

Treasures in Heaven, Part 2

Scripture: Matthew 6:19-24

Code: 2246

This morning again we have the wonderful privilege of coming to the 6th chapter of Matthew. A text in our on going study of Matthew which we began to look at last Lord's Day, Matthew 6 verses 19 to 24, Matthew 6:19 to 24. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal, But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The lamp of the body is the eye; if, therefore, thine eye be healthy, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and money."

Martyn Lloyd Jones tells the story of a farmer. The farmer bounded joyfully into his kitchen one day and confronting his wife with a great big grin on his face he announced to her that their finest cow had just given birth to twins, one brown and one white. He said, I feel the impulse to dedicate one of these cows to the Lord, we'll bring them up together and when they are at a marketable age we'll sell them and we'll keep the proceeds from one and we'll give the proceeds from the other to the Lord. His wife went right to the issue as wives are prone to do and said, which is the Lord's cow? The white one or the brown one? He replied, well there's no need to worry about that dear, or to decide that now since we'll raise them together.

Some months later he entered the same kitchen a little more slowly, looking very sad. His wife asked why he was so sullen, to which he replied, I have bad news, the Lord's cow died. Why is it always the Lord's cow, that dies? I guess we laugh at that because we identify with that kind of approach. We could even say, the Lord took His cow home. I guess the fact is we all tend to lay up treasure on earth. The pull of the sin that is in us drags us down to the earth, it is like a magnet, it is like a gravity, and we want to be rich towards self and poor toward God. So it's usually God's cow that dies. Jesus I believe speaks directly to this perspective on life in these verses, and I think He gives us a tremendous insight into how we are to really see the matter of wealth, the matter of money, the matter of luxuries.

Now in the passage following verse 24 from verse 25 to 34 He talks about necessities, He talks about eating and drinking and clothing and a place to sleep and the bare necessities, and how we are to deal with those, but in this portion He is discussing not necessity but luxury. In fact as we have been

flowing through the Sermon on the Mount our Lord has been touching every area of life. He has touched on in the Beatitudes our view of ourself, in the great passage on salt and light our view of how we fit in the world, in the section on the law of God our view of Scripture. In that marvelous section from 5:21 to 5:48 He has talked about our view of morality.

In chapter 6 verses 1 to 18 He has discussed our view of religious service or worship, how we fast, how we pray, how we give. And now He moves into our perspective on material things, luxury first, and necessity next, and so He touches every area of life. And we come to this section, and are confronted with a tremendous statement in verse 19, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth," and a corresponding one in verse 20, "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." And the heart of the matter in verse 21 literally, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Ask yourself the question in your life, is it always the Lord's cow that dies? When you get down to having to decide whether it's for you or for Him, who is it usually for? That's the real issue. Where is your heart? It's where your treasure is, wherever you put your investment is where you're going to put your heart. If all that you possess is locked up in commodities and accounts and notes and savings and whatever else that's where your heart's going to be. But if it is in the process of being invested in God's causes that's where your heart's going to be.

I can give you a simple illustration from my own life, there are a lot of people that come across my path, a lot of missionaries, I'm not always sensitive to their needs as I ought to be but on one occasion I recognized the need of a certain missionary for a suit of clothes, so I said to him one day come on I want to take you somewhere and we went down to a, to a place and I said I want you to buy a suit, whatever kind you want I'd like to, to give that to you as a gift. So he ah, picked out a suit. There are a lot of missionaries that I have met and forgotten, but not that one. Because I made an investment in his life, where my treasure is my heart tends to be, and so I've thought of him often and prayed for him often. You see wherever I set my heart is really the critical issue in my spiritual life. Wherever my affections are is going to determine how I perceive everything. And if my heart is right and my treasure is toward God, then I'm going to have the right kind of spiritual perception. Wherever my heart is, is going to be where my treasure is because I have to attach myself to my investment, that's really the matter that Jesus is speaking of.

Now for the Pharisees, their heart was in the earth. They were phonies every way you cut it, their morality was totally external, that's what chapter 5 was saying. Their humility was nonexistent, instead of being salt and light they were part of the corruption and and the darkness. Instead of believing in the law of God they defied the law of God and substituted for it their own tradition. Instead of having a really internal heart set of principles they had nothing but an external code of sort of semi-spiritual ethics. Instead of having genuine worship they had a false standard and it was pure hypocrisy. Everything about them was outside, external, self-centered, and self-motivated. And in contrast to that the Lord is saying, you must have a right heart. That's why in chapter 5 verse 20 the key verse in all the Sermon on the Mount He says, "Your righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and

Pharisees." Theirs is an external righteousness without a right heart, and what I want is a right heart. So your heart and your treasure go together and both need to be toward heaven. What our Lord is speaking of here is a single minded devotion to God and His causes that is undistracted by the world.

Now, I believe that when your heart is right your giving will be right too, so it's not an issue with me to preach on giving. To give a lot of messages on money, to have fund drives and pledge cards and whatever else to get you to give money, because I really believe that if the heart is right the treasure comes along after the heart. Let me show you an illustration of that, go back in your Bible to Nehemiah chapter 8, Nehemiah chapter 8, and I just want to show you, you'll remember that Nehemiah was God's man to rebuild the wall, the fallen walls of Jerusalem after the Babylon captivity, he came back and he set about with the people of the land to rebuild the wall which he did in 52 days, they had a wonderful time, and when the wall was completed a great event took place, a revival. And the revival was initiated in chapter 8 verse 1 when it says that Ezra, brought the book of the law of Moses. Revival always begins with the bringing of the book. Revival always begins with the Word of God. Verse 5 of Nehemiah 8 says, "And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people); and when he opened it all the people stood up. And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, lifting their hands; and bowed their heads, and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground." Verse 8, "They read in the book in I the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."

