

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT—PATRICK WALTON

A Journey Into Matthew 4-7 6.5.2022

Week #30 | “Investing In Eternity”

I. INTRODUCTION (MATTHEW 6:19-21)

- A. You know if life, if you’re going to buy something, it’s usually the most economical thing to purchase something of decent craftsmanship. Often times, it’s true, you get what you pay for. Now, it’s not always the case, because if you purchase a Gucci tee-shirt, you’re most likely getting a super, very, wildly overpriced tee-shirt (*it’s most likely the same as other tee-shirts, but with a different logo*).
- B. But recently, Jennifer and I purchased this piece of furniture for our dining room, like a credenza, hoping it was going to “work.” Well, we found one on Amazon that looked good, had cool style, mid-century modern and it was super cheap!
- C. Well, after getting her put together, we were both shocked to find it wobbling, nearly tipping over, and when you open the cabinet doors it twisted the entire credenza. I was like, babe, I got the wrong one, we gotta send it back (*funny story on the return*).
- D. In the verses at hand today, this is what Jesus is getting at. He’s essentially saying, “*Look, don’t invest your money in crappy furniture that’s going to break down with wear and tear. Instead, invest into something of high quality, something that will endure even beyond this temporal life, and into eternity. If you lock up all your interest’s here, if all your investments are earthly, you’ll end up living for earth’s pursuits, to the exclusion of eternity.*”
- E. Well, this is the topic of discussion for the next 16 verses (**Matthew 6:19-34**), but in reality, it’s the whole of the Sermon On The Mount. It’s Jesus’ invitation to us to live in light of eternity, not according to life in this present evil age.

II. DO NOT INVEST THIS WAY (MATTHEW 6:19)

- A. **Matthew 6:19** “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal...”
 - 1. Once again, Jesus opens this portion of scripture with the reality of the age to come as the most important age to live for. And here, Jesus isn’t trying to lead His family into poverty, He’s committed to delivering us from a false sense of security. *One that even creeps into the Church.*
 - 2. The verses at hand aren’t primarily about money, but about possessions, and not possessions specifically, but about our feelings towards possessions, our relationship with possessions.
 - 3. Look, the point is on what we treasure, whatever that might be. The poor of the earth treasure certain things, just like the middle class, and the upper class. Is it the Lord that we treasure, is it the Lord that we desire, or is all our labor and effort, even as disciples of Jesus a means towards the end of treasures on earth.
 - 4. It doesn’t matter how small, or grand it is, whatever we treasure is, what we are living for. For some the body becomes the treasure, forcing people to live incredibly restricted lives regarding diet, fitness, supplements, and then vocally telling everyone else about it, and internally judging others who don’t live like you.

5. Other's treasure God's laws, more than God Himself. Some treasure their nation, their heritage, their idealistic national origin that's partly true, and partly folklore (*Johnathon Edwards*).
6. Well, this word LAY UP means to horde, to store up, an attempt to keep certain things safe. And this word EARTH speaks of the systems, or practices and standards associated with our society.
7. The idea is that the worlds systems are calling for us to give up godly living, and godly desires, and to live ungodly, making ungodly desires our norm.
8. The Bible refers to satan as the ruler, or the prince of the power of the air (**Ephesians 2:2**). And when satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, he offered him all the kingdoms of this world, the systems of society (**Matthew 4:9-11**), although Jesus didn't accept that offer, He also didn't correct satan.
9. These two entities are in conflict, and we feel it to a degree today, but beloved, this battle is going to continue raging until it will fully manifest on the earth, a battle between the kingdoms of this world, and the Kingdoms of our Lord (**Revelation 11:15**).
 - a. *Abraham Heschel rightly says, "...We need the Sabbath in order to survive civilization: Gallantly, ceaselessly, quietly, man must fight for inner liberty to remain independent of the enslavement of the material world. Inner liberty depends upon being exempt from domination of things as well as from domination of people. There are many who have acquired a high degree of political and social liberty, but only very few are not enslaved to things. This is our constant problem—how to live with people and remain free, how to live with things and remain independent."* Abraham Joshua Heschel, Sabbath, Pg. 12 (introduction)
10. Well, why are we instructed not to treasure the earth?
 - a. Because Moth's, Rust, and Thieves Destroy It—When that expensive garment that you purchased is tucked away safely, away in storage, hoarded up, and you think it's fine, suddenly when you open the drawer and reach for it again you discover that the moth's got to it, and that what you cared about, is destroyed.
 - (1) Or it's eaten away by rust, corroded, though you protected it with a cover, concealed it, kept it under lock and key, somehow earth's decay touches what was most precious to you, and it's gone.
 - (2) And lastly, in Ancient Israel, most of the walls around their homes were made of clay, and when the right moment came, that which was thought to be safe, is broken into and stolen.
 - b. The overall idea is that stuff in this life perishes, it breaks down to the point that it no longer serves its purpose anymore. It becomes unusable.

III. INVEST IN THIS WAY (MATTHEW 6:20-21)

- A. **Matthew 6:20-21** "...but lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."
 1. Jesus' appeal to us through these verses is to reject the lie that if we become so heavenly minded, we will be of no earthly good. The reality is, the more heavenly minded we become, the more earthly good we are able to do.

2. Look, Paul who might have been among the most heavenly minded people that we come across in the New Testament (*although the other apostles were heavenly minded as well*), that same Paul also happened to be the ringleader in practical wisdom for everyday life.
 - a. *Take care of the widows—Feed your family—Work out your conflicts between each other in the Church—Love one another—Be patient with one another—Serve your neighbors—Don't cut, and get drunk at the communion meal*
 3. Well, in contrast to hoarding things up here on earth, Jesus says, hoard them up in heaven, put your treasure in the safest place possible, with Him. Heavenly treasures are moth proof, rust proof, and theft free. Whatever we put up there, is not just safe for a while, but for eternity.
 4. To lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven, it means that we understand we don't own these things, we are simply leasers of them, stewards of something that God owns.
 5. Beloved, this is really what the whole of the scriptures are getting at in our lives, become pilgrims, become vagabonds, become those journeying through this age, looking for another one, a better one.
 - a. **Hebrews 11:13-16**
 6. God had Israel set up their tents around God, following Him, where He went as a great reminder that He was their home, He was their treasure. Friends, when we start building our lives away from the dwelling of God, we get into trouble.
 7. What do you think about during the day? What is your daydream? Who is your daydream? Are we thinking about growing closer with God, or are we daydreaming over this and that?
 - a. Dr. Martyn Lloyd Jones defines this as, "*Being a in a blessed state of detachment from our possessions.*" -Martyn Lloyd Jones, SOTM, Pg. 357
- B. Well, some people say, "*Look, my possessions, and material wealth as a family has no bearing on my spiritual life.*" But Jesus and that statement are in disagreement. Jesus is clear, "*wherever your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*" If your treasure is on earth, than your heart will be there also.
1. A person whose treasure is in heaven, puts money/possessions in submission, speaks to money and says to it, "*Wealth, thank you for coming today, but listen, I want to make sure the ground rules are clear in his family, you will serve us, and we will not serve you. You won't control our lives. You won't control our time. You won't control our decisions. And you won't dictate my relationship with God.*"
 2. Beloved, it would be better to have less money and more time for an enlarged heart, then it would be to have more money and a decreasing heart. This is where we reject the American dream of hustling into the ground, to take time for God, not just the grind.
- C. Beloved, Jesus' appeal to us is to store up the important things of our hearts in heaven, so that our hearts will be there also.