



Discussion Guide

Date: 3/8/2026

Sermon Title: Will money solve my problems?

Scripture: Matthew 6:19-21

This discussion guide is a layout to be used with a group or class. We have included opening and closing prayers to start and end your group. The guide may be used for personal or family reflection as well.

OPENING PRAYER

Gracious and generous God, you are the giver of every good and perfect gift. As we gather in this space, quiet our anxious hearts and open our lives to your truth. Help us to hear your Word with honesty and courage. Where we have trusted in what we can earn, save, or possess, invite us again to trust in you alone. Shape our hearts to seek first your kingdom and your righteousness. We pray this in the name of Jesus, our true treasure. Amen.

OPENING QUESTION:

1. Share about something you've stored away (in a storage unit, attic, or garage) that you haven't used in years. Why do you think you've held onto it?

ENTERING THE TEXT:

Read Matthew 6:19-21 (NRSV). You may want to read in a different translation like ESV or the Message as well to see a different insight.

1. In this passage, what contrasts does Jesus make between earthly treasures and heavenly treasures?
2. Why do you think Jesus connects treasure and heart so closely? What does that suggest about discipleship?
3. What kinds of "treasures" might Jesus be warning us about today that go beyond money alone?
4. How does this teaching challenge the cultural message that financial security equals personal security?
5. Where do you notice resistance in yourself when you hear Jesus say, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth"?

Theological Reflection:

John Wesley spoke frequently about money not to shame people, but to free them. His well-known guidance can be summarized as: **"Earn all you can, save all you can, give all you can."**

Reflection Questions:

1. How does Wesley's teaching challenge both reckless spending and hoarding?
2. In what ways does generosity become a spiritual discipline that reshapes our trust?
3. How might giving be an act of resistance against the cultural lie that money will save us?

Within United Methodist theology, money and possessions are understood as gifts entrusted to us for faithful stewardship, not measures of worth or sources of ultimate security. In our baptismal vows, we promise to renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness—including systems that teach us to value profit over people.

BROADENING THE SCRIPTURE CONVERSATION:

You may choose one or two of these passages to read aloud together and discuss the question associated with the text.

Luke 12:15 – What does Jesus say is the danger of greed, even when resources seem abundant?

1 Timothy 6:6–10, 17–19 – How does this passage distinguish between money itself and the love of money? What kind of “riches” does this passage encourage believers to pursue?

Hebrews 13:5 – How is contentment linked to trust in God’s presence?

Proverbs 11:28 – What does this wisdom text suggest about misplaced trust?

SERMON QUESTIONS:

1. Pastor Clayton opens with our relationship with money and listed several "pros and cons" of having money. Which ones resonated most with you from your own experience?
2. The sermon talks about false security in having money and relationships that are strained because of money. Have you experienced any of these or others issues that money has caused?
3. Pastor Clayton asks a good question, “Money is important, but is it the most important thing?” What are your thoughts or responses to this?
4. One of the fastest growing industries in the last 20 years is storage facilities. Our relationship with possessions needs to be evaluated often. How is your relationship with your things? What are you storing up?
5. Pastor Clayton talks about a prayer shared by Pastor John Ogden at a past Annual Conference: "Lord, we have so much stuff. Our closets are overflowing." How does this simple prayer speak to you?
6. We are reminded from the scripture text and the sermon that we need to invest in the things that matter. What are you investing in? What in your life may need to be reprioritized?
7. Pastor Clayton tells of a story about his mom reminding him. "We are rich in the things that matter." What are the "things that matter" that make you rich right now?

APPLYING IT ALL:

1. Where do you see the cultural message “money will fix this” shaping decisions in your life or community?
2. What fears or anxieties make it hardest to trust God with finances or possessions?
3. What might it look like this Lent to store up “treasures in heaven” in tangible, everyday ways?
4. How can this group support one another in practicing generosity, simplicity, or deeper trust in God?



CLOSING PRAYER:

Faithful God, you know our needs before we name them, and you know how easily our hearts drift toward false securities. As we leave this space, help us to trust you more deeply than our bank accounts, our plans, or our possessions. Teach us to live generously, love freely, and seek first your kingdom. May our hearts be anchored in you, our true treasure, now and always. In the name of Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us. Amen.

WAYS TO RESPOND:

Choose ONE of the following practices to focus on this week:

1. Declutter with Purpose: Go through one closet, drawer, or storage area. As you sort, ask yourself what you're really treasuring and consider donating items that could bless others.
2. Treasure Audit: Make two lists; one of the things you spend the most money/time on, and another of what you say matters most to you. Compare them honestly.
3. Gratitude Practice: Each day this week, identify one non-material way you are "rich" (relationships, health, faith, community, etc.) and thank God for it.
4. Generosity Step: Identify one way to use your financial resources to bless someone else or support a cause that matters eternally.
5. Heart Check: Set a reminder on your phone for mid-week asking: "What am I treasuring today?"