

Treasures in Heaven (Matthew 6:19-24)

Checklist: - a nice new pair of shoes and an old worn out one (or any new item and similar old, worn out one)

New and Old Object Lesson

Have a nice, new pair of shoes and an old, worn out pair (or other old and new similar items). Have the kids look at both.

Ask:

- Which pair of shoes (*or item*) would you rather have? Why?
- Did the older pair of shoes (*or item*) look as nice as the newer one at one time?
- What happened?

Matthew 6:19-21 (Treasure in Heaven):

Have someone read Matthew 6:19-21 (while everyone follows along)

Ask:

- What are things that people treasure?
(*Have kids list different items that people treasure – like cars, video games, computers, cellphones, etc. Maybe write the list on a whiteboard.*)
- What happens to the things people treasure?
(*Just like with the shoes or other item in the object lesson, things wear out.*)

Treasures on earth wear down, get stolen, etc.

- Junk yards, yard sales, garages, storage closets, and dumps are where lots of our earthly stuff ends up.
- Things people treasure won't last – and they don't give lasting happiness.

Ask:

- What does it mean “where your treasure is your heart will be also”?
(*You seek out the things you treasure – you live for them.*)
- What is bad about storing up treasures on earth then and why should we store up treasure in heaven?

Use the following to help supplement youth's answers:

- First of all, it's not good to seek after things that just wear out or can be stolen. When you lose them, then what do you have left, if that is your treasure?
- And things can easily become idols. If we make things more important than God in our life, we're making those things a god to us.
- Verses 20-21 say we should store up treasure in heaven, because where our treasure is our heart will be also. And, our hearts should be focused on God.

So how do we store up treasure in heaven?...

1 Timothy 6:17-19 says: “¹⁷ Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. ¹⁸ Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. ¹⁹ In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.” (NIV) (*Possibly have youth flip over to these verses to look at them.*)

Ask:

- How do those verses say we can store up treasure in heaven?
(Do good – this would need to be things God thinks are good. Be rich in good deeds. Be generous and willing to share - this would seem to include sharing with God's people who are in need.)
- What would be some specific examples of doing good, being rich in good deeds, and being generous and willing to share?
- How else might we be able to store up treasure in heaven?
(It seems that helping accomplish God's purpose by serving Him and telling others about Him would help store up treasure in heaven.)

Doing good for God and sharing do not earn heaven. They are ways to make your life count and store up treasure in heaven. And, they are evidences that a person's heart is on God and not on stuff.

Matthew 6:22-23 (Eyes are the Lamp):

Have someone read Matthew 6:22-23 (while everyone follows along).

These verses seem a little difficult to understand. But, it might mean something like “what you focus on – or how you focus on things – will determine what your heart is like.” (Maybe, if you focus on the wrong things or with the wrong desires, it will fill you with darkness and your judgment of what is valuable or right will be clouded.)

Matthew 6:24 (Serve God or money):

Have someone read Matthew 6:24 (while everyone follows along)

Ask: What does it mean to serve money?
(living to make money or what money can buy is serving money. In other words, if our life's goal is to make money to please our self, that is serving money.)

Instead of living to make money and please ourselves with stuff, we should live our lives for God. Our goal in life should not be to make a lot of money. Or goal in life should be to please God.

Jesus said we can serve either God or money – not both. We'll either love one or love the other. If we serve money, there will be ways that we treat God like we hate Him.

Ask: So, Jesus said we can serve either God or money. But, why should we serve God instead of money?
(Because God is the God of the universe. He is loving and awesome and worthy of our worship and living for Him. And, if we are Christians, we owe him our whole lives in thankfulness for our salvation!)

Closing:

Ask:

- So, does what Jesus said mean it's wrong to make money or enjoy things? What does it mean?
(If God blesses us with a job that pays a lot, that is not wrong. And we can enjoy the good things God gives us. But, we should not pursue those things over God. And we should not allow those things to be more important to us than God or living for Him. Our heart's desire should be to serve God.)
- Does anyone here struggle with having God be the most important in your life (instead of money or any thing)?

Making money isn't bad. But your life and what you do for a living (whether a teacher, an engineer, a doctor, a homemaker, a pastor, a business owner, or whatever) should be to please and serve God.

Have youth think about these things to close:

- Ask God if your life and career goals are to use your gifts to please God and serve Him or to make money.
- If money is more important in your life than God, ask God to change your heart to make Him first in your life.
- And, if you are making money in a way that does not please God, you need to stop that to obey God.

- And, God must be your God to begin with! If you've never believed with your heart and accepted Jesus as savior and master, you need to do that! The Bible says if you believe with your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead and confess Jesus as Lord, you will be saved. (You don't need to say any special words, you just need to do that! But talk to me or your parents or someone else if you have questions or would like to learn more about it.)

Closing Prayer

Reference:

Warren Wiersbe, Commentary on Matthew 6:19-34, *The Bible Exposition Commentary: New Testament, Vol 1* (Victor, 2001 printing).

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