

# Sermon: Matthew 6:19-5:1-16 “Treasures of the King”

Rev. Bruce Stanley.

Sermon text and audio available for download at [www.waitara.anglican.asn.au](http://www.waitara.anglican.asn.au)

## Loyalty

---

### Treasure

Taking down the Christmas tree last week, I realised how crummy it was! As we took the tinsel off, it fell apart in our hands. The home made decorations are beautiful, but they were ripped and broken. Even the nice baubles have their hanging hooks broken off. The tree branches were bent beyond recognition, and the star on top was leaning at 60 degree angle, as if to say: “Help me, I’m falling!”

But at night, with the Christmas lights on, everything looks shiny and pretty. The darkness covers over all the brokenness and the weariness of a tired life.

Everywhere we look, if we look, we can see the evidence of a world that is in decay. A world where moth and rust destroy, where thieves break in and steal. We live in a world where things don’t last. Even our own bodies are in decay. Just yesterday, I had a friend who’s cars were broken into and wrecked on their front lawn. You can’t protect your stuff. And you can’t make your stuff last forever.

YET, we often have a tendency to dress things up with tinsel to make them look nice and we like to THINK we can keep things forever. But underneath the tinsel, they’re fading away. Verse 19:

*“DO NOT store up for yourselves treasures on earth” Jesus says, because “moth and rust destroy and thieves break in and steal.”*

Jesus says it plainly. DO NOT store up treasures on earth. DO NOT think that anything you have in this world will last. DO NOT make the things of this world your treasure, because IF YOU DO, that is where your heart will be.

### Heart

Verse 21: *“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

When the things of this world become our treasure, then they take our heart AWAY from what is really important. Jesus says that the more we place value in the things of this world, the less we place our value in the things of God. Because, verse 22:

*“The eye is the lamp of the body.”*

Imagine a dark room. With a lamp in the middle of it. When that lamp is good, the light fills the room. But when the lamp is bad, the room is left in darkness.

Our eyes are the lamp for our body. Our eyes are **good** when they’re fixed on Jesus – when we’re focussed on Jesus and loyalty to Jesus and our treasure is the kingdom of God.

Our eyes are **bad** when we take our eyes off Jesus. When we have a heart for the things of this world, when our treasure is our worldly belongings, we’re living in darkness.

Loyalty to Jesus and his kingdom is a life of light. Loyalty to this world and its kingdom is a life of darkness.

And it doesn't get any simpler than that. We can either put our hope in things that won't last, or in things that will last forever. In the kingdom of earth, or the kingdom of heaven.

But often we want to have them both. And why can't Christians have worldly wealth? Can Christians be rich? Are Christians allowed to invest and grow worldly wealth? Or do we have to give everything away and live poor?

But you see, it's not just wealth. For some people, satisfaction and treasure is in worldly things like sex, or food, or comfort, or holidays, or education or career. Let's look at Australia for example: As a nation, where is our heart? Listen to these figures:

1. *Work*: Australians work more hours than most developed nations in the world. One in five work over 50 hours a week.
2. *Gambling*: Australia owns 20% of the world's poker machines. Half of them are in NSW. There is one poker machine for every 100 people. Nearly 40% of people play the pokies.
3. *Sex*: Australia is in the top 5 countries for pornography revenue, spending over \$2 billion a year (2006).

As a nation, where is our treasure? Where is our heart? You can see it in the way we spend our time and our money. You can see what we value. What we serve. Jesus says, verse 24:

*"No one can serve two masters" "You cannot serve both God and money"*

The question we need to ask **ourselves** is: Who do **I** serve? Who is **my** master? Because that's where our heart is. A Christian can be rich. But we cannot **serve** our riches **and** God. A Christian can have a great career, but we cannot **serve** our career **AND** serve God. It can't be done. All that we have and all that we own, must be focussed where our heart is focussed – on the kingdom of God. Even the things we have from this world, we must focus those things on God's kingdom if we are to be disciples of Jesus.

Where is your loyalty? I read this quote this week and I think it sums this up well:

*"During a crisis, our allegiances get sorted out, and only one can come out on top." (D. A. Carson. "Jesus' sermon on the mount" 1999)*

In other words, when things get difficult, when we reach a crisis point, that's often when we find out what our real focus is, what we really value. When things get difficult, when we're under pressure, we reveal our true allegiance. Will it be to God, or to the world? Because it cannot be to both.

Jesus wants us to see things the way he sees things. To treasure the things **HE** treasures. To value the things **HE** values. Jesus wants us to have **HIS** heart for the things of God. How do we **DO** that?

Verse 25:

## Trust

---

### Worry

Jesus says, verse 25: *"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life"*

Jesus **TELLS** us do not worry. He doesn't **suggest** we stop worrying. He doesn't say "You **probably** don't need to worry as much. He says I **TELL** you, **DO NOT** worry – about what you'll eat or drink or wear. And he has a few examples. Look at the birds. They don't store up their food in barns, yet God looks after them. Look at the flowers. They don't make clothes for themselves. Yet God clothes them better than anyone! And you're much more valuable than birds or flowers! And besides that, you can't add a single hour to your life by worrying.

You see, the main thing Jesus wants us to know is this: As Christians, as people who follow Jesus, who keep their eyes on Jesus, who are loyal to Jesus, who see the kingdom of heaven as the true treasure, for you – YOU have a heavenly Father who loves you and KNOWS what you need. So what are you worried about?

You follow Jesus. Your treasure is the kingdom of Heaven. God loves you. He knows what you need. What are you worried about???

But it's hard isn't it? There are times we worry. Times we feel that we don't have all our immediate needs met. Times we question God. And I think that's why Jesus adds verse 34:

*"Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."*

Jesus says: There's enough to worry about **today**! He knows we can't just NOT WORRY. He knows there are things every day that trouble us. And I believe what Jesus is suggesting here is to not worry about **tomorrow**. There are enough concerns to think about today. And if we get carried away with all the concerns of tomorrow and next week, and next year and our 40 year superannuation plan, well, we're just going to start to treasure those things more than his kingdom, and we're going to move our heart closer to those things and away from him.

### Concern

But instead of worrying about tomorrow and the next day and the next day, Jesus suggest we just focus our "concern" on today. I think he brings up two things for us to consider today:

1. A reassurance: Don't get too far ahead of yourself. If you're going to worry about anything, just stick with today. God is bigger than all of this and he **does** know what you need. You can trust him for tomorrow.
2. A challenge: While you're worrying about worldly things, you can't focus on heavenly things! What things are you worried about? Are they kingdom things? Or are they worldly things? Are you worried about **your** future, **your** wealth, **your** quality of life, **your** security? Or are you worried about **God's** kingdom?

## 3. Seek

---

Verse 33: *"Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."*

Seek the things of God's kingdom, not the world's kingdom. Seek to do what is right by God, not the world, and God will look after your life. We MUST believe these words of Jesus. Do right by God. Seek God's approval. Serve God. If you serve this world, everything you gain will be lost. Serve God, and he will provide all you need. Seek his kingdom, seek what is right in God's eyes, and you have no need to worry. And that word "seek" doesn't just mean "look". It means look and keep looking. Keep searching, keep seeking every day, to please God and His kingdom.

Seek God, and you have nothing to worry about. And that's a promise only God can make. Even if you face sickness, injury, starvation, you lose a relationship, a job, a career, your family, even your life... God says: Don't worry about tomorrow. Because even if you lose everything on this earth, you will never lose the kingdom of heaven. But you need to choose where your heart will be. Because it cannot be in two places.

*"During a crisis, our allegiances get sorted out, and only one can come out on top."*