

5-Day Devotional: A Look at Materialism

PM Message by Bro. Mike Bentley – October 18, 2026

Overcoming Materialism and Pursuing Eternal Treasure

Day 1: The Danger of Divided Loyalty

Reading: 1 Timothy 6:6-10 — Paul warns that the love of money, not money itself, is the root of all kinds of evil, and that those who pursue riches above all else fall into harmful temptations that lead to spiritual ruin.

Devotional: Every believer faces the quiet temptation of a divided heart. The pull of wealth is not always loud or dramatic — it often whispers through small daily choices about where we invest our time, energy, and attention. Paul does not condemn having money; he condemns loving it above God. Ask yourself honestly: when resources are tight, does anxiety overtake trust? When resources are plentiful, does gratitude give way to appetite for more? Contentment is not passivity — it is an active, disciplined choice to anchor your satisfaction in God rather than in what you possess. Today, examine what your daily decisions reveal about where your true loyalty lies.

Day 2: Idols We Do Not Name

Reading: Colossians 3:1-5 — Paul instructs believers to put to death earthly desires, identifying covetousness specifically as a form of idolatry that must be rooted out of the Christian life.

Devotional: Idolatry in the ancient world involved carved images and pagan altars. Idolatry today is far more subtle. It wears the face of ambition, accumulation, and the relentless pursuit of more. When material possessions occupy the place in our hearts that belongs only to God, we have erected an idol — even if we never intended to. Covetousness is particularly deceptive because it disguises itself as reasonable desire. The antidote is not poverty but proper ordering — placing God at the center and allowing everything else to exist in submission to that priority. A heart freed from covetousness is a heart capable of true worship.

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Day 3: Treasures That Cannot Rust

Reading: Matthew 6:19-24 — Jesus teaches that where a person stores their treasure reveals where their heart truly is, and that no one can serve both God and wealth at the same time.

Devotional: Jesus does not speak about money carelessly. He understands that wealth is not merely a practical concern but a spiritual one. The treasures we pursue shape the direction of our hearts. Earthly wealth is vulnerable — to decay, to theft, to economic collapse, to the simple passage of time. Heavenly treasure, however, is imperishable. Every act of faithfulness, every sacrifice made in service to God, every soul encouraged through the gospel — these are investments that endure beyond this life. The question Jesus presses upon us is not how much we have, but where we have placed our hope. A heart fixed on heaven will use earthly resources as tools rather than treasures.

Day 4: The Brevity of Life and the Weight of the Soul

Reading: James 4:13-14 and Matthew 16:26 — James reminds believers that life is like a vapor, fleeting and uncertain, while Jesus asks what profit there is in gaining the entire world if a person forfeits their own soul.

Devotional: No one plans to trade their soul for material things. It happens gradually, through a long series of small compromises in which the urgent crowds out the eternal. James uses the image of vapor — something visible for a moment and then gone — to describe the brevity of human life. If life is that short, then the accumulation of wealth becomes a poor use of the time we have been given. Jesus frames the stakes with a direct question: what is a soul worth? The answer, of course, is that no earthly treasure comes close. When we live with an awareness of life's brevity, our priorities begin to realign naturally toward what is permanent.

Day 5: Seeking First the Kingdom

Reading: Matthew 6:25-33 — Jesus assures His followers that God is fully aware of their physical needs, and that those who seek His kingdom and righteousness first will find that those needs are provided for.

Devotional: The promise of Matthew 6:33 is not a formula for financial prosperity — it is a call to radical trust. Jesus is not dismissing the reality of physical need. He acknowledges that people need food, clothing, and shelter. But He invites His followers to release the grip of anxiety and control, trusting that the God who clothes the fields and feeds the birds has not forgotten them. Seeking the kingdom first means that every decision — how we spend our time, our money, our energy — is filtered through the question of what honors God and advances His purposes. This is not a burden. It is a liberation from the exhausting pursuit of things that cannot satisfy.