

# LEADER'S GUIDE

## Discussion Questions: Treasures in Heaven

Introduction: The Treasures in Heaven Bible study is a lengthy and comprehensive study, and it may take your group two meetings to cover the material thoroughly. We urge you to take your time and learn as much as possible.

Matthew 6:19-21 and Luke 12:32-34 describe Jesus' parable Laying up Your Treasures in Heaven. We say this is one of Jesus' parables because Jesus often spoke in parables. You will notice the questions and answers to His statements are not found in the four books of the gospels. Most of the answers are in Revelation and several New Testament books, and we will provide them. You will also observe that Matthew and Luke do not define these treasures, how they are earned, or who may obtain them. You may want to read a disclaimer found in the In-Depth study.

1. **Let's begin the study with an easy parable.** (Read the outlined in green Luke 12:32): **Who is the "little flock?"** The disciples and his followers were commonly referred to as "the flock."
2. **If they are referred to as the flock, who is Jesus referred to?** The shepherd. The shepherd leads and is the caretaker of the flock.
3. The end of this scripture is commonly overlooked. Jesus makes it a point that He is pleased to give them the kingdom. **Why does He expressly state He is please to give you the kingdom?** This is what is known as "foreshadowing." At the end of the parable, but more importantly, at the end of the study, the kingdom of heaven is one of the great rewards.
4. **Do not store up treasures on earth.** (Read the outlined in blue, Matthew 6:19). **In Jesus' time, what items would people store up as treasures on earth?** Clothing. Food, Water. Money consists of coins. Weapons. Heirlooms. Jewelry.
5. **What are things today commonly stored up as treasures on earth?** Examples: Clothing. Books. Newspapers. Food. Can-goods. Beauty products. Medicine. Money. Gold/Silver. Jewels. Weapons. Movies. Music. Automobiles. Recreational toys. Land. Homes.
6. **Store up treasures in heaven.** (Read the outline in black, Matthew 6:20 and Luke 12:33b). **Why does Jesus tell us to store up treasures in heaven instead of the earth?** Store up treasures in heaven to create provisions for eternal life. Because you can not take it with you.
7. **What kinds of treasures do you know are in heaven?** Those who know this answer try not to go too in-depth, as the rest of the study will cover this. It is also ok if you do not know of any treasures. Crowns (there are five) garments and positions of authority.

## LEADER'S GUIDE

### Discussion Questions: Treasures in Heaven

8. **Sell your possessions.** (Read in orange, Luke 12:33a). **Why does Jesus state, "Sell your possessions and give to the poor." Does He not want us to own anything?** We are to be stewards of the money God entrusted us and any possessions we obtain. Jesus does not want everyone to be poor. God blessed some of the wealthiest men in the world Abraham, Job, Solomon, and Joseph of Arimathea. Wealth carries with it a peculiar danger. When someone becomes rich, it is easy to focus on the power of one's wealth and independence, thinking they can live without God. Jesus is not saying that if you are wealthy, you are doomed. It will be challenging to enter heaven if money is your God.
9. **Your heart is your treasure.** (Read in red Matthew 6:21 and Luke 12:34). **What is the difference between having a heart focused on earthly treasures versus heavenly treasures? How does it affect your heart?** If our heart has been focused on earthly things vulnerable to decay and theft, then our time, energy, and money have been used to acquire earthly treasures. But if our heart has been focused on heavenly things that will not decay or steal, our time, energy, and money have earned eternal treasures.

#### **Jesus provides parables and lessons to describe heaven.**

We will cover some critical parables about how Jesus describes heaven and the importance of a foundation of heaven's treasures.

10. **Parable of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl.** (Read Matthew 13:44-46). **What is the significance of finding a treasure, selling everything you own, and then using that money to obtain it?** The importance of this parable is the man who finds treasure values it to be of the highest value. All treasures are not equal. The man who finds a treasure hidden in the field equal to in his mind the level of the kingdom in heaven is so great he would at that moment sell or sacrifice everything he has built up in value over his lifetime to obtain it.
11. **Laying up Treasures for a Firm Foundation.** (Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19). **How does someone build a good foundation for heaven, and why is it being developed?** Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, and they will carry this foundation into eternal life. King James and New King James use the words "eternal life." Notice other bible versions do not use the words eternal life, usually something like "true life or truly life." There is a difference.
12. **The Prophet and Righteous Person's Reward.** (Read Matthew 10:40-42). **What is the significance of this parable? HINT: It is in the last part of verse 42.** The importance of welcoming Jesus, receiving the

## LEADER'S GUIDE

### Discussion Questions: Treasures in Heaven

prophet or the righteous man, or giving a cup of water to a little one “In the name of a disciple,” they will not lose their reward. The versions or the King James and New King James preserve the words “in the name of a disciple” and “by no means lose his reward.” Omitting either or both of these statements from the parable dramatically alters the emphasis of the parable lesson Jesus is teaching. The other significant affirmation is by welcoming Jesus, a prophet or a righteous man; one will not lose their reward. There are risks of losing a reward or a treasure in heaven by not performing specific tasks or behaviors.

