

Materialism and the location of your treasure

BIG IDEA:

The transformed life is one that recognizes real treasure. Just a little bit of greed will contaminate all of life.

I feel like a complete loser when I don't have money. That's the real problem. I feel invalidated, as if the gods have not approved of my existence, as if my allowance has been cut off. We are worth our earning potential, you know. We are worth the money we make. Maybe this is a man thing; maybe women don't think about this, I don't know, but I think about it. I think I am worth what I earn, which makes me worth one dollar. Not having money affects the way a man thinks about himself'

*Donald Miller
In Blue Like Jazz*



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READ

In your own Bible, read Matthew 6:9-13 in one setting. As you read “The Lord’s Prayer” (Matthew 6:9-13), ask yourself how the verses following The Lord’s Prayer, (Matthew 6:14-7:12) provide application to a life of prayer. Jesus is laying out a whole new inner righteousness and no verse sums this up better than Matthew 5:20, which states, “For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven” (Robinson 176).

Have you ever participated in an NFL fantasy football league? If so, what’s the first thing you do at the end of the day on Sunday? That’s right, you are checking the stats of your guys...did your quarterback throw touchdown passes or interceptions, did your running back score, how did your defense do...in fact, you are probably more consumed about your guys than much of the rest of the entire league. Did you know you are fulfilling a biblical principle when you do this? You see, our interests follow our investments!!! And this is what Jesus was saying in Matthew 6:21, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Those things that are really important to you, you will take a vested, intimate interest in! Jesus starts this “investment” conversation in verse 19 of chapter 6 when He challenges the audience to ponder where they are collecting their treasures. Jesus lays out only two options for treasure storing: earth or heaven. One offers an investment return for both this life and beyond this life that will never crash, and the other only at best offers a return for this life that is limited and ends at death. The Holy Spirit desires to lead and guide you in your treasure storing. He invites you to pursue things of heaven. You will find these heavenly treasures to have not only eternal impact and stability, but equally to provide present peace and joy....what a return on your investment!!!

Prepare

What consumes you? What are you passionate about? Why?

How is the Holy Spirit working in your life to lead you to lay up heavenly treasures?

Do you find your “treasures” stolen, decaying, crashing, declining? If so, why?

When you are involved in the things you are passionate about, are you doing these things for your own glory and ego or for God’s glory?

What is truly most important to you? Remember, where we collect our treasure will show us where our heart is. Are your actions reflecting loving God with your heart?

Where do we go from here?

Pause and Pray. Ask God to reveal areas of your life that may consume your heart and interest on temporal things. Confess these idols to God and ask Him to give you heavenly minded vision. Make a call today to get started in those new areas where God wants you to serve.

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READ

In your own Bible, read Matthew 6 in one setting. Go back and re-read verses 19-24. What is God saying to you about treasure, seeing and serving?

I enjoy biking the trail at Sharon Woods Park throughout the summer. As I studied this passage, I thought about trying to bike the trail in the pitch black of night; it did not sound appealing to me. Jesus is telling His audience in Matthew 6: 22 and 23 this exact point. Building on verses 19-21, we are challenged in verses 22 and 23 to have the right vision, to see clearly, to differentiate in investments that are temporal and those that are eternal. Part of seeing well is keeping in mind the proper perspective between the eternal and the temporal (Robinson 214). Keeping our eyes on Jesus helps us to avoid the distractions of this earth. As I ride back home from the trail, the sun is setting. Looking into the sun, it is amazing what I pickup on the road that I did not see as I rode east to get to the park. The glare of the sun shows me slivers of glass, bolts, screws and all sorts of things that could damage my tires and derail me from my trip. Keeping our eyes on Jesus, looking at the Son, keeps us free from the pitfalls and the obstacles that blow out our tires and keep us off mission. No wonder God's Word is a lamp unto my feet... Speaking of vision, seeing two of everything and having blurred vision can make the simplest of tasks difficult. Jesus addresses this double vision in verse 24 of Matthew 6. Seniors, can you imagine if you had two English 12 teachers with two different English 12 classes this year? Your two term papers would be due right around the corner, book reports due, papers to be written, etc. How would you decide which project you take on first? This is just the idea Jesus had in mind when He said that no one can serve two masters. A slave belonged to the slave owner 24/7. The slave could not clock out of one owners and go to his next owner and report for work to his "other" master (Robinson 215). Likewise, there will be only one master for you and me. Spirit or flesh, eternal or temporal, Light or Darkness, God or riches...who/what are you focused on today?

