

Sermon 49: A Singular Devotion to God: Matthew 6:22-24

Text: Matthew 6:22-24 "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon..."

Summary: It is impossible to be a healthy disciple of Christ with a divided heart.

Review from Last Week:

There are two basic worldview options:

- **Option 1:** The brief time we live on this planet is all we get, so we should live for what we can get today.
- **Option 2:** Our lives in this world are only a small portion of our existence, so we must live today with an eternal perspective.

Five Principles:

- **Principle 1: Do not to be consumed with temporal investments:**
6:19 "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth..."
- **Principle 2: Remember the emptiness of temporal pursuits:**
6:19 "Where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal..."
- **Principle 3: Live a productive life investing in eternal pursuits:**
6:20 "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven..."
- **Principle 4: Remember the lasting value of eternal pursuits:**
6:20 "Where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal..."
- **Principle 5: Realize that you will invest in what you love:** **6:21**
"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also..."

Three tests of our devotion:

- **Test 1: What captures our hearts?** "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also..."
- **Test 2: What lens shapes our perspectives?** "If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light..."
- **Test 3: Who do we serve?** "No man can serve two masters..."

Proposition: God wants you to serve Him with a singular focus.

Truth 1: Our world view functions as a lens that shapes everything in our perspective: 6:22-23 "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore

thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness..."

- **Christ's Illustration:**
 - It emphasized the importance of our eyes.
 - What we see impacts how we think, what we love, and ultimately what we do.
 - The word "eye" is being used as a metaphor for how we perceive the world around us, or our "worldview."
- **The significant contrast of ἀπλοῦς and πονηρός:**
 - **The first term ἀπλοῦς is only used 2x in the NT**
 - **It can be translated:** "single, whole, or sound"
 - **In Classic Greek:** "to be motivated by a singular purpose, straightforward, sincere, and without guile."
 - **Physically:** Healthy or sound
 - **Morally:** Straightforward or sincere
 - **The second term πονηρός can be used several different ways depending on the context:**
 - **Physically:** sick or diseased
 - **Morally:** Evil or wicked
 - **Metaphorically:** Full of annoyances or hardships
- **Applying Christ's point:**
 - In the same way that a person's physical eyes can be healthy or unhealthy, so can a person's worldview.
 - In the same way that a person's eyes affect their quality of life and radically shape their perspective, a person's worldview affects their quality of life and perspective.
 - A healthy worldview has a simple, singular, straightforward focus.
 - An unhealthy worldview is encumbered with many inconsistencies and leads to many unnecessary hardships.
- **Stated other ways in scripture:**
 - **Proverbs 4:7-19** "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee...and the years of thy life shall be many. I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths. When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble. Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life...the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what

they stumble...Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established..."

- **Psalm 1:1-4** "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away..."

Truth 2: It is impossible to have a healthy perspective outside of new life in Christ: 6:23 "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

- **Four Facts:**

- **Fact 1: The statement is describing a conditional situation:** "If"
- **Fact 2: This conditional is understood based upon something previously stated:** "Therefore..."
- **Fact 3: This condition is a regressive condition:** "The light that is in thee be darkness..."
- **Fact 4: This condition being described is a desperate condition:** "How great is that darkness..."

- **A Sound Theological Understanding of This concept:**

- **We all have a basic awareness of certain realities, because we are create in God's image: Romans 2:14-15** "When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another..."
- **Because we are fallen, we have a deep-seated opposition to God:**
 - **Romans 8:7-8** "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God..."
 - **Romans 1:18-22** "Men, hold the truth in unrighteousness...that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse...when they knew God, they glorified

him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools..."

- **1 Corinthians 2:14** "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned..."

- **God sends the gospel which alone has the power to transform people: 2 Corinthians 4:3-6** "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ..."
- **He commands us to repentant and believe: Acts 3:19** "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord..."
- **He regenerates repentant believers: Ephesians 2:1-5** "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sin...in time past ye walked according to the course of this world...we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath...But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved..."

- **Stated Simply:** A biblical worldview starts with the new birth.

Truth 3: God demands absolute, unrivaled submission: 6:24 "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon..."

- **Four Facts:**

- **Fact 1: The ἀπλοῦς and πονηρός contrast, illustrates this statement:**
 - Healthy vs. unhealthy
 - Good vs. evil
 - A singular in focus vs. an encumbered focus.
- **Fact 2: You have to make a choice:** "No man can serve to masters..."

- **Fact 3: There are only two options:**
 - The Eternal God
 - Materialism:
- **Fact 4: You will choose what you love:** “He will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.
- **This principle applied three specific ways:**
 - **A warning against a love of possessions: 1 Timothy 6:9-12**
“They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life...”
 - **A warning against a love for this world’s values: 1 John 2:15** “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him...”
 - **Flesh:** Self-gratification
 - **Eyes:** Self-satisfaction
 - **Pride of life:** Self-promotion
 - **A warning against self-gratification: Romans 6:11-13**
“Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God...”
 - **A warning against following worldly wisdom: James 1:5-8**
“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed...A double minded man is unstable in all his ways...”

Final Questions:

- **Question 1: Are you a Christian?**
- **Question 2: Does your perspective reflect a growing thoroughly Christian perspective?**
- **Question 3: What do you love/delight in above everything else?**

- **Question 4: Are you willing to put self-gratification before God's will by justifying obvious sin?**
- **Question 5: Can you honestly say you have an undivided devotion to God?**