13. **The Rich Young Man Parable.** (Read Matthew 19:16-29) A similar parable is located in Mark 10:17-22 and Luke 18:18-23. **What must the rich young man do to receive treasure in heaven?** Matthew, Mark, and Luke describe the rich young man parable. The young man asks Jesus what good deed he must do to have eternal life. Jesus tells the man to keep the commandments. The man replies he has kept all the commandments he mentions. Jesus tells the man if he wants to be perfect, he sells all that you have and gives it to the poor, he will then have treasure in heaven, and then follow Jesus. The man left sorrowful, for he was a rich man. Jesus knew in his heart the lust for wealth was more significant than Jesus. Notice how Jesus provides the procedure. First, sell your wealth; second, give to the poor; he will not have treasure in heaven; finally, follow Jesus. The remaining part of the parable will be talked about later in the lesson.
14. **The Parable of the Rich Fool.** (Read Luke 12:16-21). **What opportunity did the rich man miss? What would have been a better solution?** Jesus stated that man is a fool for saving for retirement and not preparing for the Kingdom of God for eternity. This is different from what he was teaching. There is nothing wrong with saving up for retirement. However, he should have stored up some treasure in heaven. For we never know when our soul will be required of us.
15. **THIS IS THE HOW: How should we work to achieve rewards and treasures in heaven?** (Read again Matthew 6:21 and Colossians 3:23-24). Jesus said your heart is where your treasure will be. Where is your heart? There is more detailed information in Colossians. Paul is addresses slaves or bondservants in context, but the scripture still applies. Whatever you do, do it with a sincere heart.
16. **THIS IS THE WHEN: When should we work to achieve rewards and treasures in heaven?** Read Leviticus 23:10. Time is our most important commodity. Money will come and go, but you can never get time back. Time is not equal for everyone. God wants us to give Him the first

## LEADER'S GUIDE

### Discussion Questions: Treasures in Heaven

fruits of our harvest. Not everyone is a morning person. When is your best quality time of the day?

17. **The Day of Judgement.** (Read: 1 Corinthians 3:11-15). **How will our works be tested?** There are several verses throughout the New Testament where everyone will be judged and evaluated on their works. Several times it is mentioned their works will be tested by fire. It is to be purified to see if it will endure.

<b>Five Crowns in Heaven</b>
------------------------------

18. **What are the five crowns in heaven?** The Crown of life, the Crown of rejoicing, the imperishable Crown, the Crown of righteousness, and the Crown of glory.
19. **The Crown of Life.** (Read in green James 1:12 and Revelation 2:10). **What is the Crown of Life?** Also known as the Martyr's Crown. Some scholars are divided about what James means in the scripture. However, most agree with Revelation. It could tell everyone who has eternal life receives the crown of life. It could represent those who endure trials and demonstrates love for Jesus gets the crown of life. It could also mean those who endure temptation or numerous temptations will receive the crown of life. When combining both scriptures, James states to endure temptation. Jesus says in Revelation to be faithful until death. This concludes that we must endure temptation when tested and be faithful until the minute of our death. We would argue those who never face trials or temptation will not be eligible as they have not been tested to endure.
20. **What is mentioned in the bible about how we can achieve the Crown of Life?** Based on what is written in James 1:12 and Revelation 2:10, there are at least four criteria to earn the crown of life:
1. Need admission into the Kingdom of God. We must be saved through Jesus.
  2. They must love the Lord.
  3. The person must endure a temptation, or their faith must be tested or persecution.
  4. They must persevere and endure trials and temptations until death.
21. **The Crown of Rejoicing** (Read in blue 1 Thessalonians 2:19 and Philippians 4:1). **What is the Crown of Rejoicing?** Also known as the Crown of Exultation or the Crown of Auxiliary. You may have to read a few scriptures before 1 Thessalonians and Philippians to obtain some context. The Crown of Rejoicing is commonly referenced for people who engage in evangelism outside the Christian Church. The Thessalonians would be Paul's witness that his work through Jesus was genuine and authentic.

