

Intro: TBD

Uncomfortable Topic: why? Skepticism. Feelings of guilt or shame. Defensive (Protect what you value the most.) Private.

“Choose Your G/god”

Matthew 6:1-4, 19-24

Context: 21-48 - Focused primarily on how we relate to our neighbor. Chapter 6 focuses on how we relate directly to God.

The Point: Worship your way out of the American dream by giving more to God.

Read 6:1-4

1. Give for the pleasure of God, not the praise of people. (6:1-4)

New Guiding Principle (6:1)

- In the form of a warning. “Beware”
- Really expounds the original thesis statement in 5:20. The theme of the entire sermon—the greater righteousness demanded of Jesus’ disciples—clearly continues.
- “Practice righteousness.”
 - Right action. Doing the will of God.
 - Jesus is going to give 3 examples but certainly not limited to these 3 of giving, prayer, and fasting.
- Right action + wrong motivation = hypocrisy.
 - Greek actors who who different masks to play different roles in a play.
 - So it came to be used for a person who looked one way on the outside but was something else on the inside. (Osbourne)
 - “That’s fake.” (baby talk, **baby pic**)
- Verse 1 does not contradict 5:16 because the motives in the two passages are entirely different.¹
 - Inevitable influence - overflows
 - The other seeks influence - forced
 - Inside out - overflows. Outside in - obligatory. One is joyful. The other joyless.
- The S.o.M is a sermon about the heart!

Giving...

- Verse 2: Pattern... [When you ____, not like the hypocrites... received their reward, give/pray/fast in secret for true reward.]
- Explain “give to the needy”
 - Almsgiving — **“For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.’” (Deuteronomy 15:11)**
 - This was an important part of their worship when they came to the temple or synagogue.
 - Giving was and still is the expectation. Jesus’ focus is not really on giving but on how we give.

Why we give: Self-glory or God’s glory

- Self-glory

¹ Blomberg, C. (1992). *Matthew* (Vol. 22, p. 116). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

- Praise of people — reward now.
 - “Sound the trumpet.” - LOOK AT ME! Draw attention to yourself...
 - Luke 18:9-14
 - Our good works are not performed for the applause of others. We do “not parade [our] piety.”
 - No bricks. No plaques on the walls. Motivation through Recognition.
 - “If the motive is wrong, the act has no value and will receive “no reward” in heaven.” (Osborne)
- God’s Glory
 - Self is removed. It’s not about me. It’s not for me. It’s for him.
 - “Verse 3 an idiom for total privacy, disregarding one’s self entirely in the act of helping the poor.” (Osbourne)
 - The point is to give because of the goodness of giving to meet a need, and as a way to point to God’s greatness.
 - It’s not saying that we should never discuss giving with one another, or that we need to disguise ourselves when we drop a gift in the collection box on the way out of worship. :)
 - Pleasure of God — our greatest reward, now & then.
 - the Father rewards us!
 - Present blessing? Yes (Acts 20:38?)
 - Future blessing? No doubt.
 - “Give in such a way that there is no temptation for others to glorify the giver rather than God.

T: Most of us don’t have a huge problem with this, because our bigger problem is 19-24.

2. Give for the praise of God from a life of worship (19-24).

- **Craig Blomberg** says how we handle money is “**the most important test-case of one’s profession of discipleship.**”
- And calls **materialism: “the single biggest competitor with authentic Christianity for the hearts and souls of millions in our world today.”**

Jesus shares this 1 message in 3 ways. These words form one of his clearest teachings on materialism.

Your heart follows your treasure.

- Earthly vs...
 - Any material possession. Anything of value we can accumulate, including money.
 - These created goods are temporal.
 - **“But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.” (1 Timothy 6:6-10)**
 - Content: with necessities (this passage doesn’t have a lot of appeal - exactly). We assume we don’t love money. Am I right? What about you? Do you love it? (Give me half!)
 - Desire: Your salary, your assets, your net worth is irrelevant.
- Heavenly:
 - Storing up treasure in heaven refers to using material resources to meet spiritual and physical needs according to kingdom priorities. (Blomberg)

- Treasure in heaven lives forever. (Dot or the line?)
- Chase after what we value. Randy Alcorn (The Treasure Principle)
 - Key #2: My heart always goes where I put God's money. Do you wish you cared more about eternal things? Then reallocate some of your money, maybe most of your money, from temporal things to eternal things. Watch what happens.

Your health follows your vision.

