

CORE Seminar  
Spring 2024  
Sermon on the Mount  
Course 6: Matthew 6:19-34

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### ICE BREAKER

Choose an ice breaker from the *Spring Community Group Guide* or go to [www.fbcportland.org/icebreakers](http://www.fbcportland.org/icebreakers) to select an ice breaker to ask your group.

- Spend about 5 minutes discussing the question – this is a great way to “warm up” your group.

### INTRODUCTION

Welcome back to the Sermon on the Mount – **week 6**. The last time we met we were beginning **Matthew 6** – **somewhat the center of the Sermon**. And, if you remember, we read how Jesus taught on the condition of the heart –the spiritual disciplines of the believer. We stated that there were three disciplines that come from the heart: **giving** [verses 2-4], **prayer** [verses 5-15], and **fasting** [verses 16-18]. And when He instructed His disciples with these disciplines, He was teaching them [and us] how to do them in the right way – a way that **glorifies** God.

This week, we’re going to transition from these three disciplines of giving, prayer and fasting and we’re going to pick up in **verse 19**. And we’re going to see very quickly, that Jesus begins to teach on material things. This is one of those topics that our culture really should pay attention to because of the way our culture tends to overly **consume** material things. As a culture, we have more resources than we have ever had – and we do not always utilize those resources for the benefit of others. In this section of **Matthew 6**, Jesus is going to address this dependence on “stuff,” and where true focus should be. Remember, this section comes right after fasting – where His listener gave-up food and fully focused on God’s blessing & provision.

So, let’s pray and then we’ll dig into Scripture.

### PRAYER

Ok – let’s open our Bibles and dig into **Matthew 6:19-24**

## Have someone in your group read Matthew 6:19-24

<sup>19</sup> “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, <sup>20</sup> but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

<sup>22</sup> “The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, <sup>23</sup> but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

<sup>24</sup> “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

Jesus doesn't begin this section softly – He goes in full bore! It's a command not to treasure “for yourselves treasures on earth.” Do not lay them up – do not treasure them.

Why would He say this? It's because treasures are temporary. They fade and they don't last forever.

- If it's clothes or expensive fabrics, then guess what – moth's will eat it.
- If it's cars or expensive metals, then rust will destroy it.
- If it's money or valuable jewelry/ watches OR expensive electronics, then thieves will break into where you are keeping these items and they will steal them.
  - Remember **Bernie Madoff**? – In 2009, Madoff was charged for a “Ponzi” scheme that stole over **\$64 BILLION** from investors and was sentenced to **150 years** in federal prison.

So, ultimately – what is the value of these things compared to your eternity? And the answer is, they have no intrinsic value compared to Jesus work on the cross and our eternity.

And that's what Jesus states – instead of focusing on those earthly treasures – focus on your “treasures in heaven!” Your eternity in heaven can't be destroyed or corrupted by moth or rust. Your eternity in heaven can't be taken from you by thieves. So, as citizens of heaven, focus on that treasure RATHER than the **temporary** treasures on earth.

Jesus states that if this is difficult for you – determining where your true treasure lies – then in may be an indicator of where your heart lies. Because “**no one can serve two masters.**” If we think that we can successfully serve two masters, then Jesus states we are deceived. It just cannot be done.

In the book of Daniel, we see that King Neb has defeated the Southern Kingdom and they took the best and brightest from Jerusalem to Babylon. This included Daniel, Hananiah,

Mishael, and Azariah [Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego]. At no time in their captivity, did King Neb state that they could not worship God – he did not prevent their worship. But, in Daniel 3 - when King Neb built a huge golden statue - we see that the king commanded everyone to bow down and worship the image. He was not asking everyone to stop worshipping their gods – but he was asking that they worship his gods in addition to their gods. Basically, “you worship your gods privately and my gods publicly.” Most of us know what happened - Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah [Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego] refused to bow down and worship Neb’s god. They would only worship the One true God. They obeyed the first commandment and they realized that **“no one can serve two masters.”** – that to be loyal to the one is to despise the other.

Jesus realized this and commanded His disciples – that in the Kingdom economy – they could not serve both God and money. Some of your translations may say **“mammon.”** The term “mammon” means **“materialism, or ‘wealth personified.’”** The idea is, you can’t serve God and your wealth. You will either be loyal to the one and whichever you are loyal to will cause you to **despise** the other.

