

## **DAY 1: "Afterlife"**

Read: Matthew 16:24-28 (Freedom in Christ Bible, p. 1099 )

Read: The Treasure Principle, p. 34 to middle of p. 36

Reflect: How often do you think about heaven? What do you think heaven will be like? What's your idea of the perfect heaven?

Dig: Some people like Tutankhamen, the boy king of Egypt, live their life as though riches are extremely important. The Egyptians even thought that young King Tut would need his earthly riches in the next life. For this reason they buried him with all his golden artifacts, chariots and even in a golden coffin. When King Tut's burial chamber was discovered over 3000 years after his death was King Tut found enjoying his earthly riches? Of course not. The Egyptians didn't understand that it doesn't matter who you are and how much you obtain in this earthly life, because no one can take our earthly riches with us into the next life.

What does it mean "to save your life" in verse 25?

How was King Tut trying to save his life by being buried with his golden riches?

How can someone "lose his soul"? See verse 26.

According to verse 25 how do you find your life?

What does it mean to "lose your life for Jesus"?

What will the son of man (Jesus) do at the end?

What kinds of rewards do you think you'll get?

What do these verses about being rewarded according to what we've done on earth have to do with saving our life or losing your life?

Apply: Knowing Jesus will reward you or not reward you, according to what you've done for him, what changes should you make in your life this week?

For younger children, ages 5 - 9, and their families . . .

Read: Matthew 16:26-28 (Freedom in Christ Bible, p. 1099)

Dig: Have you ever tried saving cereal box tops to get a certain toy? Maybe they require having 5 box tops and sending \$2. Have you ever been saving for a certain toy and finally you realize you have enough box tops and your mom then discovers that the final date for sending the box tops in has gone by? At this point discouragement hits. Here you've been working so hard to gather these box tops and now you can't turn them in for the toy you wanted. What good are those box tops now? In your mind they are worthless.

There was once a very young king named King Tut. He was very wealthy. He had many golden riches. When he died at age 17 the Egyptians buried him with those riches thinking that he would use them in the next life. But when they found his burial place many years later the riches were still there and he was not using them. His time for using his earthly riches had passed by. He tried to take them with him but he couldn't. Now for many years those golden riches sat worthless in a hidden burial chamber. God wants us to use the thing he has blessed us with to bless others. Now is the time to do that. When we use our blessings to bless others, Jesus puts away rewards for us in heaven. We just have to wait awhile to get them.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, help me to use my earthly blessings (toys, clothes, money) to bless others. Help me remember that these blessings are not meant to be stored up here, but that I can use them to store up rewards for myself in heaven. Amen.

## **The Treasure Principle-- Devotions for ages 9 and up**

### **WEEK 3: "Eyes on Eternity"**

#### **DAY 2: "Eternal Rewards"**

Read: Matthew 10:37-42 (Freedom in Christ Bible, p. 1090)

Read: The Treasure Principle, middle of p. 36 to bottom of p. 38

Reflect: What have you imagined that heaven will be like?

What do you think you will do in heaven?

Dig: In verse 38, what does it mean to "take up your cross"? (Hint: It means to make sacrifices in your life for Jesus' sake.)

Brainstorm about a few ways you could "take up your cross" or have done so in the past.

Jesus is keeping track of your small and big acts of kindness. In Malachi 3:16 it tells us that there is a scroll on which all these acts of kindness are written. Why do you think these things are recorded?

In vs. 42, what will happen to the person who gives a cup of cold water in Jesus' name? What other things could a "cup of cold water" be?

Apply: What are some other words for "reward"? What can you do in the next week to build up rewards in heaven?

For younger children, ages 5 - 9, and their families . . .

Read: Matthew 10:37-42 (Freedom in Christ Bible, p. 1090)

Dig: In verse 38, what does it mean to "take up your cross"? (Hint: It means to make sacrifices in your life or to give things up for Jesus' sake.)

Brainstorm about a few ways you could "take up your cross" or have done so in the past.

Jesus is keeping track of your small and big acts of kindness. In Malachi 3:16 it tells us that there is a scroll on which all these acts of kindness are written. Why do you think these things are recorded?

In verse 42, what will happen to the person who gives a cup of cold water in Jesus' name? What other things could a "cup of cold water" be?

Prayer: Dear Jesus, help me live a life every day that builds up rewards from you. Amen.

### **The Treasure Principle-- Devotions for ages 9 and up**

#### **WEEK 3: "Eyes on Eternity"**

#### **DAY 3: "Motivated by Rewards"**

Read: Luke 14:7-14 (Freedom in Christ Bible, p. 1179)

Read: The Treasure Principle, bottom of p. 38 to bottom of p. 39

Reflect: Do you like getting rewards for things that you do? If you know you're going to get a reward for doing something does it help you get more excited about doing it? Do you get whatever you're doing done faster?

Do you think rewards are a good thing?

Dig: Why should we be humble? See verse 11.

Sometimes when you invite someone over to play, or to your birthday party, or a sleepover, you might be tempted to invite the more popular people or the friends that you think would be the most fun. Have you ever invited kids who are different than you? Have you ever invited kids that seem like they don't have many friends, or kids that are in a wheelchair, or a child that can't hear or see? Have you ever invited someone that seems to come from a poor family? What kinds of people should we invite to our parties? To our houses to play or sleepover?

