

Marks of Discipleship

Daily Prayer ■ Weekly Worship ■ Bible Reading
Giving Time, Talents & Resources ■ Spiritual Friendships
■ Service In & Beyond the Church

February 13, 2022

Day 1: Matthew 6:19

‘Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal;

Treasures on earth are present, temporary goods that may be lost. One can read treasure as something we place value upon (a treasured memory) or something we believe has value on its own. Jesus is talking about accumulating and storing something that is regarded as valuable. In Jesus’ time large protected storehouses were built to house items that were considered valuable. These store houses, in time, would prove to be unable to protect the items inside. This was because natural forces would degrade the items (moth and rust) or some stronger group would steal it.

Question: What institution(s) do we use to keep our treasures on earth?

Challenge: Think through the things you own. Which ones are a treasure because they are monetarily worth a lot? And which ones are treasures because of intrinsic worth?

Scripture: I Kings 10:1-10

Day 2: Matthew 6:20-21

but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

In Jesus’ day the phrase “treasures in heaven” was a common image for a future reward. The image was used to refer to both a time and place where people could worship, live and be with God. Jesus does not specifically tell how the followers are to store up treasures in heaven. The ironic thing about Jesus’ words is as He uses the term “store up,” He means give away. We stockpile things in case we might need them in the future. Jesus tells us that we need to give away in order to gain the future reward. We give away love, mercy, forgiveness, money and time all in Jesus’ name. By doing so we store up treasures in heaven.

Question: Is it true that what you spend the most money on is what you really value?

Challenge: Think of some images that describe heaven for you.

Scripture: I Kings 10:11-29

Day 3: Matthew 6:25

‘Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?’

Worry here is anxiety. Anxiety causes us to take steps that may cause harm to others. In the account of the Temptation (Matthew 4:3-11) Jesus does not use his power to make bread because he says life is more than food and drink. Jesus’ action in the temptation and his words here cause us to think about the meaning of life and the worth of a person. Is a person’s worth in what they do or is there some intrinsic worth to a person? Is life in what we can gain and enjoy or is there some deeper meaning?

Question: Would Jesus’ advice cause an economic depression?

Challenge: Think about 3 friends you care about. How do they add to your life and how do you add to theirs?

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 2:1-11

Day 4: Matthew 6:26

Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

Jesus points out that the basics of life are in creation for all to use and thrive on. A person is in trouble when they confuse wants with needs. We cannot live like the animals and birds but we know from watching them that God has provided for them and God will provide for us. The way God provides for each is different but the fact remains that God provides.

Question: How are we more valuable than the animals and birds?

Challenge: Try to define a need and a want.

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:1-14

Day 5: Matthew 6:27-30

And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? 28 And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, 29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. 30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?

Another series of questions that cause us to think about the issue of being anxious about life. Verse 29 is more than a true saying, it is an appeal for us to do something positive to add to our life. Anxiety will just subtract from our life and freeze our ability to think.

Question: Which thing(s) on the above list do you find yourself worrying about (food, clothing, or life span)?

Challenge: Take a look at your clothes closet and see if you have excess clothes.

Then go to your pantry and see if there is excess food. If you have excess, think about contributing it to some organization that needs both food and clothes.

Scripture: Luke 12:13-23

Day 6: Matthew 6:31-33

Therefore do not worry, saying, “What will we eat?” or “What will we drink?” or “What will we wear?” For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Jesus is not asking us to sit back and do nothing about gaining the things we need to live. In creation, we are given great possibilities and time. We need to use those possibilities to feed, clothe and shelter our family. Jesus is telling us to trust that God will provide what we need to live. Anxiety will make us passive and we need to be active in order to take what God has provided and make a living. Treasure in heaven may just be giving life to those around us. It may be aligning our wants and dreams with what God wants for us.

Question: How do you think one can align our wants and dreams with God’s?

Challenge: List those things you find yourself anxious about and then ask God to help you find a way to lessen that anxiety.

Scripture: Matthew 6:19-34