

Essentials
Eternal Treasure
Matthew 6:19-24

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HDBC

Open your Bibles to Matthew 6:19-24. These are words Jesus spoke to his disciples in what is called ***The Sermon on the Mount***. In it, Jesus is lays out the ***Essential Expectations*** for those who follow Him as savior and Lord.

He made it clear from the beginning that he had high expectations for his followers. In fact He expects much more even than was expected under the law.

The law said not to commit **adultery**. Jesus said avoid **lust**.

The law said **an eye for an eye**. Jesus said, **turn the other cheek**.

The law said to love your neighbor. Jesus said **love your enemies**.

The law said to keep your **vows**. Jesus said just **tell the truth**

Jesus deals with a number of practical subjects . . . things we deal with in life. Marriage, relationships, honesty, anger, lust, revenge, insults, pride, giving, etc.

Now we come to the section where he speaks about **our stuff and our money**. It becomes clear that Jesus more concerned about our **attitude and perspective** on our money and possessions more than how much we own.

The challenge is to make sure our stuff and our money do not take priority over Christ and on His kingdom. Money and thing are acceptable and even necessary, but must never become the most important things in our lives.

What we accumulate in this life is not as important as what we have in the next life.

Here is an interested note. In the Sermon on the Mount there are 4 verses on witnessing; 2 on adultery; 3 on forgiveness; 4 on giving; 9 on prayer; 3 on fasting; **16 on money and possessions!**

Read the text: Matthew 6:19-24

1. Single Place (19-21)

One of the most important principles of financial investment is the principle of diversification. Most experts encourage their clients to invest money in a great variety of places. Diversification provides protection against catastrophic losses.

That may be good for financial investment, but just the opposite is true when it comes to eternal treasure. In light of eternity, Jesus mentions only two places to invest. He reveals the problem with one and the advantage of the other.

A. Earth (19)

Store up – Put something aside to protect as a treasure. Carries the idea of **stacking and laying out in horizontal order** as in stacks of coins. Offers the idea of stockpiling for safekeeping.

Treasures – Things stored up and protected as treasure.

Both words come from the same root. Literal translation would be . . .

Do not treasure up treasures for yourselves.

He explains that there are **three things** that will destroy earthly treasures.

1. **Moths** - Garments were expensive commodities. Investment. Tough to protect them from moths that would eat the fabric.
2. **Rust** - Literally, “the act of eating.” Could reference the grains being eaten by mice. Coins that rust. Goods being destroyed.
3. **Thieves** – *Break in*, literally, “dig through.” Mud-diggers.

I opened a retirement account 35 years ago. Grown a little, yearly statements, interest added. I remember the first year I actually lost money.

I'm no economic expert, but I know that there is no way for my money to ever be totally safe. Inflation can take \$100,000 and make it worth \$100.

Venezuela. One round with cancer can deplete all I have. Fire can destroy my **valuables**. We know this. But we still face the temptation to want to get more and more and more. **Burial - \$30,000 each. One man wrote check!**

B. Heaven (20)

Heaven is the best place to invest for the future. **Obvious benefit** to this investment is that it is a **protected investment**. **Not protected by the FDIC, but by L-O-R-D.**

Different location and different treasures. Lay up or save those things that cannot be **affected by death**. Those things that are secured in a place that is out of reach for moths, rust and thieves.

Not only means godliness, character, witnessing. But also, using our material goods in a spiritual investment. **Money spent that leads a person to Christ. Money spent to build a church, send a teen to youth camp, support a missionary, touch a life in Jesus' name are permanent investments.**

C. The Principle (21)

The heart follows the treasure. If your treasure is your bank account, then that is where your heart is. Think more of your account than other things. **It could be your hobby, your house, your car, your job.** What is it in your life that you would be devastated to have to do without? There is a magnetism that draws a man's heart to his treasure. So, if you want to know where your treasure is, follow your heart.

2. Single Focus (22-23)

Jesus uses the eye to illustrate his point. When the eye is clear, light can penetrate, and the image is seen clearly. This allows the body to function properly. But if the eye is clouded, or unable to focus properly, there is trouble.

What is the point? Still in context of money and stuff. No, reason to think that he has changed. Key is in the word, **clear**. Also means **single**. Both eyes focused on a single thing. When there is a single focus sight can be good. If one eye focuses on one thing, and the other on something else, there is no clarity. It leads to confusion and uncertainty.

Same is true spiritually. We cannot focus our desires on possessions and money, and on spiritual things and expect a clear picture of both. The believer who has a priority focus on material things is like one with blurred vision. Focus on Heaven, not on earth.

An eye that is clear represents a heart that has single-minded devotion. Where the eye is cloudy, the heart is full of darkness. A heart which is encumbered with material things is a heart that is blind and insensitive to spiritual things.

1. Single Place
2. Single Focus
3. **Single Master (24)**

Great principle underlying Jesus' words. ***No one can serve two masters!***

Serve - Be a slave to. Only belong exclusively to one master. By definition the master has control over the slave or servant.

Jesus presents God and wealth (money/stuff) as opposite masters. They are rivals who are desiring our allegiance. He speaks of our attitude toward them using opposite terms . . .

Hate one . . . Love the other. Devoted to one . . . Despise the other

They have opposite orders.

One calls us to live by faith and the other demands that we walk by sight.

One calls us to humble trust Him for the future. The other calls us to proudly build our own reserves as a guard against future trouble.

One calls us to set our minds on eternal things. The other one calls us to set our minds on the things of this world.

The simple truth is this:

The way we use our money and possessions is an accurate barometer of our spiritual condition.