## LEADER'S GUIDE

### Discussion Questions: Treasures in Heaven

The Thessalonians would be a witness of Paul's evangelism. Paul would be filled with joy. He looked forward to the pleasure of being in Jesus' presence—an honor for Paul to wear the Crown of Rejoicing. The Philippians are Paul's crown of joy. Paul rejoices they had been converted under his ministry.

22. **What is mentioned in the Bible how can we achieve the Crown of Rejoicing?** (Read Acts 11:25-26 to establish the first Christians). There are two types of Christians. Believers (Converts) and Disciples.
1. Disciples: Some are gifted evangelists bringing people to Christ.
  2. Believers (Converts): some nurture those along the way.
  3. To achieve the Crown of Rejoicing, we must be a disciple; Jesus will decide who is worthy to wear this crown, and everything we do will be judged. 1 Corinthians 3:14-15.
23. **The Imperishable Crown.** (Read in read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27) **What sporting event(s) does Paul use to describe the perishable crown?** Paul is writing this to Corinth using the competitive Isthmian games for running and boxing.
24. **What is the Imperishable Crown?** Also known as the Incorruptible Crown. The Imperishable crown is a crown that never diminishes or decays like a perishable crown. It is awarded to those who demonstrate perseverance. This is not just enduring a 5K run. One must be willing to train vigorously to compete for the crown.
25. **What is mentioned in the Bible about how can we achieve the Imperishable Crown?** We can learn from how Paul uses the Isthmus games in Corinth as a metaphor for how athletes strive, train, and earn a perishable crown. To earn an imperishable crown is to demonstrate the same dedication athletes exhibit in training to compete for the perishable crown. To obtain this crown, the person would need to persevere and train oneself physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually-Paul describes how he trains spiritually in verses 26-27. Do not train by running with uncertainty, but with certainty like with purpose when actively studying and learning and teaching his Word. Like boxing, do not fight was an invisible opponent, but condition the body, the mind, and the spirit to fight with purpose. Use these techniques and behaviors to train spiritually to obtain the Imperishable Crown.
26. **The Crown of Righteousness.** (Read in black 2 Timothy 4:4-8). 2 Timothy 4-5 provides the context of fulfilling the ministry. **What is the Crown of Righteousness?** The person awarded the Crown of Righteousness must possess the qualities of a righteous person. Paul refers to his life ending. He kept the faith of Jesus Christ by fighting a good fight. Finally, his reward, the Crown of Righteousness, is laid before

## LEADER'S GUIDE

### Discussion Questions: Treasures in Heaven

him in heaven. This is all those who desire His second coming—also interpreted as being ready to meet Christ upon his return.

27. **Who or what are the qualities of a righteous person?** A righteous person is righteous ethically, law-abiding, honorable, and pure. They are known to have these traits all the time, not just at home or in public places. They would maintain these characteristics wherever they go.
28. **What is mentioned in the Bible about how can we achieve the Crown of Righteousness?** Paul states three things must be achieved to receive the crown of righteousness.
1. Fight the good fight. The fight is against sin, the flesh, and sometimes the world. A Christian life almost always has a conflict with the world. However, this is a fight worth fighting for.
  2. Finish the race. The race is a test of endurance. Finishing to the finish line is not for the weak in spirit. Just as an athlete must condition himself for the long race, Christians need to improve and strengthen their spiritual faith if they wish to persevere to the end of their life.
  3. Keep the faith. Keeping faith means holding steadfast by believing in Jesus and his teaching gospel.
29. **The Crown of Glory.** (Read in purple 1 Peter 5:1-4) **What is the Crown of Glory?** The Crown of Glory is a particular crown dedicated to those (not just elders) who are shepherding, pastoring, and getting involved with believers. They are responsible for feeding the flock. The flock will only be as strong as the leader of the flock. As more of God's Word feeds the flock, the more enriched they will be as Christians.
30. **What is mentioned in the Bible about how can we achieve the Crown of Glory?** The Crown of Glory is obtained by shepherding, pastoring, and getting involved with believers. The most challenging task of the shepherd is to be an example to the flock. They need to be unselfish leaders. They should not act as rulers, dictators, tyrants, kings, or monarchs. But most of all, they need to lead as a good example to others.
31. **Crowns at Risk.** (Read in blue Revelation 3:11) **Can we lose our crowns?** There are three parts to this verse:
1. John writes that Jesus states he is coming soon. Christ's return will be sudden; at this point, you cannot develop new skills to obtain your new crown(s).
  2. Holding fast to what one has, that is, whatever one has accomplished to obtain or possess to achieve one's crown, stand firm on what you have.
  3. Be on constant guard, for the world of temptation has many sins who will try and rob and steal your crown.

