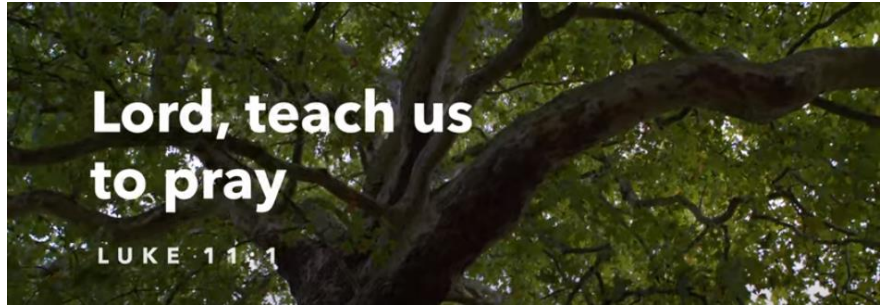


## How to handle money

Our hearts have room only for one all-embracing devotion, and we can only cleave to one Lord. Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

During our 30 days of prayer, all life groups are encouraged to set aside time for prayer. Instead of leaving prayer to the end, I would like to encourage you to pray before you start looking at Scriptures and discuss the theme of the week.

If you are able and know how to use the technology, start with showing the YouTube video (the first 8.10 minutes)



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0IXu1dWgz8&t=490s>

Now prayer to your Father who knows you by name.

### This week study

**Key thought to remember:** Jesus cares about my behaviour and he wants to modify it a lot. Right behaviour is not enough, I need a right posture of the heart.

### Read Matthew 6. 19-24

In verse 19 Jesus says “do not store up for yourselves treasures on where moth and rust destroy, where thieves break in and steal”

- Is Jesus against investment, savings or enjoying the good things in life with your earned money?
- Jesus here is not concerned so much with your wealth, but with your heart and affection. How does this help understand his teaching?
- Investing in the kingdom will primarily mean putting our time, energy and money into people. How do you do that?

In verse 22-23 Jesus says “the eye is the lamp of the body...” Jesus is using the analogy of physical eyes. If they work properly we will see (body full of light), but if they are bad we will be blind and in the dark (body full of darkness).

It matters a great deal where we set our *spiritual sights*. The word for “bad” literally means “evil”; while the word for “good” means “single.”

An “evil eye” is someone fixed on greed, lust, resentment, avarice, etc.

A “single eye” is someone with a single vision, looking in the right direction

- How the expression in Hebrews 12.2 to “fix our eyes on Jesus” helps us here? What does it mean in practical terms?

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In verse 24 Jesus says “no one can be a slave to two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot be a slave to both God and money.”

Money is not a neutral, impersonal medium of exchange. The word used for money is “Mammon,” the god of wealth in Carthage. So money is a kind of god seemingly offering freedom, security, power, influence, status and prestige. Money demands sacrifices, including human sacrifices:

Can destroy health through long hours, stress, unhealthy living.  
Can destroy relationships (marriages, children, friends and God)

Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote “Our hearts have room only for one all-embracing devotion, and we can only cleave to one Lord.”

Discuss:

- “Money is a good servant, but it is a bad master.”
- “The problem with money is that we think we own it but, if we are not careful, it ends up owning us.”

Jesus warns that if money is our “God” we will ‘despise’ the one true God. The word ‘despise’ means to be indifferent to or unconcerned about something.

- Can you recognise this problem in our affluent Western societies and churches?

What is the remedy? In the Jesus lifestyle book, Nicky Gumbel writes: We should hold onto everything loosely. We break the power of materialism by generous and cheerful giving . . . generous giving is an affront to Mammon and it destroys the demon greed.”

### Action

Think of your giving to others, to your local church, to the community. What is God saying and what wilful decision will you take to show that “Jesus is Lord and Mammon isn’t?”

### Prayer

Thank you Jesus that your words are truth and life. Thank you that you want to free me from the bondage of materialism by generous and cheerful giving. I fix my eye on you Jesus, the author and perfecter of my faith.