses 22-23 a perfect fitness between a saying on true treasure (vv. 19-21) and the necessity of choosing between the mastery of God and the mastery of money (vv. 24). So, the flow of thought would go like this: Don't lay up treasures on earth, but lay up treasures in heaven. Show that your heart is fixed on the value that God is for you in Christ. Make sure that your eye is good not bad. That is, make sure that you see heavenly treasure as infinitely more precious than earthly material treasure. When your eye sees things this way, you are full of light. And if you don't see things this way, even the light you think you see (the glitz and flash and skin and muscle of this world) is all darkness. You are sleepwalking through life. You are serving money as a slave without even knowing it because it has lulled you to sleep. Far better is to be swayed by the truth—the infinite value of God. So, if you are emotionally drawn more by material things than by Christ, pray that God would give you a good eye and awaken you from the blindness of “the bad eye.”

6. How do we differentiate between necessary material possessions and earthly treasures that might hinder our spiritual growth? In what ways can the pursuit of material wealth impact one's relationship with God?

Differentiating between necessary material possessions and earthly treasures that might hinder spiritual growth involves examining the roles and significance of these items in our lives. We need necessities for daily living, such as food, clothing, shelter, and tools required for work and daily tasks. These items are essential for life and fulfilling responsibilities. On the other hand, earthly treasures are possessions and pursuits that go beyond necessity, often driven by a desire for status or security. Pursuing material wealth can significantly impact one's relationship with God by shifting focus and priorities away from spiritual matters. When the accumulation of wealth becomes a primary goal, it can lead to greed, anxiety, and a false sense of security, causing us to rely more on our resources than on God's provision. This pursuit can also foster selfishness and distract from acts of generosity, compassion, and service to others. It creates a divided heart, where the devotion that should be directed toward God is instead given to material gains. Ultimately, this undermines spiritual growth and alignment with God's will, making it harder to live a life that reflects God's love and values.

7. How can we practically store up treasures in heaven in our daily lives?

Practically storing treasures in heaven involves prioritizing actions and values that reflect God's love and kingdom principles. This includes practicing generosity by helping those in need, fostering relationships through acts of kindness and compassion, and investing time in spiritual disciplines such as prayer, worship, and studying Scripture. It also means living with integrity, seeking justice, and sharing the message of God's love with others. By focusing on these eternal values, we align our hearts with God's purposes, ensuring that our efforts contribute to lasting spiritual rewards and reflect a life dedicated to serving God and others.

8. What about this lesson challenged you the most? What was your biggest takeaway?