

THE TREASURE PRINCIPLE

HANDOUT

The Treasure of Giving by Randy Alcorn

Watch the Video: <https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/Series/198062?episode=1>

The session opened with an illustration. What stood out to you in the opening illustration? What did it make you feel? Would you respond the same way as the weary traveler? Why or why not?

In everyday life, we call the idea of giving up present pleasure for future satisfaction “delayed gratification.” Where do you see the idea of delayed gratification played out in your life?

In the past, when given the choice between present or future rewards, which have you chosen? Why?

How much of a role do you think personality plays in the ability to choose something future, rather than chase immediate satisfaction?

Randy likes to say, “We were made for a person and a place. Jesus is the person, heaven is the place and there are real treasures awaiting us in Jesus and awaiting us in heaven.” Ideally, how should the idea that we were made for eternity with Jesus, with real treasure, affect the way we live in the present?

Why do you think we still struggle so much to live in light of eternity, even as believers?

Matthew 6:19–21. What has Jesus’ statement meant in your personal life? How have you applied the admonishment to store up treasure in heaven? What does that look like?

If God genuinely wants you to store up treasures, how does that change the way you look at your pursuit of satisfaction? Is God against you, or for you? Why?

What obstacles stand in your way when it comes to relocating your treasure to heaven?

What do you stand to gain by switching your financial focus toward heaven, rather than toward earth?

Justin’s story highlights the value of the treasure principle: when we focus our resources (in Justin’s case, his money) on eternal things, God can and will provide for the here-and-now. What often prevents us from trusting God with our financial resources? Why?

What would your life look like if you invested your finances in the future hope of eternity, rather than solely on the present? What would change?

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Matthew 19:16–30. How would you describe the faith of the rich young ruler? What did he want? How did he go after his desire? Why didn’t Jesus condemn him for following the law rather than relying on faith?

Have you experienced the struggle to surrender your finances to Jesus? What did you do?

How might the way we view our money reflect our attitude toward eternity?

If you were to look at your credit card statement or you bank account, what would it say about your treasures? Where are they located?

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Are you satisfied with your answer? If so, why? If not, what do you want to change?

Jesus' disciples were confused when the young man left dejected. So they exclaimed, "If the rich will struggle to get to eternity, what chance do we have?" How did Jesus respond to the disciples' inquiry? Does Jesus' answer give you hope? Why or why not?

How could Jesus' promise affect your view of the way you use your resources?

Mark 12:41–44. According to Jesus, what sets apart the widow's offering in this passage from the lavish gifts of the religious leaders? Why?

What does the story of the widow's offering tell us about God's view of sacrificial giving?

Does the fact that God looks not at the size of the gift but at the giver's heart motivate you toward relocating your treasures? Why or why not?

Regardless if you're like the rich young man or the widow, what do you stand to lose if you relocate your treasure to heaven? What do you stand to gain?

LIVE IT OUT

Select at least one activity below to complete during the next week.

- Take Action:** Sit down with your money this week. If you're married, include your spouse. Look at what your cash flow says about your treasures, and come up with one change—big or small—you can make to prioritize the kingdom of God in your finances.
- Perspective Shift:** Revisit Jesus' perspective on money and heaven. Write out the way you typically approach money and God's kingdom, and then pen an alternative perspective informed by God's Word.
- Memorize:** If you haven't already, memorize Matthew 6:33: "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." Remind yourself to prioritize God's work this week.
- Interact:** In keeping with Jesus' admonition to the rich young man, find someone who you can support or bless with a financial gift—a homeless person on the street or a struggling family at church. Whether you give anonymously or in person, practice generosity.
- Pray:** Ask God to uncover the motives behind the way you use your money. Ask Him to reveal any selfish areas of your life, and allow Him to direct your desires and treasures toward eternity.