

Financial Planning - Matthew 6:19-34 **Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading**

Notes from the Sermon

What are your goals and do you have a plan? Generally, these are the first two questions a good financial planner might ask. What will come next is a financial and investment plan that will help the client move toward the goals, letting his money work for him. Of course, if he is a believer in Jesus, the plan will be to throw a few bucks toward the church or some cause. But for the most part, our financial planning is focused on laying up treasures on earth. Not sure if you knew it or not, but Jesus was also a financial planner. Our text this week is from a section of Matthew's Gospel we call the Sermon on the Mount, a section of teaching Jesus gives to His disciples outlining the costs, commitments, call, and blessings of following Jesus. Interestingly, Jesus' words often look vastly different than the baptized American dream that often drives the Christian faith in our culture.

So what does Jesus, the financial planner tell us about our investment plan? Simple, make sure your goals and plan are actually headed in the right direction. In this section Jesus gives three commands, imperatives for us as we think about our stuff. But it is bigger than just stuff. The gifts God has given us includes three things. First, our time, the seconds, minutes, hours, days that we have on this big blue ball. Second, God has given us our talents, the abilities we have that we can either use for our own benefit and prosperity or see them as Kingdom gifts. Third, He has blessed us with the things we own and our financial resources, our treasures. With these in mind, Jesus gives three commands for us to believe and obey as His followers.

The first is actually both a negative and positive command. First, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth," followed by, "But lay up yourselves treasures in heaven." So Jesus warns that our investment strategy needs to concentrate on investing in things that are eternal and which cannot be corroded. How in the world do we do this? Do we choose the Kingdom of God Brokerage Firm for our investments? And is Jesus really telling us that we should not save, grow our wealth, and plan for retirement? Well, lets begin with the possibility that the answer to those questions might be yes, or at least maybe. I think most of us need to wrestle deeply with the way our faith has been shaped by the so called American dream and think deeply about how much energy we are putting in to storing up earthly treasures and asking God to bless them. In verses 21 and 24 Jesus gives two significant warnings. First, he tells us that wherever we place our treasure, our heart will soon follow. Our culture tells us to follow our hearts, but Jesus reminds us that our hearts are doing little more than following our treasures. Second, Jesus tells us that we cannot serve two masters, and eventually we will despise one of them when we try. When Jesus says we cannot, he is saying more than it is a bad idea for us to try. The word "cannot" is a Greek word that speaks of inability, that it is not possible to serve both God and the money god. But don't tell us that, we all believe we will be the one who figures this out. Yet, the outcome is that we will despise the true Jesus, reshaping Him to fit our idols and treasures rather than humbly repenting and trusting in Him.

Which leads to the second command, to not be anxious. This is an interesting imperative, because on one level it makes little sense to firmly tell an anxious person to stop their anxiety. When Jesus tells, "Do not be anxious," He is not giving a command about our emotions. Rather, He is reminding His disciples that their anxiety is attached to their treasures and the fear that they might corrode or be taken away. The way to end anxiety according to Jesus is to store our treasures in heaven. But that is so difficult when our gaze is on our things and the materialism of the world around us. So Jesus tells us that we need to shift our focus and look at the birds and the wildflowers rather than the next neighborhood over. They are content, they are sufficiently cared for, and it is the Father in heaven who provides. And we are so much more valuable to our Creator and Sustainer, so rather than trusting in our ability to provide we learn to place our trust in Jesus, realizing that He will keep

His promises and take care of us.

Third, we seek the Kingdom of God first. Simply put, a Kingdom is where a King rules, and the King over the Kingdom of God is Jesus. So our lives are marked by pursuing the rule and reign of Jesus in all things. Wherever we use our time, talents, and treasures to advance the reign of King Jesus we are investing in the eternal. So we seek His rule in our own lives. We invest in relationships, loving our own family and showing hospitality to others. We do justice and give to the poor out of our love for them but also as a reflection of God's love for the poor, oppressed, and marginalized. We give our time, talents, and treasures through the church to the work of the Kingdom in making disciples. And we invest in the lives of those who are without Christ seeking to see them come to Jesus and join us in heaven. This is what Kingdom investing looks like, and what the call to store up our treasures in heaven entails. Or as author Randy Alcorn said, "We can't take it with us, but we can send it on ahead."

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Acts 1	Acts 2	Acts 3	Acts 4	Acts 5	Acts 6	Acts 7

Reading from this past week: Matthew 6:19-34

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday Nehemiah 2, Exodus 35

Family Worship

Song - *God is For Us*

<https://youtu.be/xxl1EOhJiRA>

Gospel Project

Unit: Away from the land

Story: The people didn't go into the land

Big Picture Question: What is God like?

Answer: God is holy, good, and loving.

Scripture: Numbers 13-14

New City Catechism

Question #6: How can we glorify God?

Answer: By loving him and by obeying his commands and law.

Verse: Deuteronom 11:1

Scripture

Matthew 6:19

- What are some ways we can "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven?"
- If people who don't know us were to look at our lives, what would they say we most treasure?
- What are your greatest fears and anxieties? What do these anxieties show us about the things we treasure?
- What would it look like in life if we were to seek the Kingdom of God with our time? Our talents? Our treasures?

Prayer

*Pray for the events coming this week associated with Rise Up & Build - Prayer vigil on Friday, Prayer Breakfast Saturday, and the RU&B Luncheon next Sunday.

*Pray that God would teach us to store up our treasures in heaven.