

# The Treasure Principle

Matthew 6:19-34

April 17, 2016

## Would you like to win the lottery?

Jack Whittaker won \$319 million, Christmas Day 2002. He took home \$113 million payout after taxes. **He promised 10% to his church, & to take care of his family.**

**After winning the lottery...**Whittaker, 57, was arrested twice on drunken driving charges, **He was ordered to go into rehab for 28 days.** He pleaded no contest to charges he attacked a bar manager, and he was accused in two lawsuits of **making trouble at a nightclub and a racetrack.** He reported several thefts, **each of \$100's thousands.**

One of first purchases, **new car for then 16 year old granddaughter.** She fell into a wild group, involved in drugs, A year later, **she was found dead, drug related causes.**

**After years of legal and personal problems,** in 2007 Whittaker alleged that 12 checks were forged and cashed that **cleaned out his bank accounts. \$113 million gone.**

Matthew 6:19-34 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

"The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

"No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

Do Not Worry

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

When we hear the command, "Do not store up treasures on Earth, rather, Store up treasure in heaven." **We think that Jesus is talking to us about our money, or our material wealth.**

Scripture speaks about these topics somewhere around 2,000 times, **they obviously are important.** Someone said, "Money is not everything **but it is way ahead of whatever is in second place.**" **Another person said,** "If I can't take it with me, I am not going." That does not reflect God's truth!

As I read this passage, I don't believe that what we do with our material wealth is Jesus' main point. In this passage Jesus presents us with Matthew 6:3 **"Priorities in the lives of Kingdom People."**

**Seek God First** Matthew 6:33 **"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."**

I begin with the priority listed last chronologically in this section, because as a part of the command, **we are told, this is first!**

**First things first!** That which is **most important** in a task, or in our lives should **be given the best and the most of our attention.** It should be taken care of before anything else.

**Jesus tells us, that thing... is to Seek God.**

This makes sense, **What can be more important than experiencing freedom from slavery to sin, and a relationship with your Heavenly Father?** What can be of greater value than ordering your life in such a way as to experience **the maximum of an abundant and joyful life?**

What can be of greater urgency than **where you will be spending eternity?** In **Matthew 13:44-46** Jesus tells **two brief parables** that aid us in understanding this priority. "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it."

There are two keys for us to see in order to understand these parables. **First, the individuals in these stories had to identify the importance of these items they have found.**

This is a challenge in our lives, **what is really important? What is really important to you?**

There are a great many substitutes that people strive after, that become very important in their lives, **things like,** money, relationships, things, power, and position. **But these things do really do it.** We need to listen to God's truth to know what is most important.

**The second key is that they committed everything they had, their entire life to acquire that one thing of greatest value.**

They each sold "**all that he had,**" in order to acquire the treasure, or the pearl. I suggest to you that it is not what we say is important, but it is **what we do that determines what we truly value.** If people observed your life, **if they could see you 24/7,** what would they say are your priorities?

**Have you decided that your relationship with God through Jesus Christ is your highest priority?**  
Have you ordered you life and structured your time **to pursue that relationship?**

**How do we "Seek God first?"**

Give Him time first in our day, **read scripture and pray.**

"Pray without ceasing throughout your day.

**Stay in contact with Him.**

"Meditate on His word through your day."

**Keeps our focus on God and His view of life.**

Adjust your actions, **based on God's commands.**

**Have as a priority,** opportunities to serve God.

Find ways to tell others about God,

**Even if that is uncomfortable.**

**It will not look the same in every life,**

But it should be apparent what guides your life.

## **II. Trust God, Do not worry**

**What are things that people worry about?**

**Jesus tells us that we need not worry.**

Mathew 6:25-27 Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? **Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.**

Imagine the freedom, the joy, peace of mind, fulfillment that would be ours, if we did not worry.

