

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

August 2013

The Sermon on the Mount

Lesson #8: Treasures

INTRODUCTION

If you had to give up one luxury in your house, what would it be?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Read Matt 6:19-24

*Note: 'The lamp of the body is the eye' (v. 22) is an idiom difficult to define precisely in our thinking, so let us first seek to determine how this would have been heard by Jesus' audience. 'Eye' in Hebrew ('ayin') is a word with a wide range of meanings; it means the sight organ and is used thus, but it also means sight itself, and, indeed, is first used in the Old Testament to denote spiritual insight (Gen 3:5, 7). This, obviously, is an appropriate meaning in this idiom, and one which Jesus' audience could be expected to have thought of when they heard 'ayin.' The word's other meanings include mental attitudes, opinions, judgments. We say 'in my view' when we cannot literally see anything, so English is not that different in attaching a wide range of meanings for the basic concept of 'eye' or 'sight.' We also speak of the 'eye' of a storm, or a spring—and the Hebrew word for 'spring' is the same word, 'ayin.'¹ "In ancient times, wealth was frequently measured by clothing. Compared to our day of mass-produced clothes, garments represented a considerable investment. Rich people sometimes had golden threads woven into their clothing, both to display and to store their wealth. But the best clothes were made of wool, which the **moth** loves to eat; and even the richest persons had difficulty protecting their clothes from the insects."²*

1. What treasures do people consider "safe & necessary" today? Matt 25:27; 2 Cor 12:14; 1 Tim 5:8
What makes them vulnerable?
2. If Jesus is not advocating poverty as a means of spirituality, how does one draw close to God? 1Tim 6:17
3. How does one maintain the proper attitude towards wealth and security? Acts 5:3; James 4:4

Read Matt 6:25-34

4. How does Jesus describe God's provision for nature?
5. Why do we often trust God's created things (money, food, shelter, etc) rather than the creator?
6. How can we simultaneously seek God's glory and our own security/comfort? What is the role of faith and trust?

APPLICATION

- What challenges you the most about living out these verses?

Some years ago, I happened to have contact with two quite wealthy men during the same week. One was a former professor at a major university who, through a long series of good investments in real estate, had accumulated a fortune of possibly a hundred million dollars. But in the process he lost his family, his happiness, his peace of mind, and had aged far beyond his years. The other man, a pastor, also acquired his wealth through investments, but they were investments to which he paid little attention. Because of his financial independence, he gave to his church over the years considerably more than he was paid for being its pastor. He is one of the godliest, happiest, most fruitful, and contented persons I have ever met.³

¹ Mills, M. S. (1999). *The Life of Christ: A Study Guide to the Gospel Record* (Mt 6:19–24). Dallas, TX: 3E Ministries.

² ³ MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). *Matthew*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary (411). Chicago: Moody Press.