

**7th Grade New Testament (Gospels)****Lesson Plan:** Treasures in Heaven (Matthew 6:16-24)**Learning Goals:** Students will learn to differentiate between wants and needs as well as between earthly treasures and heavenly treasures.**Opening Question:** Activity - List everything you can think of in your room.

Prayer

Discuss Question on board.

Begin by asking students to take out a piece of paper and write down everything they can think of in their room (bed, dresser, clothes, toys, video games, television, computer, shoes, etc.).

Then, think about what we have available to us and what we take for granted:

heating and air  
refrigerator and pantry full of food  
coffee  
light by hitting a switch  
instant hot water  
ice  
cooking over a stove  
closet full of clothing  
car(s) to drive  
neighborhoods that are safe

Compare that to Jesus. He seemed to have nothing. He lived in a hot, dry, and dusty world. He ate what he caught fishing, farming, or through donations. He had no home. He cooled off by wading into the Sea of Galilee. He lived off the generosity of others.

How do we live as faithful followers of Jesus regarding our money?

**Read Matthew 6:16-24****3 examples:****Treasures**

- The things of this world are temporary. Materials treasures can be destroyed by the trio of moth, rust, and thieves.
- We should invest ourselves in things that last:
  - Love (Greatest command: love God, love others);
  - Shalom - Peace and Justice (loving others and God's creation);
  - Wisdom - more than just knowledge
- Do you want to know what it is that you truly value? Look in two places:
  - Your bank statement (how you invest your money)
  - Your calendar (how you invest your time)

**The Eye of the Body**

- Seems like a strange statement that is out of place.
- Interesting connection here: word for "healthy" is often used for generous

word for “unhealthy” is often used for stingy

### **Two Masters**

- Connection or echo here to the first commandment (Exodus 20:3)
- Mammon: the “god” of money, possessions, greed; placing our trust in something other than the true God of the Bible.
- Mammon Worship: the spirit of grasping greed, the insatiable longing for more of material possessions and a consequent lack of contentment and absence of trust in God our Father who has promised to supply all needful things to His children.
- There are two masters: God and Mammon. You can only serve one.

### **So What? How do we live this?**

- What this passage does NOT mean (John Wesley):
  - we shouldn't pay off taxes or loans
  - it does not prohibit the means of sustenance (we can have enough to survive)
  - it does not prohibit labor that provides for our families
  - it does not prohibit occasionally storing up in order to accomplish what God has called us to accomplish
- Jesus has called us to simplify our lifestyle to focus on the kingdom:
  - If disciples really trust God, they will live as if treasures in heaven really matter.
  - Those whose perspective is distorted by materialism are blinded to God's truth.
  - One either loves God or money, and those who think that they can love both are idolaters.
  - In the kingdom we won't be hoarding or storing up treasures but instead living in the bounty of God's gracious provision so we can enjoy what he wants for us: to serve God and to serve others.

*“If the kingdom vision of Jesus doesn't reshape our approach to possessions, then we are not living out the kingdom vision. If we are living to the end of our means and have little for the poor, if we are extending our budgets and giving only from what is left over, and if we have not cutting our budgets and giving only from what is left over, and if we have not cut back on how we live, then we are not embracing the kingdom vision of Jesus.”*

- Scot McKnight

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### **Lesson Summary /Review:**

Students should review and highlight the following vocabulary terms and concepts from this lesson in their notes:

- Mammon
- What two places can you look to find your true priorities? Why are these important?