

# Attitude Adjustment: Riches

Does anyone here like to play Monopoly? Monopoly is one of the most popular games in the world.

Monopoly is available in 111 countries and 43 languages. It's so popular that there are 3266 versions of the game if you count the unofficial versions.

You can get it for about every sports team, popular movies, tv shows, bands, cartoons, cities-states-countries, branches of the military.

People either love or hate the game but the numbers say a lot of people buy it! But in the game, the goal is to pile up riches....right? Own the most property, and the best property, own the most houses and hotels, and destroy everyone else by ultimately winning ALL of the money!

Doesn't that reflect the attitude of this world we live in? How many people are focused on things like:

- Is my job more important than yours?
- Is my paycheck bigger than yours?
- Is my house nicer than yours?
- Is my car newer, cooler, have more features than yours?
- Do my kids dress better than yours?

Why do we do this? Now, you may not say it out loud, but people at least think it from time to time....if not all the time. People put so much value in earthly riches (money and possessions). They view riches as the measure of whether they are successful or whether they have a "good life"

But our view of riches is wrong. Our attitude toward riches ought to be like that of Jesus!

## **Matthew 6:19-21 (HCSB)**

"Don't collect for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But collect for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don't break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

So before I break this down, in Matthew 6 Jesus teaches about giving to the poor, praying to the Father (Lord's Prayer), fasting, then He talks about riches (money and possessions), and follows it up with dealing with anxiety.

I really don't think it's a coincidence that He teaches about our relationship with God and with riches right before He addresses anxiety. Riches are what gives people the most anxiety in life. It's not a "good life" having the best of everything because you will live in constant anxiety and worry as it's only a matter of time before someone gets something better that you have to then one up!

Most people in the US have anxiety not about where they are going to get their next meal, but about whether they can afford a lifestyle they want to have.....

So Jesus lays it out! Guys, this Word is alive! It really has the answers that we seek in this life. But we find them by seeking Jesus through His word not just looking up answers. Who needs a bible for that....just Google it, everything on the internet is true! Jk

Jesus had the right attitude toward riches:

**Matthew 6:19 (HCSB)**

"Don't collect for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal.

Don't misunderstand the scripture...Jesus isn't saying you can't have savings or retirement. The ant was praised for his example of working and saving:

**Proverbs 6:6-8 (HCSB)**

Go to the ant, you slacker!  
Observe its ways and become wise.  
7 Without leader, administrator, or ruler,  
8 it prepares its provisions in summer;  
it gathers its food during harvest.

Paul tells us the view of a person that doesn't provide for their family:

**1 Timothy 5:8 (HCSB)**

But if anyone does not provide for his own, that is his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Not collecting treasure on earth doesn't mean you can't have nice things or you can't save anything. What Jesus forbids is the selfish collection of money and possessions with that Monopoly attitude of "I've got to get it all".

Our goal in life should not be to pile up riches. Our joy in life should not come from piling up riches.

He said that “moth and rust destroy and thieves break in and steal....”

He was specifically targeting 3 things that were of value to people at this time.

**Moths** - Clothing was a status symbol then like it sometimes still is. Nice, expensive clothing was made primarily of wool, which happens to be something that moths like a lot! If you piled up clothes, the moths would destroy them.

**Rust** - This doesn't mean what we think it means in English, the word Greek word for rust would be used to say something was eaten away, most often used when talking about food. So for those who piled up corn and grain it would eventually be eaten away by worms, mice, rats, etc.

**Thieves** - Back in the times of the New Testament about the safest place to keep things of great value, specifically money, wasn't the “bank” like we know it today. The safest place was in your home. But thieves were known as “mud-diggers” because they would tunnel their way into homes and steal your money. This must be where El Chapo got the idea to tunnel out of prison...

If you collect treasures on earth, if they are your goal and your joy. Man you are in for some disappointment and sorrow.

**Clothes** go out of style, rip, get irremovable stains, get too small

**Food** goes bad, or gets eaten, either way it's gone!

**Money** gets stolen, loses value, seems to disappear. Even if you think it's secure in a bank it seems to things like inflation, taxes, medical bills, stock market, and other unexpected things tunnel in and steal it!

You can take any other thing that may be considered “riches” and they will fall into one of these categories. They eventually will get destroyed or stolen!

We are not to live in this world as if this is the only world there is. There is a world where we will live forever, a world without moths, rust and thieves where things are destroyed or stolen.

When you set up your life to store up the riches of this world, you are building something that won't last....

*An American tourist traveled to Poland to visit with a respected religious teacher who was known for his wisdom. The visitor noticed that the man's room had nothing but a table, a chair, and some books. Puzzled by such austerity, he asked, "Where is your furniture?" The teacher answered, "My furniture? Where is your furniture, my friend?" The American protested, "Furniture? But I am only a tourist passing through." "So am I," said the man.*

We are all just passing through, and we need to learn to loosen our grip on earthly possessions and money!

**Luke 12:15 (HCSB)**

15 He then told them, "Watch out and be on guard against all greed because one's life is not in the abundance of his possessions."