- Dark room. Eye is source of light. Good eye guides the person's life.
- Where is your focus? We set our eyes on what we believe to be valuable.
 - Some of you single dudes or my brothers that are dating (shoot, we'll even throw married brothers in there): don't use this as a pick up line - My pastor said we set our eyes on what we believe to be most valuable. Well I must be on the Forbes 500 list because my eyes are set on you!
- Perceive. Prize. Pursue.
- "You can tell a lot about a person by watching his eyes." (Danny Akin)
- Black Friday/Cyber Monday Ads.

Your devotion follows your love.

- The Greek word for "Money" refers to all of a person's material resources" (Blomberg)
- Jesus says, money cannot be your master.
- **"Master" suggests living under total allegiance of someone or something else.**
- Essentially, Jesus says: choose your God. It's me or money.
 - This is the S.o.M. Jesus is not after your money. He's after you!
 - Find your worth and your security in me, not in what I've made.
- Do you see what Jesus is saying? There is not one area of our life that is off limits to Jesus? Abilities? Time? Relationships? Money?

T: I would love to be the kind of Christian, and I would love to pastor a church where the primary motivation for giving is not compulsion and it's not even need, it's desire born out of devotion. How?

3. Worship your way out of materialism by giving more. (24)

Key #5: Giving is the only antidote to materialism.

- "American Christians give on average between 2 and 3 percent of their income."
- Why? Trinity (Bountiful, effusive, abundant, generous)
 - Everything belongs to him.
 - **Generosity says: "God gives money. Therefore, my money is his, and I use it to glorify him."** (MAIN POINT - give to God!)
 - **Greed says: "I earn. Therefore, my money is mine, and I use it however I please."** (Munson)
 - Giving reflects the heart of God.
 - "Every gift breaks the barrier between the sacred and the mundane and floods the mundane with the sacred. When a gift is given, life becomes extraordinary because God's own gift giving flows through the giver." - Miroslav Volf
- ¥ Why? The generosity of God hit its height in the cross of Christ. **"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich."** (2 Corinthians 9:8)

How? Principles for Mature Giving

- **First:** Don't give God your leftovers. We see this principle in Proverbs 3: "Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce." (Proverbs 3:9) Give. Save. Spend. The bent of our hearts is the reverse, and we usually do so until we have little to save or give. Reverse the trend. New Normal.
- **Voluntary:** Not because we have to, because we want to.
- **Cheerful:** Not because we have to, because we love to.
- **Systematic:** We give on the regular. If you give once or twice a year, that's not super systematic or regular.
- **Proportionate:** The New Testament does not seem to stipulate a 10% gift, but I do see that as a good starting place for consideration. Why? If the people of God contributed a tithe of their income (i.e., 10%) before Jesus came, how could we now, in light of what we have experienced in Christ, seek to give any less? The idea is that we are all contributing together. All doing our part to see Redemption Hill thrive in the mission God has given us.
 - Listen to the words of **2 Corinthians 9:7** — **"Each one must give as he has decided in his heart (Systematic, Proportionate), not reluctantly or under compulsion (Voluntary), for God loves a cheerful giver (Cheerful)."**
 - Best giving should be to your local church. Why? It's God's primary means of accomplishing his mission in the world. But our giving should not be limited to our local church.
- **Sacrificial**
 - ["I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. 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 do not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say they are too small. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot do because our charitable expenditure excludes them." - C.S. Lewis]

Which of these is most difficult for you? What will it take for you to move forward toward mature giving.

I want to encourage every one of us toward **Mature Giving (Where are You?) >> Missing (No Giving) > Immature Giving > Mature Giving > Generous Giving**

Give more. Starting. More Maturity.

[[Missing MIA > Start. Cut eating out? Unnecessary bills? Cheaper purchases? If you are visiting, we really do not expect you to give a dime today. If you desire to, then we will not stop you, but that is not our expectation. But if you call RHC home and you are in the missing category: that's not cool. It doesn't make sense to me. Give something. Start.

Immature Giving > Some of you have never had this modeled for you. Perhaps you've never been taught what it looks like, or you've never considered why giving is so important and how it reflects the heart of God. Hopefully, no one can say that after today.

Mature Giving > First, Voluntary, Cheerful, Systematic, Proportionate, and Sacrificial, which will set you up to be a... **Generous Giving]]**

Conclusion:

- Give for the sake of your own joy...
- To not share this with you is to rob you not take from you.
 - There is joy in giving.
 - There is blessing (it's more blessed to give than receive).
 - Gospel-centrality - Jesus generous...
- What are you living for?
 - Dot or the line? (Alcorn)