

Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ
SoM, Part 20: Greater Righteousness, Part 8

Last time...Jesus taught us how to pray

A model, a pattern, a framework...not a script to be repeated verbatim mindlessly
over and over and over again making it a vain repetition

This time...a “Life” lesson...about which Scripture has much to say

v19-20 treasures upon earth...treasures in heaven:

2 kinds of treasures are contrasted by Jesus Christ– earthly and heavenly

Do not gather/amass/store up treasures on earth

- eaten/consumed by
 - moths and other critters...high fashion, expensive tapestries
 - rust and other works of the elements...metallic objects
 - rust: oxidation, a “slow burn”
 - corrosion: the eating away of
- stolen by thieves
 - breaking and entering punk
 - sophisticated Wall Street banker or Gov’t official

Those treasures/riches/wealth are as their environment...the earth

- corrupted by sin
- cursed by God
- perishable...finite life, will certainly vanish (be wiped out)
- a false sense of security

Implied in v20 after “But”: I say unto you

Do gather/amass/store up treasures in heaven

- impervious to decay and “consumption” by critters or the elements
- secured where thieves cannot go

Those treasures/riches/wealth are also as their environment...heaven

- pure, untainted by sin/death
- the abode of God...blessed, not cursed
- eternal...infinite life, will never vanish
- eternally secure

Treasures on earth can never be secured and preserved...ultimately worthless

Treasures in heaven will forever be secured and preserved...ultimately glorious

v21 treasure...heart:

The issue regarding treasure/riches/wealth is...the heart

- the very core of our being
- the nature of our life
- that which drives us
- our innermost desires

“Treasure” and “heart” are bound together, linked, inseparable

Treasures reveal where the allegiance of our heart lies

What do we value and desire the most?

The eternal Word of God teaches

- Do not covet...material riches (Ex 20:17)
- Covet...immaterial riches (1 Cor 12:31)

Prov 23:4-5 Labor not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for *riches* certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.

Prov 27:24 riches are not forever

James 5:1-3 Go to now, *ye* rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon *you*. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

1 Tim 6:6-10 godliness and contentment, love of money is the root of all evil

Phil 4:14-20 (support for Paul's missions) desire fruit that may abound to your account

Prov 8:17-21 Wisdom is speaking; Jesus is Wisdom (1 Cor 1:30)

The world teaches:

- Money is power
- Money can buy happiness
- he who dies with the most money and the most toys wins

Unfailing experience teaches:

Mr. X died

How much did he leave?

Every penny

True for the Pharaohs, JD Rockefeller, the Rothschilds, the Popes

Reality: grave robbers...v19 after death too

False teachers in Christianity teach: Prosperity Gospel – Jesus Christ was rich and He wants us to be rich

The Word of God and experience teach:

- spiritually bankrupt false gospel...bad fruit
- deception of the devil

Jesus Christ cares not about earthly riches...they are burning now and will certainly end in “fervent heat”

Jesus Christ, the Lord of all, cares about our hearts...our allegiance

Are we devoted (all in) to fleeting earthly treasure?

Are we devoted (all in) to Jesus Christ?

Are we “half and half”, straddling a fence that in reality does not exist?

His exhortation (has eternal consequences either way) in v19-21 is to give Him, the King of the Kingdom of heaven, absolute allegiance

King Solomon understood eternal riches

Prov 30:7-9 Two *things* have I required of thee; deny me *them* not before I die:
Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny *thee*, and say, Who *is* the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God *in vain*.

v22-23 light...single...evil:

Jesus gives a physical metaphor to teach a spiritual truth

The light/illumination of our body is the eye

If the eye is whole/healthy/undivided/one, the body is full of light

If the eye is diseased/degenerate/unhealthy, the body is full of darkness

Light = Life

- John 8:12
- John 14:6
- 1 John 1:1-2, 5-7

Darkness = sin/death

- Ps 107:10-11
- Luke 1:67-69, 78-79
- Matt 4:12-17, quoting Is 9:1-2

Light and darkness are spiritual realities

Col 1:12-13 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son:

Heb 2:14-15 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

To lay up treasures in heaven...immaterial, next-worldly...is linked to a heart that is devoted to Light/Life...Jesus Christ

This the “single” eye

To lay up treasures on earth...material...is linked to a heart that is devoted to Darkness/death

This is the “evil eye”

- miserly
- greedy
- covetous

Jesus is saying that if the “light” of our “life” is worldly riches/wealth/treasures (a false “light” and “life”, a deception from the prince of darkness), that “light” is really darkness and how great is our deception!

Prov 28:22 He that hasteth to be rich *hath* an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.

How do people hunt monkeys?

Food/treasure in a coconut with a narrow opening

What is the “light” and “life” of the monkey?

The food/treasure it so desperately covets

What is the end of the monkey?

Won't let go of the food/treasure, is killed

What does the world teach us about money and wealth?

Get and don't let go of “treasure”

What is the prince of this world doing to people?

Hunting

v24 No man can serve two masters:

Every man

- is a servant...NO man is a master (not Trump, Putin, Soros, etc)
- must choose which master he will serve

Choices:

1. God...The True and Loving Master, Creator of heaven and earth
2. Mammon...worldly riches/wealth...a false and cruel taskmaster

By his choice, a man will

- hate one and love the other
- hold onto one and despise the other

To serve is to love and hold onto

To not serve is to hate and despise

The choice is exclusive...one “or” the other

Not both...both/”and” is impossible

Total allegiance/loyalty can be given to only one

Jesus Christ is making an unmistakable call: put our total and absolute allegiance in Him, not in worldly riches/wealth

The Word of God reveals that

- God cannot fail
- Mammon has and will fail

Job 1:21 Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

Joshua 24:15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

Are we money-motivated or Christ-motivated?