Prepare

Are you biking down the path of your own agenda? There will be obstacles and potholes that you will hit. When you are “on the sideline” will your hope, joy and meaning for life be blown away with your blown tire?

What/who are you keeping your eyes on? What are you focused on?

Spending time with God, because He loves you and has given you the freedom and opportunity to do so is awesome. Does love or duty motivate you time with God? How’s your time with God going?

You’re gonna serve somebody. Is it God or riches? Who is the master of your life?

Is there an addiction you need help with? Lust of the Flesh can choke out your life.

Where do we go from here?

Jesus Christ has paid the price for your righteousness. The Holy Spirit invites you to join God where He is working. What does the path of following God’s Spirit look like??? That’s right. . . . Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Pick one or two of these characteristics to focus on this week and ask God to empower you to display this type of fruit today.

Chapel Scripture

Thursday, February 17

MATTHEW 6:19-24 (NIV)

19Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

22”The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. 23But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

24”No one can serve two masters. 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 both God and Money.

Notes:

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READ

In your own Bible, Read Mathew 6, I Timothy 6 and Proverbs 30: 8 & 9. Does God have a receipt to gain great treasure?

Whenever I think about treasure, I think about wealth. I like to have money; I like the things money can buy. Am I wrong to want money? If I am storing my treasures in heaven, can I still be rich on Earth??? Financial blessings are a gift from God, yet being a good steward of God's resources is no easy task. Let's be honest, we all want to "make it big." So fortunately for us,

God gives us an equation for "Great Gain." I Timothy 6:6 states, "But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment." Do you see the equation? Godliness + Contentment = Great Gain. I Tim. 6:10 goes on to state "for the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang." Take a few minutes to reflect on this phrase, "The love of money." Ecclesiastes 5:10 states "He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves abundance with its income. This too is vanity." So how do you know if you love money? Do you find yourself never being satisfied with the money you have? Never having enough income? Always thinking that just a little more will be all you need? Do you see the coloration with I Tim. 6? Contentment!!!! Do you want great gain? Pursue godliness, not riches! One final thought on money; Proverbs 30:8-9 always comes to my mind as I think of my treasure. Proverbs 30: 8, 9 states "Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is my portion, lest I be full and deny Thee and say, "Who is the Lord?" Or lest I be in want and steal, and profane the name of my God." Let's admit it; we have a lot of material things here at WC. It is easy for us to "be full" and think we can do this on our own and that we do not need God. Are we pursuing godliness over wealth? How can we use God's financial blessings to impact His kingdom here in Columbus? Outside Columbus?

Reflect

First of all, what did you learn about Matthew 6:19-24 in chapel this week?

Have you been in a financial situation lately where you had to rely on the Lord? How did He provide?

Are you using your wealth to store up heavenly treasures? Or are you rich in good works? Are you generous and ready to share?

“Do you think the Bible commands us to work hard to earn and save money? How does the use of money reflect our trust in God?” (Robinson 218).

Many of you are going to go to college and all of you will eventually be selecting careers. Are you interested in making money or pursuing the path that God has called you to walk? Is making money blurring your decision on what to do next?

Where do we go from here?

Take a look at your schedule and your checkbook over the last month. What did you do and how did you spend your money? What do these things say about how and where you are laying up treasures? What needs to change for you to store up treasures in heaven that will not be destroyed?