**QUESTIONS: Is the primary focus of this passage money, finances and wealth? If not, what is?**

**According to these verses, practically speaking, why Jesus warns us against laying up treasures on earth?**

- **How would you define a treasure?**
- **What happens to the treasures we have amassed here? [verse 19]**
- **Why are treasures so appealing to us?**

**What is the spiritual reason Jesus encourages us not to lay up treasures in heaven? [verse 21]**

**What are some of the things the world treasures?**

- **What earthly treasures are you tempted to store up for yourself, and what is the result?**

**Why is it impossible to serve God and material wealth?**

- **What or who are some of the “masters” you’re tempted to serve?**

**Any questions?**

Let’s move on to **Matthew 6:25-34**

**Have someone in your group read Matthew 6:25-34**

<sup>25</sup> “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? <sup>26</sup> Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? <sup>27</sup> And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? <sup>28</sup> And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, <sup>29</sup> yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. <sup>30</sup> But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? <sup>31</sup> Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ <sup>32</sup> For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. <sup>33</sup> But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

<sup>34</sup> “Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

In **verse 25**, Jesus uses the word “**therefore**,” in an effort to point us back to what He just taught us – primarily, leaning on earthly treasures are bad and eternity in the Kingdom of Heaven is FAR SUPERIOR! So, **THEREFORE**, because the Kingdom of Heaven is far superior to any earthly treasure, the Christian should not be worried or anxious about anything:

- They shouldn’t be anxious/ worried about food or drink.
- They shouldn’t be anxious/ worried about what they’re going to wear.
- They shouldn’t be anxious/ worried about time or how long they are going to live.
- And, they shouldn’t be anxious/ worried about tomorrow!

They should not be anxious/ worried about **anything**. In fact, He almost comes out and states that worry or anxiety accomplishes nothing. There is nothing that can be added to our physical lives by worrying. There may be greater sins than worry, but there are none more self-defeating and **useless**.

Jesus tells goes on to tell His disciples [and us] that God has already thought of and produced everything we will ever need – AND He has provided it to us. So, He provides descriptions of God’s creation that He has already provided everything they will ever need – such as the birds and the flowers of the field. If we can understand that our Heaven Father provides for the birds in the sky and flowers of the field, then He will certainly take care of us. THIS we can have confidence in - the **power** and **provision** of our loving heavenly Father.

In relation to the last set of verses, Warren Wiersbe once said:

Worrying about tomorrow does not help either tomorrow or today. If anything, it robs us of our effectiveness today—which means we will be even less effective tomorrow. Someone has said that the average person is crucifying himself between two thieves: the regrets of yesterday and the worries about tomorrow. It is right to plan for the future and even to save for the future [2 Corinthians 12:14; 1 Timothy 5:8]. But it is a sin to worry about the future and permit tomorrow to rob today of its blessings.

**QUESTIONS: How will the crucial choices we make in verses 19-24 affect our ability to live free from worry? [verse 25]**

**According to Jesus, why are we foolish to worry about our physical and material needs? [verses 25-30]**

**Jesus says, “Seek first God’s Kingdom” in Matthew 6:33. What does it mean for us to do that?**

**What things are you most tempted to worry about? How does it help or hurt?**

- **Are there times where you experience a tension between fear and faith?**

**How does the reminder that God is omniscient, or all-knowing, help give us peace in the midst of anxiety when we find ourselves prone to worry?**

## CONCLUSION

Today, we learned from Jesus’ words that when our hearts are transformed by God – as representatives of the Kingdom of God – our focus should shift away from the “treasures” of this world and towards the provision of God. Because of His provision in our lives, we should not spend time worrying or being anxious over the things we may be lacking or the things we do not have enough of. When we worry or are anxious, we are prone to give-in to our desires and attempt to “serve two masters.” Jesus tells us this is impossible. We will be loyal to one and – in our loyalty – we will despise the other. If we can understand that our Heaven Father provides for the birds in the sky and flowers of the field, then He will certainly take care of us. THIS we can have confidence in - the power and provision of our loving heavenly Father.

## PRAYER

**Next Week: Read Matthew 7:1-12**