**We need not worry because that which really matters is provided by God, our heavenly Father.**

**Jesus says do not worry, 4 times in this passage**

**25)** “do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear.”

**28)** “Why do you worry about clothes?”

**31)** “Do not worry, ‘what will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’”

**34)** “Do not worry **about tomorrow**, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

**What else is there to worry about? Do you want to be free from worry?**

Embrace these three priorities that Jesus presents here!

**Philippians 4:6-9** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**This hit home for us.** A few weeks ago Christine had her regular monthly meeting with the President of Converge, **the Baptist group that she has worked with for 14 years.** Early on in this meeting the President explained to her that **she didn't fit into his plans for the future and he asked her to resign.**

That is difficult for her and for us on a variety of levels. **Of course she was surprised, and hurt, and sad.** Maybe even a little angry. **I felt those emotions also.** In addition, **her job had been our stability.** She made a good income. It was also through her job **that we had Health Insurance.**

After worrying about how Christine was doing, **I started thinking about how we would pay our bills,** where would we get insurance, and how would we pay for it? **Those issues have not been resolved.**

**I was quite convicted this week in my preparation.**

**25)** “do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear.” **And “where will you get health insurance.” “Do not worry about tomorrow.”**

It is clear that **Christine & I** must embrace this priority. **We desire to not worry, and to trust God.**

### **III. Store your treasure in Eternity**

**Matthew 6:19-20** “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, **Do not store treasures on earth** They will deteriorate Moths, rust & vermin will destroy them.

**Do not depend on the future value of those things.** Do not make those the goals in your life. **These items will not ultimately satisfy you. Don't make life here too important!!!!**

Money, possessions, things, relationships, Many of the things that we were worrying about in our 2<sup>nd</sup> point. **Anything that is focused on this earth.**

**Don't treasure them. Don't pursue earthy treasures.**

**DO! Store treasures in Heaven** These are treasures that last, they satisfy, They accomplish their goal.

**Heavenly Treasures include**

A relationship with Christ.  
Christlike character, **the fruit of the Spirit**  
An increase of faith, hope and love  
Growth in the knowledge of Christ,  
Being an Ambassador for Christ,

**“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” What we treasure indicates where our heart is.**

What your heart is set on, **what you treasure the most, where you spend your time and money,** that really determines where you are in your **love relationship with God.**

An American businessman was at the pier of a small coastal Mexican village when a tiny boat with just one fisherman docked. **Inside the boat were several large yellow fin tuna.** The businessman complimented the Mexican on the quality of his fish and **asked how long it took him to catch them.** The Mexican replied, "Only a little while."

The American then asked why he didn't stay out and catch more fish. The Mexican said he had enough to support his family's immediate needs.

The American then asked, "**But what do you do with the rest of your time?**" He answered, "I sleep late, fish a little, play with my children, **take a siesta with my wife, Maria,** stroll into the village each evening where I sip wine **and play guitar with my amigos,** I have a full and busy life senior."

The American scoffed, "**I have a Harvard MBA and I could help you.** You should spend more time fishing and with the proceeds **buy a bigger boat,** with the proceeds from the bigger boat **you could buy several more boats,** eventually owning your own fleet.

Instead of selling your catch to a middleman you would **sell directly to the processor,** eventually opening your own cannery. You would control the product, processing and distribution. You would need to leave this village and move to Mexico City, then LA and eventually New York City where you will run your expanding enterprise."

The fisherman asked, "**But senior, how long will all this take?**" To which the American replied, "15 to 20 years." "**But what then senior?**" The American laughed and said, "**That's the best part.** When the time is right you would announce an IPO and sell your stock to the public and become very rich, you would make millions." "**Millions, senior? Then what?**"

The American said, "**Then you would retire. Move to a small coastal fishing village where you would sleep late,** fish a little, play with your grand kids, take a siesta with your wife, stroll into the village in the evenings where you could sip wine and play your guitar with your amigos."

**Embrace these priorities in your life**  
**Seek God with all that you have!**  
**Trust God, Don't worry**  
**Pursue Heavenly Treasures**  
**Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

This sermon was preached at the Evangelical Free Church of Bemidji  
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