*George W. Truett, a well-known pastor, was invited to dinner in the home of a very wealthy man in Texas. After the meal, the host led him to a place where they could get a good view of the surrounding area.*

*Pointing to the oil wells punctuating the landscape, he boasted, "Twenty-five years ago I had nothing. Now, as far as you can see, it's all mine." Looking in the opposite direction at his sprawling fields of grain, he said, "That's all mine." Turning east toward huge herds of cattle, he bragged, "They're all mine." Then pointing to the west and a beautiful forest, he exclaimed, "That too is all mine."*

*He paused, expecting Dr. Truett to compliment him on his great success. Truett, however, placing one hand on the man's shoulder and pointing heavenward with the other, simply said, "How much do you have in that direction?"*

People put so much effort into gaining riches on earth. They spend their time, talents, and finances to get the most stuff and the best stuff. But it's all going to burn. It's all temporary. Life is not Monopoly!

How much time, talents, finances do you spend trying to get the most and best heavenly riches?

**Matthew 6:20 (HCSB)**

But collect for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don't break in and steal.

These are the things that WILL last forever. This is talking about impacting not just this temporary life but the one that is to come.

You store up treasures in heaven by investing your money in things that will last for eternity. Only two things last forever. Everything else vanishes. Cars, boats, homes, clothes, jobs, salaries, planes, vacations, books, buildings--they all pass away. They wear out or blow up or fall down. You eventually lose your job. Your salary runs out, your bank account goes dry, your investments pass away. Nothing that is material lasts forever. It's part of the way God created the world.

So how do we collect treasures in heaven, things that last forever and won't be destroyed or stolen? Jesus tells us of two things that last forever:

**1 John 2:17 (NIV)**

The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.

People last forever. When you die and are put in the ground, that's not it! That's not the end of the line. People all have a future life but not all people have a future life in heaven. That's living church, life in heaven. And it's only for those who do the will of God. Those who not just believe in Jesus but live for Jesus, serve Jesus.

The other thing that lasts forever is:

**Matthew 24:35 (HCSB)**

Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away.

The words of Jesus give life, they are true, they are without error, they will always be true and without error. And they give life! They are the way that people get to live forever in heaven....see for the first to happen, it has to be united with the second.

People need to know Jesus, the living Word! Jesus gave all His time, all His talents, all His finances, all His life.....for the thing that is most valuable souls... There isn't anything more valuable than the human soul.

John Wesley rightly said that *"The real value of a thing is the price it will bring in eternity."*

The price of a person's soul brought the greatest payment ever to be paid.

1 Timothy 2 urges us to pray for everyone especially those in authority, because that pleases God.....

**1 Timothy 2:4-6 (HCSB)**

who wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

5 For there is one God

and one mediator between God and humanity,

Christ Jesus, Himself human,

6 who gave Himself—a ransom for all,

a testimony at the proper time.

Jesus paid a ransom. A ransom is the price demanded to free a prisoner.

We usually think of that as just an exchange of money. If someone gets kidnapped and the kidnappers ask for a ransom, they usually just want money. Give us what is most valuable to me and you can have her back....

When Jesus paid your ransom. It wasn't just a meet in the park and drop off a briefcase and then you were freed.

He actually took your place as the prisoner. He took your place on death row. A place that by your failure to keep the laws of God you were deserving of death, but He said "I'll pay it, let them go"

He became the object of God's wrath for the sins we commit. Free of charge, but we can't stoOp there.....you are only free of the debt IF you accept the payment.

If someone paid your bills for you, and you rejected that and kept sending in your own payments anyway, that would be pretty foolish. But many do this in a spiritual sense. Accept the payment. Follow Jesus and BE FREE!

The bigger problem is that many do not know that the price has been paid, and they are struggling to make the payments. Isn't a better treasure to pile up, the one of helping those people get free from their debt of sin?

Shouldn't we put way more stock in helping connect people with the living word of God than we do in piling up money and possessions?

**Matthew 6:21 (HCSB)**

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also

If someone were to look at your schedule and your checkbook, would they see kingdom priorities? Or a life of living for yourself?

Jesus is pointing out in v21 that a person's cherished possessions and his deepest motives and desires are inseparable, for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. They will either both be earthly or both be heavenly. It is impossible to have one on earth and the other in heaven

It doesn't start with having your mind and attitude right, it starts with having your heart right.....When the heart is right everything else falls into proper place.

A person who is right with Jesus will be generous and happy in giving of themselves, their time, talents, finances to God's work.....connecting people with the Word.

Jesus is not saying that if we put our treasure in the right place our heart will then be in the right place, but that the location of our treasure indicates where our heart already is. Spiritual problems are always heart problems. Sinful acts come from a sinful heart, just as righteous acts come from a righteous heart.

We need the an attitude adjustment toward riches....but it starts with the heart. How's your heart?

## **WORSHIP TEAM**

In Matthew 6, Jesus goes on to say that no one can serve two masters, you can't serve God and money.

In 1 Timothy 6:10, Paul said *"For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and by craving it, some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains."*

Money is not the root of all evil; the love of it is. Money is a neutral thing, it's just a resource. The problem with riches is not in having them. It is how we get them. It is how we guard them. And it is how we give them.

Is money your God? Does it rule over your life? What about the deceitfulness of earthly treasures? Do they drive your checkbook and calendar?

It's all temporary....it won't last. It's not the source of true joy and satisfaction.

This would be a good time to remember that money didn't die on a cross for you! Jesus did! And He did so you could live with Him forever and use your life to show others the way to Him....those are the heavenly treasures that are worth storing up!