Why does Jesus say you will be blessed if you make room in your home and life for those who are blind, crippled, lame, deaf, or poor?

When does the blessing come? See verse 14.

Read Matthew 25:34-40 (FiCB, p. 1115). In this story who were the people feeding when they fed the hungry, gave a person a drink, gave clothing to strangers, or visited prisoners? When we do these acts of kindness it is like we are doing it to whom?

How does the passage in Matthew 25:34-40 relate to the story above?

Apply: Next time you have a party or just friends over to your house, who will you invite and why?

For younger children, ages 5 - 9, and their families . . .

Read: Luke 14:12-14 (Freedom in Christ Bible, p. 1179)

Activity: Look in a photo album or yearbook at pictures of friends. Talk about your favorite friends and some great times you've had together.

Dig: What kinds of people should we invite to our parties, or to our houses to play or sleepover?

You may not know anyone who is blind or poor or can't walk. But you probably know people who have hardly any friends. Why does Jesus say you will be blessed if you invite people to your house to play who have no friends or who can't invite you to their parties? When does this blessing come? See verse 14.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, help me to open my heart to kids who need friends. Help me to think about how you would treat people if you were me. Amen.

### **The Treasure Principle-- Devotions for ages 9 and up**

#### **WEEK 3: "Eyes on Eternity"**

#### **DAY 4: "A Heart in the Right Place"**

Read: Matthew 6:19-21 (Freedom in Christ Bible, p. 1083)

Read: The Treasure Principle, top of p. 40 to bottom of p. 42

Reflect: What is your "treasure?" (Your bike, your skateboard, your computer, your American Girl doll, etc.?)

What makes you want to give to others? (For example: love for a friend, seeing someone in need of clothes or food.)

Dig: What happens to our stuff here on earth? See verse 20.

What happens to the treasures we lay up in heaven?

How can we learn to treasure what God treasures?

Apply: How can you use your "treasures" (money, toys, etc) to make God happy and "lay them up" in heaven? (Idea: Give part of your allowance to help poor people, or share your stuff (toys, computer games, etc) with kids who don't have what you do.)

For younger children, ages 5 - 9, and their families . . .

Read: Matthew 6:19-21 (Freedom in Christ Bible, p. 1083)

Dig: What is your "treasure?" (Your bike, your skateboard, your computer, your American Girl doll, etc.?)

What happens to our stuff here on earth? See verse 20.

How do we lay up treasure in heaven?

What happens to the treasures we lay up in heaven?

Prayer: Dear Jesus, help me to use my "treasures" to make you happy. Amen.

### **The Treasure Principle-- Devotions for ages 9 and up**

#### **WEEK 3: "Eyes on Eternity"**

#### **DAY 5: "My Heart Always Goes Where I Put God's money"**

Using the lectio divina process (described below), meditate on this Bible verse:

"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Matthew 6:21

To help yourself meditate on this verse:

- Find a quiet, comfortable spot to sit where you won't be disturbed
- Take a moment to pray the prayer of protection (in bold) below
- Close your eyes and be still in God's presence for a moment
- Slowly read the scripture aloud
- Read it again, emphasizing the first word as you read out loud
- Next time, emphasize the second word
- Keep going, emphasizing each word in turn . . . take time for God's words to sink in
- Take time to answer some of these questions: Which reading gave you new thoughts? What did it make you think? What does this verse mean for you in your life now? Does it tell me that I need to change anything in my life -- my attitudes, my actions, my thoughts?
- Take time to pray and confess any sins that may have been shown to you. Ask Jesus to help you have victory in this area. Thank Jesus for anything he revealed to you. Ask him to make it real in your life today.

Dear Heavenly Father, I know you are in this room with me and in my life. I want to know your Word better and have a closer relationship to you. I ask for your complete protection and for your guidance as I meditate and pray now. In the name and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, I command Satan and all evil spirits to flee. I bind their power in Jesus' name. I ask, Father, that you close my ears and heart to any deceptions that Satan would try to plant in my mind. I want to hear only your voice, Heavenly Father. Fill me with your Holy Spirit and lead me into all truth. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

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#### A Word about Meditation in General

Lectio divina is a form of contemplative prayer and meditation on Scripture. It's different from other forms of meditation that people today practice. We need to understand that many kinds of meditation (such as Transcendental Meditation) can allow the enemy, Satan, to get a foothold in our lives. Just because we are learning here a specific type of meditation doesn't mean that any kind of meditation is OK to practice. We need to be careful.

#### Lectio Divina -- Background

Lectio divina [LEK sio di VEE na] is an old form of prayer that early Christians used. Through lectio divina, which means "sacred reading," we take time to read God's holy Word over and over again until we memorize it and allow it to sink deep into our heart and mind. The early Christians believed that as they read the Word in this manner, they would hear from God -- hear him speak to their heart through his inspired Word.

In our busy society today, we like to do everything fast. It takes discipline for us to slow down and devote time to meditate on God's word and to pray. If you want to develop a deeper prayer life and have a more intimate relationship with your blessed Savior, Jesus, then you will do well to use lectio divina as part of your weekly devotional time.