Do we worry about having enough money?

Is that worry about money and wealth “fleeting” or “consuming”?

Do “What if” questions regarding money haunt us?

Mammon is a cruel and insatiable taskmaster

- a person serves mammon, mammon does not serve the person
- possessions possess people

If we choose to serve God, He rewards us with peace, contentment, joy...and
Life/Light

If we choose to serve mammon, we are rewarded with crushing anxiety...and
Darkness/death

Jesus' desire is that we would choose Him!

v25-27 Take no thought...fowls of the air:

With power and authority that far surpasses EF Hutton, Jesus says:

Don't

- worry
- be crippled or paralyzed with anxiety
- stressed out (damages our bodies)
- have panic attacks
- fall into depression
- be pre-occupied

about the necessities of life

- food
- water
- clothes to cover your nakedness to protect you from the elements

Your Father in heaven, Who

- knows what you need
- has given you life
- holds your breath in His hands
- loves you enough to send Me here save sinners...you

is to be your focus.

Leave all those things to Him...let Him "worry" about it

Consider the birds...they don't "do" as humans "do"

Nonetheless

- When was the last time you saw a bird keel over dead of starvation?
- How many birds showed up when you re-seeded your lawn?

Do you see any birds losing sleep about

- the accumulation of stuff?
- some promotion at work?
- making the mortgage payment in 3 months?

They know in their little bird brains that their Creator is going to provide for them.

We are infinitely more valuable and important to our Father than all the birds

As are the 2M homeless children in Egypt!!!! (Pray for SWM!!!)

5/96 In the midst of financial stress, Ps 46-49 and sparrows sent by God to my breakfast table at the Embassy Suites in Tucson. Thank you, Lord!

7/98 “surprise check” from Garden Grove mortgage company with overpaid escrow account!
(looked like junk mail, was throwing it away, Lord stopped me)

9/12 A church in NoCal I never heard of: letter of encouragement and a gift

10/12 Radio Listener: Letter of thanks and a gift

Life...the eternal life of Jesus Christ received by grace thru faith when we give our absolute allegiance/devotion to Him...
is more important than food or drink or clothes...
things He knows we need and faithfully provides

And worrying about things that even the birds don't worry about adds nothing to our lives

Has our worry EVER accomplished anything helpful or healthy?

Worry is an exercise in futility...it does nothing, it never helps.

- doubt, unbelief, distrust
- rips me off, steals my joy, and causes me to forget
 1. Who my Father is
 2. Who my Provider is
 3. How much God values me

This is a “Life” lesson...a matter of the heart

Luke 12:15-21

Matt 16:24-27

And Life comes by trusting Jesus, not money/wealth/riches

v28-30 lillies...ye of little faith:

Jesus emphasizes His call to be totally devoted to Him vs the things of the world
with another example: the wild flowers

Why do you get so stressed out and worry about clothes to wear?

The wild flowers in the fields do nothing as humans do, yet they look more
beautiful than Solomon in all his splendor!

If the Father cares for the super-transient grass and wild flowers, how much more
will He care your you!

Speaking to...us of little faith

Of weak faith (vs the absence of faith)

When we question, doubt, don't believe ...refuse to not be in control

By speaking of the birds in the air and the wild flowers in the field, Jesus is
exhorting us not to be preoccupied and anxious about food and clothes...
the "bear necessities of life" (all that we need)

We are to responsibly expend productive energy i.e. work (2 Thes 3:10)...
but not anxious energy

The Father provides for the birds and the wild flowers, He most certainly will
provide for us!

Our security lies not in the things we amass for ourselves...a food supply and
money like a survivalist...but in our Creator, Provider, and Sustainer

v31-34 seek ye first:

Jesus has the cure for worry and anxiety –

1. let it go...servants are NEVER in control
2. KNOW that the Father knows we need the "bear necessities of life"
(Ps 37:25)
3. 1st Things 1st.: seek the Lord (Ezra 7:10), serve/love/hold onto the Lord
 - a. The Kingdom of God (Luke 12:32)
 - b. His righteousness (1 Cor 1:30)
4. Don't borrow trouble from tomorrow, today has enough all by itself
 - The past is gone
 - The future is not ours and is not here...nor ever is
 - The present is ours...and we can do "it" today!
One day at a time, as we are given it

This “Life” lesson requires:

- faith (Heb 11:1)
- perspective (v9-13)

Am I going to “lean” (trust) in money (falsely claims “In God we trust”)?

Like leaning on this music stand

Note: Leaning does not mean standing and touching

Am I going to “lean on” Jesus Christ (Who 1 Tim 1:15) and our Father which art in heaven?

Like leaning on this wall

Can mammon hold me up, no matter how tightly I hold onto it?

Can the Lord God Almighty?

Note: He holds us tighter than we hold Him!

Which master do I need more?

Which master shall we love and hold onto...and serve?

A “Life” lesson: The key to stress-free, worry-free lives...a matter of the heart

v21

v24

v33

1 Tim 6:15-19 treasure...where?

What part does money play in your life?

What part does Jesus Christ play in your life?

Jesus Christ must be First...

- covet the things of God and not the things of the world
- give Jesus Christ what He deserves – our total and absolute allegiance
- be preoccupied with the Lord, not with the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches
- seek to live a life governed by the sovereignty of the Father and in doing His will rather than spinning our wheels needlessly in pursuit of more and more and never enough “burning” stuff

Let’s gather in small groups to pray...in agreement with, in one accord with our Father

Closing Song