

Discussion Guide

June 22, 2025

Summer Series Week 2

Matters of the Heart

Pastor Ken Claytor

Main Idea

The Sermon on the Mount isn't just a list of moral dos and don'ts—it's a call to heart transformation. In Scripture, the heart represents the core of who we are—where our decisions are made, our motivations are formed, and our affections are rooted. Jesus was after more than behavior; He was after what we truly care about, what we're passionate about, and what we love most. Then and now, Jesus is calling us to give Him our whole heart. Today, Pastor Ken shares four things that he believes God wants us to know about our hearts.

Anchor Passage

"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." (Matthew 6:19-21, NIV)

Read Malachi 3:10-12; Acts 20:35; 2 Corinthians 9:6-10; Luke 6:38

1. **Money is not the root of all evil. It is the "love of money" that is the root of all evil.**

Wanting more money isn't necessarily wrong, but how we pursue it reveals where our trust lies. When we chase wealth our way—through keeping, saving, grinding, and hustling—it often leads to self-reliance and greed. But when we follow God's way—through tithing, giving, trusting, and obeying—we align our hearts with His priorities. Generosity is God's way of guarding our hearts. Giving consistently breaks the grip of greed, purifies our motives, and keeps our affection rooted in Him, not in what we own.

Discussion: In what ways have you seen money either strengthen or challenge your trust in God, and how has giving helped shape your heart toward Him?

2. There is no such thing as tithing your time.

Tithing is specifically about giving a portion of your finances, not substituting it with time or good deeds. We can be active in many areas of ministry, but if we withhold this one area, we may still be missing full obedience to God.

Discussion: Is there an area of your life—like finances—that you’ve been actively serving God around, but not fully surrendering to Him? What might it look like to trust Him with that area starting today?

Where your treasure is, that's where your heart is also. – Mathew 6:21

3. Tithing is not an Old Testament principle: it's a believer's principle.

Tithing isn't just an Old Testament command—it's a timeless principle for believers, modeled by Abraham 400 years before the law and affirmed by Jesus in the New Testament. Jesus taught that while we should pursue justice, mercy, and faith, we shouldn't neglect the tithe in the process.

Read Matthew 23:23

Discussion: If tithing was modeled before the law and affirmed by Jesus, how does that shape the way you view giving today—and what might it look like to honor God consistently in this area?

4. Tithing has tremendous benefits.

Tithing has powerful benefits—it protects our hearts from greed, unlocks God's promises, and fuels the mission of the local church. Most importantly, it's a tangible way to express our trust, honor, and love for God with what often matters most to us: our resources.

Discussion: Which of the benefits of tithing—heart protection, God's promises, fueling ministry, or expressing love to God—resonates most with you, and how might that shape your next step in giving?

SUMMARY

Tithing isn't just about money—it's about the heart. It reveals who we trust, what we value, and where our priorities truly lie. Jesus isn't after our wallets; He's after our hearts. Through giving, we guard our souls, activate God's promises, support the mission of the Church, and most importantly, demonstrate our love and trust in Him.

CALL TO ACTION

Put This In Your Heart: Make up your mind. I will be a tither from this day forward. It's a matter of your heart.

Put God at the Top of Your Budget: The way you start to tithe is that you have to go home today and do a budget. You've got to put God at the top of your budget. Then start cutting lower priorities off.

Take a Stand: Draw a Line in the sand. You have to take a stand and say, "For me and my house, we will serve the Lord". We are going to do this God's way.

GROUP LEADER RESOURCE

Ice Breaker: Most Unique

Go around the room and have each person share something that makes them unique or unusual, such as "I've never left the state I was born in" or "I am one of 10 kids." The more unique the facts, the more fun the icebreaker becomes.

Tips: Give examples of unique or unusual facts, and be willing to share your answer first. This activity often creates starting points for conversations between members.