

Small Group 10th November

What you will need for this week:

- > Bibles
- > Pens and paper for everyone to write with

Suggested Structure:

- > Opening game (see below)
- > Open with question about whether anyone had any insights or comments about the sermon. (if you need it there is a brief summary of sermon at the end of this document)
- > Discussion questions and prayer

OPENING GAME

Get everyone to choose a letter of the alphabet (its fine if people choose the same letter). Give them a minute to jot down single words that describe them beginning only with that letter. Then get them to share. Once they have finished sharing, let the group give them some words starting with that letter that describes them.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Activity: Ask the group to think about three things they think God is passionate about in Cape Town right now. Get them to write it down on their paper. (We will come back to this later)

Someone read **Matthew 6:19-24**

TREASURES IN HEAVEN

¹⁹ “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

²² “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy,^[a] your whole body will be full of light.²³ But if your eyes are unhealthy,^[b] your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

²⁴ “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

- If you are honest, what do you generally find yourself treasuring most in life? Asked another way: in what do we find our identity, our significance, our worth and our security?
- Mark Driscoll suggested in the Real Jesus series, that our biggest treasure is that thing that we believe we could not live without it. Such as our kids, our jobs, our abilities, our talents. How much are we willing to sacrifice for these things?
- Is money a good thing?

Someone read **Matthew 6:25-33**

Do Not Worry

25 “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 than food, and the body more than clothes? 26 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? 27 Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life[c]?

28 “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30 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—you of little faith? 31 So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

- Take a moment to think about what you mostly think about during your days or at night. Share with the group if you feel comfortable: What do you worry about most?
- In what ways do you seek God’s kingdom first before seeking the things of this world?
- In what ways do you put His kingdom second?
- What changes could you make to be dependent on God in all things?

Sum up: The sermon on Sunday spoke about the idea that through generosity, we invest our lives and money in what lasts forever.

Jesus is saying something very important: we can't take our money with us – but we can send it on ahead! He is not saying it is wrong to invest on earth – he is saying that it is dumb! *Generosity can be a kind of investment.* We can't take our treasures with us. But – we can send them on ahead by investing them in things that God really values...

How has God been generous to us?

How do we become more generous?

After this discussion ask the group to take out their papers and reread what they wrote. If we believe these things are important to God, we should ask ourselves how important they are to us.

Spend some time praying about these things.

PRAYER

Spend some time thanking God for his generosity – through creation, through his creating us in his image, through sending his Son to die for us, through then sending the Holy Spirit to live in us and make us more Christlike, through his provision, through always wanting to pour out his love on us. God is a generous God!

Pray for correct vision when it comes to God's Kingdom and our priorities (especially money).

Pray for wisdom for how we invest generously in what God is doing in and through Common Ground in the city of Cape Town.

There might be people in your groups who have been adversely affected by the economic climate, if people have been vulnerable during the discussion, pray for them now.

Pray for increased faith and vision for everyone.

SUMMARY: SECURE STOCKS IN A FALLING ECONOMY

Summary

This week's talk was extremely personal in that we let Jesus really search our hearts on the matter. Next week's talk is extremely practical in that we think of how best to manage our money.

- 1) Materialism is rampant
- 2) Materialism has the power to control our lives
- 3) Materialism keeps us from asking some questions about our lifestyle
- 4) Materialism can devastate our relationship with God

THE FIRST QUESTION JESUS ASKS US: What do you treasure?

Either we treasure God (and all he values) or we treasure money (and all it can buy).

THE 2ND QUESTION JESUS ASKS US: What fills your vision?

Either our vision is filled with God (and all he values) or it is filled with money (and all it can buy).

THE 3RD QUESTION JESUS ASKS US: What do you serve?

Either we serve God (and all he values) or we serve money (and all it can buy).

WHAT ARE THE MAIN APPLICATIONS OF JESUS' TEACHING ?

- 1) Don't invest your life and money in soon-to-crash stocks.

Jesus is saying something very important: we can't take our money with us – but we can send it on ahead! He is not saying it is wrong to invest on earth – he is saying that it is dumb!

- 2) Through generosity, invest your life and money in what lasts forever.

Generosity can be a kind of investment. We can't take our treasures with us. But – we can send them on ahead by investing them in things that God really values...

How do we become more generous?

1. The first key is to trust in God to provide for you. Then you will be free to give with abandon.

2. Another key is to look at Jesus on the cross. On the cross, Jesus gave up everything he had – total sacrifice – because he treasured us.

Checklist: Money has a hold on you when ...

- You're always talking about it
- When you exaggerate its power
- When it sticks to you
- When it shapes your identity (self worth becomes increasingly similar to your net worth).
- When the prosperity gospel makes sense to you

Conclusion. What is your treasure? What fills your vision? What do you serve?