

Money Matters

Matthew 6:19-24

If you were to get online right now and type in the title of this morning's message, "Money Matters", you would quickly find out that 'money matters' in America. There are podcasts, financial seminars, movies, songs and all kinds of topics that speak specifically about money and how much it 'matters'. The Scriptures themselves contain all kinds of warnings about the love of money and then turns around to give us examples of how that riches (like Boaz) were used to bless the community and family. I've heard people that are single say that one of the topics they talk about before they agree to marry is...guess what...money. In this pandemic, churches have been falsely accused that the only reason that we want to reopen soon is over money. Money is one of the reasons that longtime friendships have been developed...and ended because there is the warning about entering into a business relationship with or borrowing from a friend. **The 10th Commandment warns us of coveting our neighbor's things**. You may have your own thoughts about money as I speak. So, it only makes sense that Jesus plunges into the matters of money as He preaches to the people of Galilee in Capernaum. But I hope that you also noticed that He had no qualms with emphasizing that when money becomes the singular focus as the standard for success or happiness that money can produce idolatry, spiritual darkness, and slavery. Jesus wants us to understand that when it comes to our walk with the Lord that "Money Matters".

I. IN RESPECT TO EARTH

Vss. 19, 23-24

(a) **Lay Not Up:** Once again, Jesus gives us an example of what to not do in life. We will look at verse 22 in a moment but look at it quickly and see where Jesus speaks of the eye being '*single*'. When we focus solely on money and willingly become singular in our goals of financial success, know that there will be some consequences that follow that focus.

1. Your treasures are on earth. Undoubtedly you will become 'so earthly minded that you're no heavenly good'. Verse 19 gives you some of the reasons why your focus will become so earthly (secular).

a. Devaluation: Simply put, if you are a glutton for punishment, go look at your retirement account since COVID-19 began. It's not going to be pretty. Neither is what a moth does to fabric (the Jews garments of purple) or what rust does to metal; it depreciates in value. Vs. 19

Puritan Thomas Fuller wrote, “*Riches are long in getting with much pains, hard in keeping with much care, quick in losing with more sorrow.*”

b. Invasion: If you had money in Israel, you became a target thieves and robbers invading your home to steal what you had worked so hard for. Thieves played a vital role in what happened at Calvary. John 18:40 tells us that Barabbas was a robber. Matthew 27:38 tells us that Jesus was crucified between two thieves.

(b) **All Filled Up**: Verse 19 gives us an example of what can happen to things on earth that ‘run across the board’; you don’t have to love money to have your house broken into or your possessions ruined by natural causes (fire, flood, termites). But verse 23 cuts to the chase about being singularly focused on loving money more than loving God (Father, Son, Holy Ghost). Vs. 23

1. The Evil Eye: We will talk about verse 22 in a minute, but verse 23 warns the person about being so focused on money that we stop seeing the spiritual damage that loving money can do. Verse 19 is about physical loss. Verse 23 is about spiritual loss.

a. Loss of inward focus. The eye is the window of the soul and the lamp of the body (Vs. 22). When the eye focuses on money and riches, it produces darkness a complete darkness of body, soul, and mind. Spiritually, you become ‘septic’.

Illustration: Sepsis is a life-threatening condition in which the body is fighting a severe infection that has spread via the bloodstream. Sepsis violently attacks people who have weak immunity systems, suffer from diabetes, the elderly and those who may have just had surgery (just like COVID). The death rate of COVID in America, according to Johns Hopkins University research, is about 5.9% by their numbers. But the death rate of sepsis in those with weakened immunity systems is upwards of 80%! Verse 23 describes the spiritual mortality rate of the individual that is so focused on money and amassing wealth that there just simply is NO room for the Light of the World, Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 6:6-10 *But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. ⁸ And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. ⁹ But 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. ¹⁰ *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.*

(c) **All Tied Up:** Senior Pastor Kent Hughes, College Church in Wheaton, Illinois said, “*Material possessions tend to focus one’s thoughts and interests on the world only. Wealth gradually enslaves those who are attached to it and perverts their values. The more we have, the easier it is to be possessed by our possessions, comforts, and recreations.*” That is **verse 24** in a nutshell. When your possessions possess you, you are a slave.

- Servants cannot serve two masters (money vs. God)
- He will have love and loyalty for only one
- He will have hatred and scorn for the other
- You cannot serve the Lord and wealth at the same time

1. Mammon was a common word in Israel, especially because the nation bordered the Mediterranean Sea on its west. This word was a Phoenician word and signified the wealth of the sea trade that made Phoenicia rich. In the days of Solomon, sea trade brought him gold, silver, ivory, exotic animals, and birds. The Phoenicians imported wealth into the economic system of the Mediterranean Sea nations.

2. The eye imports the importance of wealth into the spiritual body and exposes us to the possibility of financial slavery to temporary things. That is the love of this world.

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.*

II. IN RESPECT TO HEAVEN

Vss. 20-22

(a) **Better Vision:** Jesus challenges the Galileans to aim just a bit higher towards Heaven and look to a more eternal return on their ‘earthly’ investments. The dangers/challenges of our own ‘security’ becomes void and we now rest within the hope and safety that is provided to us in Jesus Christ. Vss. 20-21

1. Neither moth nor rust do corrupt (render unapparent; consume)

2. Thieves do not break in and steal

a. I hope that you noticed the difference in the two worlds through the words of Jesus. On earth, there are treasures and those treasures can be corrupted; rendered unapparent and consumed. But in Heaven, there are treasures there too. Those are what David described as the ‘*pleasures that are at the Father’s right hand*’, safe and secure from any danger.

Psalm 16:11 *Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*

He who lays up treasures on earth spends his life backing away from his treasures. To him, death is loss. He who lays up treasures in heaven looks forward to eternity; he’s moving daily toward his treasures. To him, death is gain. He who spends his life moving toward his treasures has reason to rejoice. Are you despairing or rejoicing?

Author Randy Alcorn
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(b) **Better Care:** After Pat had her heart attack last summer, she was told that she would now have a cardiologist for the rest of her natural life. But we see in verse 21 that, in Heaven, we not only have Someone who looks after the heart but also the treasures of the heart in Heaven. Sounds like a better deal to me!

Colossians 3:1-3 *If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (ESV)*