

Single-Minded Devotion*Matthew 6:19-24*

Introduction: If you have been watching any of the Olympics this week, you have probably heard more than one personal interest story about one of the athletes. Most of these men and women have worked and trained and practiced for years and years to get to the competitive level that they are today. They have had a single-minded devotion to their sport. Today, in our study of the Sermon on the Mount Jesus challenges His disciples to have single-minded devotion as well - a single-minded devotion to God. Since Jesus had single-minded devotion to His heavenly Father it only makes sense that His disciples would learn to live with the same focus. May we be challenged today to consider whether we are simply admirers of Jesus or disciples of Jesus who share his single-minded devotion to God.

Opening Discussion: What is something that you own that has special meaning to you?

Read Matthew 6:19-24

1. What does Jesus say about treasures in this passage?

Steve said:

So what is Jesus warning against? He says, "Do not lay up for yourself treasures on earth" which are inherently corruptible and which can be lost completely. Instead, Jesus commands His disciples to "lay up for yourself treasures in heaven" because they're untouchable. No moth can eat away at these treasures; no rust can destroy them; thieves cannot dig through the walls of heaven and carry away your treasures there. Heavenly treasures are untouchable. There was no economic downturn in heaven in 2008. Every investment you made in the kingdom of heaven during those days was completely safe; no heavenly treasures lost their value.

2. What does it mean to lay up treasures in heaven?
3. What does it mean to lay up treasures on earth?
4. What does Jesus mean when he says "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (v. 21)?
5. What is the "heart" that Jesus is talking about (v. 21)?

Steve said:

Ask yourself the question, "What do I treasure the most? Do I treasure earthly things or heavenly things?" To answer that question, look at your life – how you actually live. You answer that question by evaluating how you use your money, your time, and your talents. If someone took an objective look at your life, what would s/he conclude it is that you treasure? If you want to know the condition of your heart, answer that question about what you treasure. Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

6. What do you actually treasure most - earthly things or heavenly things?

Speaking of 6:22-23, Steve said:

These verses suggest that we each ask ourselves the question, "Is my eye clear? Are my sights single-mindedly set on God and His kingdom?" This doesn't mean that the only thing we do is think about God. But it does mean that when we do think about other things (work, possessions, family, recreation, etc.) that we do so in a God-centered way. Paul actually wrote that "whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, you should do it for the glory of God." Last week we talked about a "lifestyle of worship." This is the same mindset: everything we do should be done as an expression of devotion to God.

7. What are your main struggles in keeping your sights single-mindedly set on God and His kingdom?

8. What is Jesus' point in verse 24?

9. What other "masters" most often compete for your allegiance to God?

Steve said:

I'd encourage you to be honest before God and evaluate your own life in light of the questions we've asked today. Perhaps you'd want to invite God to show you one thing – something small or something big – that He wants you to do in response to this message. This teaching of Jesus isn't meant to condemn and demoralize us; Jesus teaching calls us to the type of single-minded devotion to God that is possible by the grace of God.

10. Is there something that you sense God wants you to do in response to this teaching in Matthew 6:19-24?