

THE RED LETTER LECTURES

NOTES

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Jesus' Teaching on Possessions and Masters
Matthew 6:19-34

I. Possessions

DO NOT STORE UP* for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But **STORE UP*** for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. — Mt. 6:19-21

Read Boice, pp. 213-23.

A. *Do not store up . . . treasures . . . on earth . . .*

1. An Imperative Command.
2. This is all one word in the Greek, *thesaurizo*, from the word *thesauros*, which means treasure.
3. Lit., "do be treasuring up," or save up.
4. Refers to anything laid up in store.
5. The love of wealth is a great evil . See *1Tim 6:10*.
6. For heirs of the kingdom to hoard riches in the last days was chastised. See *Jas. 5:2-6*.

1Tim. 6:10: For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

B. *but store up . . . treasures . . . in heaven . . .*

1. An Imperative Command.
2. The word is the same as above. The only difference is pointing to a different location, i.e., earth or heaven.
3. We know how to save on earth by using banks, retirement plans, investments, etc., especially in the more wealthy countries of the world.

Jas. 5:2-6: Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days. Look! The wages you failed to pay the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. You have condemned and murdered innocent men, who were not opposing you.

4. Is God against all of the above? See *2 Cor. 12:14*; *Prov. 13:22*.
5. But how do we "store up" in heaven? See *1 Cor. 16:2*; *Mk. 10:21*; *Lk. 6:38*, *Rom. 12:13*.
6. One commentator of note said this could be rephrased as, "Do not give priority to this, but give priority to that."¹⁷

C. *where your treasure is . . . your heart . . .*

1. The ultimate destiny of our lives is either earthly or heavenly and the concentration of our efforts will reveal where our real treasure is.¹⁸

The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness! — *Mt. 6:22-23*

A. *The eye is the lamp of the body . . .*

1. Remember the admonition by Jesus regarding the connection between lust and adultery? How did it start? See *Mt. 5:28*.
2. This is allegorical here, a figure of speech, but what is it saying about good eyes and bad eyes in relation to what goes on within us?
3. Discuss.

II. Masters

No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money (mammon). — *Mt. 6:24*

A. *serve two masters . . .*

1. *Serve* is the verb form of *doulos*, a servant. Refers to someone who is in the position of a slave and acts accordingly.

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2 Cor 12:14: Now I am ready to visit you for the third time, and I will not be a burden to you, because what I want is not your possessions but you. After all, children should not have to save up for their parents, but parents for their children.

Prov. 13:22: A good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children, but a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous.

1 Cor. 16:2: On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

Mk. 10:21: Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

Lk. 6:38: Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Rom. 12:13: Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

¹⁷ Nelsons, *New Illustrated Bible Commentary*, p. 1152.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1152.

Mt. 5:28: But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

2. To be subject and serve in subjection or bondage.
3. Master is *kurios*, which means Lord.
4. What is the difference in being a servant to a lord and servant to the Lord? See *Phil. 2:8-11.*; *Rom. 10:9, 13.*
5. Who or what is the lord of your life?

B. *You cannot serve both God and Money . . .*

1. Why not? See *1 Tim. 6:10.*

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? **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? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? — *Mt. 6:25-27*

A. *do not worry about your life . . .*

1. An Imperative Command.
2. Food and clothing are considered necessities of life. See *Phil. 4:19.*

B. *Look at the birds of the air . . .*

1. An imperative Command.
2. The Psalmist captures the majesty of God and all of His creation. See *Psm. 19:1-2.*
3. The instructions are to look around at how God provides for His creation, even the smallest ones.

And why do you worry about clothes? **SEE HOW*** the lilies 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, O you of little faith? So do not worry,

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Phil. 2:8-11: Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Rom. 10:9, 13: That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved . . . for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

1 Tim. 6:10: For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

Phil. 4:19: And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Psm. 19:1-2: The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.

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. — Mt. 6:28-32

A. *See how . . .*

1. An Imperative Command.
2. Lit., "consider or take thought."

B. *O you of little faith . . .*

1. This is not a person of no faith, but of little faith. One who has unbelief in the moment or circumstances. See *Mk. 9:24*.
2. Our faith is by degrees. Explain.

C *worry . . .*

1. To be anxious, troubled, to take thought.
2. Do not worry (vs. 25); Who of you by worrying . . .? (v. 27); And why do you worry . . .? (v. 28); So do not worry . . . (vs. 31); Do not worry . . . (vs. 34); Tomorrow will worry . . . (vs. 34).
3. Would it be safe to say that a person who worries a lot is a person of "little faith"? See *Phil. 4:6-7*.

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. — Mt. 6:33-34

A. *seek first his kingdom and his righteousness . . .*

1. An Imperative Command.
2. This is the cure for all worry. Why?

B. *do not worry about tomorrow . . .*

1. An Imperative Command.

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Mk. 9:24: Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"

Phil. 4:6-7: Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, 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.

III. Imperative Commands in this section of study.

- A. **DO NOT STORE UP** for yourselves treasures on earth.
- B. **STORE UP** for yourselves treasures in heaven.
- C. **DO NOT WORRY** about your life.
- D. **LOOK** at the birds of the air.
- E. **SEE HOW** the lilies of the field grow.
- F. **SEEK FIRST** his kingdom and his righteousness.
- G. **DO NOT WORRY** about tomorrow.

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