

Riverview Baptist Church
Sunday School Lesson Guide
November 2, 2014
“What do we actually value?”

Memory Verse:

“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.” Matthew 6:19-21

Kick-off:

As a thought exercise, ask your class to imagine the following subjects in their mind and then have some volunteers tell what they saw in their mind’s eye.

Fence, car, pizza, hammer, fish, phone, house, tree, etc. (add your own). The purpose is to show people that we don’t all think the same, and before we can have a discussion about something, it’s important that we define it so that we know we’re all starting on the same page.

Just like the topics we imagined, before we can talk about treasure, we need to define what we mean by “treasure.” When we say “treasure” do we mean the physical money? Greenbacks or coins? Do we mean electronic currency? Electronic accounts that we use to pay bills online or shop on Amazon? Are we talking about earnings, wages, gifts or inheritance, or all of the above? What is treasure?

For purposes of this study and in accordance with what Jesus means by “treasure” we will define it as “what we truly value.” Does that sound right? We spend each day doing something, right? We spend our hours, minutes and seconds (the time of our lives) investing in something. Some might work for wages. Some might work to grow, teach and support their families. Some might be self-employed. Some might be currently unemployed or retired. However, everyone spends their time doing something. Most of us invest our time in doing work for which we get paid and we then spend that money on the necessities of life (food, water, clothing, shelter) and anything leftover we spend or save, depending on our interests. Either way, we show what we value by what we spend our money, our time and our lives on, and what we value is our “treasure.” Treasure = value = time (life). So with this, we can get a better idea of why Jesus was so concerned about where we put our treasure; it affects every aspect of our life!

So, the choice is yours. Dr. Seuss wrote “You’ve got brains in your head, you’ve got feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose.” So what are you willing to trade your life for? Earthly or Heavenly treasures? Those are the only two options and Jesus shows us what we can expect from each choice.

1. Do we value earthly things? If so, get ready for...

a. **Decay** ([1 John 2:17](#))

Moths, rust, rot, erosion... decay is a fact of life on this earth since the Fall. Your car will rust. Your clothes will get ragged. Your house will eventually rot. Your beachfront property will slowly be washed out to sea. Things on this earth have no staying power. This curse will not always affect God's creation; when Jesus returns he will "restore all things." (Acts 3:21) However, until that glorious day, decay is an inescapable reality for your possessions and even your physical body. Thankfully, 1 John 2:17 gives us this promise "The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever."

b. **Theft** ([Proverbs 12:21](#))

Private property is a blessing and a right in our country. We have laws against theft and the Bible is very straight forward about it as well. "Thou shalt not steal." 'Nuff said, right? But what happens when somebody wants something that's yours more than they care about the law and what's right? There had to be a reason why God told us NOT to steal in the first place, right? By turning from God, humanity has embraced all that is evil, including theft. Now the thief might get caught and they might be forced to make restitution and then go to jail, but does that really replace what they stole? Anyone who has ever been robbed, mugged or burgled can tell you that physical money and possessions are not all that they lose to the criminal; there's also a loss of a feeling of security which often is worth much more than the stolen goods and we never realized how much we valued security until it is gone. With earthly goods and possessions, any type of security we might seek through guns, alarms, cameras or guards will ultimately be a false security if we fail to put our trust in God. No harm overtakes the righteous, but the wicked have their fill of trouble. (Proverbs 12:21).

c. **Loss** (Ecclesiastes 5:15)

You might protect and maintain your possessions to avoid decay. You might build a strong enough wall or security system to prevent theft; however, there's one thief you can't fend off and one decay that you can't avoid: Death. Randy Alcorn relates an anecdote about a very wealthy man in his book "The Treasure Principle". John D. Rockefeller was an oil tycoon and one of the wealthiest men of his generation. After he died, someone reportedly asked his accountant "How much money did John D. leave behind?" The accountant's answer was this: "All of it." Ecclesiastes 5:15 says this "Everyone comes naked from their mother's womb, and as everyone comes, so they depart. They take nothing from their toil that they can carry in their hands." You can't take it with you. There's no U-Haul trailers behind hearses. No matter how you say it, all earthly treasures will come to an end, and so will you.

2. OR Do we value heavenly things? If so, get ready for...

A. **Safety**

Treasures stored in heaven are in no danger of decay. Creation will be restored and God will dwell among his people (Revelation 21:3). There will be no death or loss or separation, forever. Moths, vermin, rust and decay of all kinds will be a thing of the past, Jesus tells us. They were only a threat to the old world. The broken and fallen world. But that world will pass away

when Jesus returns to restore all things. Whatever rewards and treasures we have stored up in heaven, will last forever as we dwell with God and enjoy his presence forever.

B. Security (Isaiah 11:6-8)

There will be no thieves in heaven. No sin of any kind will exist in the presence of God. Isaiah 11 paints a picture of perfect safety and security under the reign of Christ:

- ⁶The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;
and a little child will lead them.
- ⁷The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.
- ⁸The infant will play near the cobra's den,
and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.

Violence and theft will be a thing of the past, and all that you've entrusted to God in heaven will be safe for eternity.

C. Permanence (Mark 10:30; John 10:28)

Finally, most importantly, there will be no death in heaven. All the work and service you have done for God's glory, all the treasures you have stored up will be yours forever. They won't outlive you. You won't have to pass them down or bequeath them. The most important thing that you can store up in heaven by entrusting it to Christ is your life itself! If you trust Christ to save your soul, then that is best and most important investment you can make. Jesus tells us in John 10:28, "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand." The return on investment is infinite, because eternal life never stops paying off. In Mark 10:30, Jesus promises a 100-fold return to those who lose anything for his sake on earth. Once you trust Jesus with your life, the next logical step is to trust him with all that your life produces be it your time, your talents or your wealth. If we truly believe that Jesus will keep all his promises to us, it's the only wise path we can take.

Take Home:

- What we value is our treasure and what our hearts really care about.
- Take a look at how you spend your life (your money and time) this week and see if you can determine what your values truly are and where your heart truly lies. Do you focus on heavenly treasures, or are you seeking earthly treasures?
- Whatever you find, good or bad, go to God with the results. Ask him for the strength to begin (or continue) being a good steward with the blessings he has provided for you.