

Eternal Investment

Matthew 6:19-24 – Memorial Day (May 29, 2011)

Disciples reflect the values of the kingdom by using money in such a way that displays to everyone that money is not their treasure, God is.

1. Invest Completely in Eternity (6:19-21)

- Stop Storing Up Earthly Treasures because You Can't Take Them With You (6:19):
 - Earthly treasures aren't bad, they just won't last. They will *always* be lost. Earthly treasures will either leave you while you live, or you will leave them when you die.
 - See Ecclesiastes 5:10-15
 - Why do so many Christians dread the thought of leaving this world? Because so many have stored up their treasures on earth, not in heaven.
 - The Treasure Principle by Randy Alcorn, "You can't take it with you—but you *can* send it on ahead.
- Store up Heavenly Treasures because they have Eternal Value
 - Christ isn't against storing up treasures for yourselves. He's all for it. He commands it. He has a treasure mentality. He's just telling us to stop storing them in the wrong place and start storing them in the right place.
 - **Consider the cost-to-benefits ratio:**
 - Don't think just three months or three years ahead. Think thirty years ahead." Christ, the ultimate investment counselor, takes it further. He says, "Don't ask how your investment will be paying off in just thirty years. Ask how it will be paying off in thirty *million* years" (Alcorn).
 - "It is a poor bargain which exchanges the eternal for the temporary, regardless of how much tinsel is used to make the temporal more attractive" (D. A. Carson).
 - **What does it look like to store up treasures in heaven?**
 - See Luke 12:33; 1 Tim. 6:17-19

"As base a thing as money often is, it yet can be transmuted into everlasting treasure. It can be converted into food for the hungry and clothing for the poor; it can keep a missionary actively winning lost men to the light of the gospel and thus transmute itself into heavenly values. Any temporal possession can be turned into everlasting wealth. Whatever is given to Christ is immediately touched with immortality" (A. W. Tozer).

- Guard Your Heart Carefully (6:21)
 - Money is not the main point of this passage but rather your aim in life.
 - What are you living for?
 - Your heart always goes where you put God's money (Alcorn).
 - "The point is that the things most highly treasured occupy the 'heart,' the center of the personality, embracing mind, emotions, and will; and thus the most cherished treasure subtly but infallibly controls the whole person's direction and values" (Carson).
 - We move toward the object on which we fix our gaze, so gaze at heaven (Col. 3:1-4).
 - "I've heard people say, 'I want more of a heart for missions.' I always respond, 'Jesus tells you exactly how to get it. Put your money in missions—an in your church and the poor—and your heart will follow'" (Alcorn).

2. Gaze at Heaven with Undivided Attention (6:22-23)

Metaphor: through the eye the body finds its way. If the bad eyes let in no light, the body is in darkness.

If you divide your interests and try to focus on both God and possessions, you will have no clear vision and you will live without direction in life. The good eye is fixed solely on God, unwavering in its gaze, and constant in its fixation.

3. Worship God Wholeheartedly (6:24)

- Every financial transaction reveals our heart by presenting an opportunity to worship Jesus or worship ourselves.
- God owns everything. We use it. We are just His money managers. It is our job to find out what he wants us to do with his money, and then to carry it out.
- There are three things you can do with money: spend it, save it, give it away
 - **Spend:** provide for your family
 - Why is debt so bad? Because it severely limits our ability to give, which in turn draws our hearts away from Jesus.
 - **Save:** provide for your future (Prov. 6:6, 8; 13:11; 21:5; 24:27)
 - Prudent preparation can help address many finance-related worries (unemployment, sudden crisis, spouse's death, can't afford kids, retirement funds)
 - Emergency savings fund, Life insurance, Live only off husbands income, Use retirement calculator to plan ahead
 - **Give:** Giving is the only antidote to materialism.
 - God prospers me not to raise my standard of living, but to raise my standard of giving.
 - How much should I give away?

“I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. In other words, if our expenditure on comforts, luxuries, amusements, etc., is up to the standard common among those with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little. If our charities [giving habits] do not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say that they are too small. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot do because our charities [giving] expenditure excludes them” (C. S. Lewis).

Conclusion:

- *Community*
 - Don't ask, don't tell policy concerning money: Are you inviting biblical accountability into this area of your life?
- *Gospel*
 - “Our giving is a reflexive response to the grace of God in our lives... We give because He first gave to us” (Alcorn).