

## “Following the Call” by Charles E. Moore

## IV. Kingdom Priorities – Lasting Treasures Ch. 39

Last week we discussed **Matthew 6:13** – “...but deliver us from the evil one.” **Guardini** says: “Grant that the rightful chain reaction may be broken by which evil continually arises out of wickedness and, in turn, engenders new evil.” **Guardini** says that this chain of evil can be broken in each heart that gives itself to God. What does evil do to the heart? Why is this important to the Christian?

**Matthew 6:19-21** - “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” What do you think Jesus is telling us here?



**John Wesley** (1703- 1791) was the founder of the Methodist movement in the Church of England. His most popular works remain *Sermons on Several Occasions*, *The Journal of John Wesley*, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, *Notes Upon the New Testament*, and *Primitive Physics* (a guide to natural remedies for everyday ailments).

**Wesley** says: “How then is it possible for a rich man to grow richer without denying the Lord that bought him?” What is **Wesley** saying here? How did Jesus buy us?

“...if you will add house to house, or field to field – why do you call yourself a Christian? You do not obey Jesus Christ...Why do you name yourself by his name?” Why would a person call themselves a Christian when they do not obey Christ’s commandments? “Lay up thy treasures in the bank of heaven; and God shall restore them in that day.”

What is **Wesley** saying about treasures in heaven? What is “that day”?

**Proverbs 19:17** – “He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward him for what he has done.”

**Proverbs 14:21** – “He who despises his neighbor sins, but blessed is he who is kind to the needy.” Sharing food, lending money, and defending rights are ways one can show kindness. Such a person “honors God” and will lack nothing. How can we honor God?

**Matthew 25:40** – Jesus said: “The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’” What is Jesus saying about helping the poor? How are we to think when showing charity?



**Basil the Great** (ca. 330-379) was the Bishop of Caesarea Mazaca in Cappadocia, Asia Minor, and a saint. He was a champion of the poor, and a defender of the Christian Trinity against Arianism. His writings include; *On the Holy Spirit*, *Hexaemeron*, *On Social Justice*, *Asketikon*, and *On Christian Ethics*.

**Basil** says: “The wealth you handle belongs to others; think of it accordingly. Not for long will it delight you; ...”

What is **Basil** saying about wealth? How can your things belong to others? Why will it not “long delight you”?

“I am wronging no one”, you say, “I am merely holding on to what is mine.” What is yours! Who gave it to you so that you could bring it into life with you?” What is **Basil** asking here? Don’t our possessions belong to us and to do with as we will? “Is God unjust when he distributes unequally? Explain why you are rich when others are poor?” **Basil** asks an age-old question as to why some are blessed with provisions and others are not. What do you think? What does **Jesus** think? (reverse)

**Basil** goes on to say: “You do injustice to every man whom you could help but do not.” Why is injustice served by not helping others?



**Clement of Alexandria** (150 – ca. 215) was an early Christian theologian and philosopher. He taught at the Catechetical School of Alexandria, Greece. He is best known for being one of the first Church Fathers to harmonize classical Greek philosophy with Christian doctrine. As the head of the famed Catechetical School of Alexandria, he famously taught that faith and reason are complementary tools for understanding divine truth. He was the teacher of Origen, one of the most prominent theologians of the ancient church.

**Clement** says: “They are silly who greedily take delight in what they have hoarded up.” What is he saying here?

**Haggai 1:6** – **Haggai** says: “...You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it.” What do the holes in the purse represent?

**Clement** continues: “Such a one – who fulfills the command, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” – is perfect. For this is the true luxury – the treasured wealth. But that which is squandered on foolish desires should be considered waste, not investment.”

What is **Clement** saying about the difference between wealth spent on ourselves and wealth spent on helping others?

“Wealth is like a serpent, which will twist round the hand and bite, unless one knows how to lay hold of it without danger by the point of the tail.” What is **Clement** warning us about riches? How are we to control this serpent?



**A.W. Tozer** (1897 – 1963) was an American Christian and Missionary Alliance pastor and magazine editor. He is one of the most widely read Christian devotional authors. His most popular books include *The Pursuit of God*, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, and *The Crucified Life*. These works explore themes like intimate relationship with God, divine attributes, and spiritual surrender.

**Tozer** says: “There is within the human heart a tough fibrous root of fallen life whose nature is to possess, always to possess. It covets “things” with a deep and fierce passion.” What is **Tozer** talking about here? What is fallen life?

The terms “my” and “mine” “...express the real nature of the old Adamic man better than a thousand volumes of theology could do. They are verbal symptoms of our deep disease.” What is he saying about our want and need to own things?

“God’s gifts now take the place of God, and the whole course of nature is upset by the monstrous substitution...”. How can this be?

“Let him insist that God accept his all, that He takes “things” out of his heart and Himself reign there in power.”

What are we to replace things in our lives that we worship with? How can this be done?

**Tozer** says: The ancient curse “must be expelled from our soul by violence as Christ expelled the money changers from the temple.” Get to work by letting God get to work on you! There’s no time like today.

(reverse)

Jesus commands his followers to give generously to the poor, often linking this to spiritual devotion. He teaches that whatever is done for the needy is done directly for Him, warns of the spiritual dangers of wealth, and promises that the poor are blessed.

His teachings on the poor highlight several specific principles:

- **Care for the Vulnerable:** Jesus makes helping the destitute a central standard of righteousness. He explicitly tells a rich man to sell his possessions and give to the poor to gain treasure in heaven. In the parable of the sheep and the goats, He identifies Himself with the hungry and the marginalized.
- **The Danger of Wealth:** Jesus warns that wealth can be a major spiritual obstacle. In the parable of the rich fool, He condemns hoarding possessions while ignoring one's relationship with God. He famously declared it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God.
- **True Generosity and Humility:** Jesus praises those who give quietly, rather than to be seen by others. He also elevates sacrificial giving, such as when He observed a poor widow donating two small copper coins. She gave out of her poverty rather than her abundance, which Jesus recognized as a greater contribution than the gifts of the wealthy.
- **Blessing and Honor:** Jesus emphasizes an upside-down kingdom where the poor are blessed. He teaches that when hosting banquets or feasts, believers should invite the poor, the crippled, and the blind, rather than rich neighbors who can pay them back.
- **The "Poor in Spirit":** In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus states, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven". Scholars explain that this refers to spiritual humility—recognizing one's spiritual bankruptcy and utter dependence on God's grace.

What do all of these principles on the poor have in common? Can you relate this to experiences in your life?