

## **Matthew 6:19-21, 24-27**

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

<sup>24</sup> “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

<sup>25</sup> “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? <sup>26</sup> Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? <sup>27</sup> Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?”

## **MONDAY: MATTHEW 6:19-21—TREASURE, THE HEART, & WORTH**

Jesus is talking about treasure on earth and comparing it with treasure in heaven.

- What is the reason Jesus gives for not accumulating treasure on earth?
- Think on this passage from the perspective of our “worth”? How is treasure related to worth?
- Read Philippians 3:4-11. In this passage Paul mentions all of his accomplishments as a Jew, only to reduce them to worthlessness. What he once considered things of great worth, he considers less than worthy. The difference? Knowing Jesus Christ. Sounds simple! What is involved in this “knowing?”
- The things Paul mentions held great value. They all related to his relationship with God as a member of God’s people Israel. Paul stood head and shoulders above his peers. It is clear that Jesus Christ turned Paul’s world upside-down. It is not just that what had worth no longer does. It is that there is something of much greater value. How does Jesus give your life such worth? How does what Paul says resemble what Jesus says in Matthew 6?

## **TUESDAY: MATTHEW 6:22-23 CORRUPTING THE BODY, NOT JUST “TREASURE”**

These verses are a continuation of what Jesus said about treasure in Matthew 6:19-21. It seems that these verses interrupt Jesus’ train of thought on treasure and money. Don’t you think that 6:21 would be better followed by 6:24? Yet, in Matthew Jesus inserts this saying about the quality of the eye here for a purpose. Let’s first try and sort out what the point of this saying is.

- “The eye is the lamp of the body...” Jesus is speaking metaphorically. The eye admits light into the body that results in quality of life. “If the eye is healthy...” The word we translate “healthy” or “good” denotes the idea of “clear” or “untainted.” What might bring clarity or distortion and unclarity to the eye? How can what we let in through the eye corrupt the whole body?
- Relate this to Matthew 6:19-21. What are points of connection? What does earthly treasure and money have to do with the possibility of corrupting the body through the eye?

## WEDNESDAY: MATTHEW 6:24-27—ALLEGIANCE AND WORRY

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As far as explicit content, Jesus returns to the topic of treasures and money in 6:24. But, has Jesus really left the topic? Understanding how 6:24-27 follows 6:22-23 will help clarify this.

- Jesus raises a relatively new point in verse 24. He is not talking about *worshipping* God or money (“mammon”). He is talking about *servicing* one or the other. “Allegiance” might be a better way to think about it. How does this relate to the clarity of the eye and one’s “treasure”?
- Verse 25 begins with a “therefore.” What does this indicate about how we should read verses 25-27 in relation to verse 24? How does being overly concerned (“anxious”) relate to whom one serves or where one’s allegiance is?

## THURSDAY: ISAIAH 43:1-7—HOPE IN OUR IDENTITY

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In this passage, God speaks to Israel, his people. They are in the middle of exile. They are displaced, and they are bombarded by pressures of a different culture that does not recognize God. In addition they had failed God in the choices they made, resulting in this exile. In this situation they probably asked if their identity as God’s people was worth it. Had God abandoned them to the consequences of their actions? Was it sustainable to continue to live as God’s people in a culture hostile to their God? Would there be a hopeful future?

- How does God address these concerns in this passage? Recall Philippians. Paul’s new identity changed his worth. How does God identify his people?
- We have learned already that in Christ we are incorporated into God’s people, God’s family of faith. In spite of our different circumstances, how can we receive God’s message to Israel in Isaiah today?
- Pair this passage with the one in Matthew 6:19-27. What connections do you make? How does worship of God relate to identity? To our allegiances? To our hope? To the applicability of God’s promises?

## FRIDAY: TITUS 3:3-9—IDENTITY IN ACTION

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In this passage, Paul is in the midst of talking to Titus about correcting troublemakers in the body of faith. One of Paul’s main points in these verses is to remind Titus of what God has done in all of us who enter into the life of faith.

- Describe the change that Paul says is typical of all people as a result of faith?
- According to this passage, what drove life decisions of people without faith? What drives life decisions of those who have experienced “washing of new birth and the renewing of the Holy Spirit”?
- Many people seem to make wise decisions in life, and are not Christians. How does faithfulness to Jesus as a result of new birth and renewal of Spirit (ideally) make the decisions of a Christian different? How can this related to treasure on earth vs. treasure in heaven?

## SATURDAY: JAMES 1:2-3—TRIAL OF HOPE

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In these verses, James encourages those whose faith is “tested.”

- What is the encouragement James gives to those who are tested?
- James says that the goal of testing is “that you might be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” Do you ever think of enduring difficulty in this way?
- James actually seems to think that being “perfect and complete” is attainable. How does this strike you? Do you allow James’ words to shape how you see yourself and God’s purposes for you? How does this goal impact (1) your worth, (2) your treasures and allegiances, and (3) your hope?