# LEADER'S GUIDE

## Discussion Questions: Treasures in Heaven

### White Garments and Other Treasures in Heaven

32. **Promises in Heaven.** (Read in gray Revelation 3:5) **What three promises did Jesus make to the church of Sardis?**
1. They will be clothed in white garments.
  2. Jesus will not blot out the believer's name in the book of life.
  3. Jesus will confess the believer's name and give his approval to His Father and the angels.
33. **The Lukewarm Church.** (Read in purple Revelation 3:18) **What three solutions did Jesus provide the church of Laodicean for salvation?**
1. Jesus' gold is refined in the fire. If it's the riches they seek, buy the gold from Him. By finding Jesus, they will have all the riches they want or need.
  2. Obtaining the white garments of salvation as their clothing. This is in response to Revelation 3:17, stating they were naked. The white purity of such garments will protect them from the shame of being naked.
  3. The eye salve is also a response to them being blind. An ointment to clear their eyes so they can see what they have become. This will also help them see God's character clearly and give them the proper perspective on leading as a church.
34. **The Wedding Supper for the Lamb** (Read in red Revelation 19:7-8). There are several topics in these two verses; however, **what is the significance of the fine linen being referred to as the righteous acts of the saints?** The bride (church) is to be dressed in a pure white robe. The inner linen lining of the robe is to be dazzlingly bright white. Some scholars interpret where John states the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints; this is symbolic of the good works of this believer. It should be noted that it is not by their righteousness they have obtained this linen; The linen is graciously bestowed to them by the Lord, and their righteousness was received by faith, granting them the gift of the linen.
35. **Twenty-four Thrones.** (Read in green Revelation 4:10-11). **Who sits on the twenty-four thrones in heaven?** To help answer this question, read Matthew 19:28 and/or Luke 22:30. So if these twelve apostles sit on the thrones in heaven overseeing the twelve tribes of Israel, Who will sit on the remaining twelve thrones? The Bible does not say.

# LEADER'S GUIDE

## Discussion Questions: Treasures in Heaven

Perhaps, previous Old Testament prophets, such as Moses, Abraham, Job, David, or Solomon? Maybe some post-first century disciples?

### Positions of Authority

36. **The good and faithful servant.** (Read in green Matthew 25:20-23) **What are the lessons learned here about the good and faithful servant? Is there an opportunity in heaven when Jesus teaches us about the parable?** Both servants return to their lord joyfully with the talents they were trusted, plus a 100% return on their investments. The first servant was given five talents and returned with ten. The second servant was given two talents and returned with four. Christ does not want his servants to be idle. (1) It would be a great honor to hear from Jesus that your work was well done and to his satisfaction. (2) Being granted authority over many things by Jesus. (3) To be welcomed into the joy of your Lord or the kingdom of heaven.
37. **Sitting on Jesus' Throne.** (Read in black Revelation 3:21). **What is the significance of sitting on Jesus' throne?** Jesus is addressing the Church of Laodicea. Jesus referred to the Laodicea church as being lukewarm. There are two thrones mentioned here. (1) God's throne and (2) Jesus' throne. Jesus says he also overcame and sat with his father on His throne with Him. About Jesus' throne, to grant someone to sit on Jesus' throne with Him is a distinguished honor. It even goes beyond what was promised to the 12 apostles. Read Matthew 19:28. Nevertheless, for those from the Laodicea church who overcome, Jesus will grant them a remarkable gift to sit with Him on His throne.
38. **Kings and Priests.** (Read Revelation 1:6 and 5:10). **Will everyone be a King or a Priest? If not, who will be?** God/Jesus would naturally want a sense of order in His kingdom and on the New Earth. The scholars are divided amongst the interpretation of the king. Some say we will be our own king and govern ourselves by the law of His word. Others say Christians will be exalted to the rank and dignity of such an office as to have the responsibility to rule over many as in the parable of good and faithful servants: Matthew 25:20-23. God said to Moses in Exodus 19:6 the people of Israel will be a kingdom of priests. They sing the song to Jesus that, out of every tribe, tongue, people, and nation, have made us kings and priests to our God. Since the twenty-four elders on the throne were singing the song, it would imply they would represent the kings and priests who would reign on the earth. Kings have the responsibility of leading. It also means that some will be granted authority over others.