Now they read the law of God, and the law of God generated a heart response, and if you go to chapter 9 you find that basically there were four things that came out of the reading of the law. Number one was conviction of sin, they began to confess their sin, number two was a desire for obedience, number three was praise, and number four was a covenant or a promise. First they were convicted of their sin, they began to praise God, they began to express a desire to obey God, and then they affirmed that they wanted to make a promise or a covenant, chapter 9 verse 38, "And because of all this we make a sure covenant and write it; and our princes, Levites, and priests, set their seal to it." In sight of all their spiritual leaders they wanted to make a covenant, a vow to God, a promise as a result of their hearts being revived through the reading of the Word. And what does a revival produce? It'll produce conviction of sin, it'll produce a desire for obedience, it'll produce praise and I believe it'll produce a covenant, a promise.

In other words a decision to start to walk in a new direction, a moment in time in which direction is altered dramatically, and what was their covenant? Most wonderfully and amazingly you'll notice verse 32, "Also we made ordinances for us, to charge ourselves yearly with the third part of a shekel for the service of the house of our God," the first thing they wanted to affirm other than general obedience to the law of God is that they would pay that third shekel temple tax required of them. "For the showbread, and the continual meal offering, and burnt offering, and Sabbaths, and new moons, and set feasts, and holy things, and sin offerings to make an atonement for Israel, and all the work of the house of our God." In other words they would give to support the functioning of the house of God.

Now the point is this, when the heart is made right the initial response was giving. And further, you look down in verse 35, "They would bring the first fruits of the ground, the first fruits of all the fruit of all trees, year by year, to the house of the LORD: The first born of our sons, our cattle, as it is written in the law, the firstlings of our herds and our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, unto the priests who minister in the house of our God; And that we should bring the first fruits of our dough, and our offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, of wine and oil, unto the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God; and the tithes of our ground to the Levites, and the same Levites might have the tithes in all the cities of our tillage. And the priest, the son of Aaron, shall be with the Levites, when the Levites take tithes; and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes to the house of our God, to the chambers, into the treasure house. For the children of Israel and the children of Levi shall bring the offering..." and it goes on. What did they do when revival came, what was their initial act of obedience? Financial. Take care of responsibilities given them by God. Beyond that they gave freely of the first fruits of everything they possessed. What I'm saying is when the heart is right the treasure is poured toward God.

And so in terms of spiritual life you're always dealing with a heart attitude, because it is out of the heart that man operates, as he thinks in his heart, what? So is he. And so we preach to the matter of the heart, out of a right heart. I believe that's what our Lord is saying. I believe that when the heart is right the treasure is sent toward God, for wherever our treasure is our heart has an inseparable attachment to that, and conversely wherever our heart is that's where we put our treasure. In Exodus 35:21 it says, "And everyone who was willing, and whose heart moved him came and brought an offering to the LORD." In First Chronicles 29 verse 9 it says, "For they had given freely with their whole heart to the LORD."

Now, the heart is the issue and we've told you many times that the heart is the thinking cognitive part of man not just his emotions. "As a man thinketh in his heart." The Hebrews see the bowels as the emotions, the heart as the cognitive process, dependent upon our thinking pattern, our knowledge of God, our knowledge of His Word, our commitment to those things will be the investment of our treasure. So the heart has to be right, and if the heart is right then everything is right. That's why Jesus preaches this sermon the way He does. If the heart is right it won't be proud, it'll be cowering as a beggar in spirit, mourning in meekness, if the heart is right it won't attach to the world it will be salt and light, if the heart is right it won't violate the law of God it'll keep the law of God, if the heart is right it'll not say, well we don't kill, it will not even be angry with a brother, it'll not just say, well we don't commit adultery, it won't even commit adultery in its heart, see. If the heart is right then we will not approach religion hypocritically and superficially, and we will not do our alms before men, and we will not give to be seen, and we will not pray in the middle of the street to be seen of men, it'll be a matter of honesty and integrity because the heart is the issue. And if the heart is right we will not lay up for ourselves treasures on earth like the Pharisees did, we won't be as Jesus said, The Pharisees also are greedy, covetous. But we will deal with those commodities which God has graciously given

us by investing them in His eternal kingdom, A very vital thing.

Now we're forced then, people to a decision, we're forced to make a choice, and that's why we've divided this text into three parts, where Christ gives us three choices, two treasuries, two visions, and two masters. Two treasuries, two visions, and two masters. And beloved we are forced to choose, we have to choose. And we have to choose I think initially and once for all and maybe in a covenantal way as did the people in Nehemiah's time, but we have to follow that up with an everyday, maybe every moment of everyday choice reaffirming that covenant. We must choose where our treasure is, what our vision will be and who are master is to be.

Let's look then at these three choices. Number one, two treasuries. two treasuries. Now reviewing briefly, last time we looked at verse 19, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth." And we talked about the word thesaurizoin the Greek which is the word to treasure up treasures. In other words we're talking here about luxuries, about that which we hoard or store up or stack. It is not wrong to accumulate money, it is not wrong to accumulate possessions which are then invested in divine causes and in God's purposes, and God's purposes are to care for our family and to care for our extended family in the church and to care for even those who are not of the family of God but have need, and to care for the causes of God around the world, and to invest in souls, those things are needful uses of what God gives us. But to stockpile selfishly accumulating with greed and covetousness, piles and piles of things treasuring up for ourselves on earth these commodities is that which our Lord says not to do, to be consumed with material wealth, to labor for the food that perishes, to put it in the words of John 6. But on the other hand verse 20, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven."

Now beloved we must focus very clearly on this because I'm going to show you as we go through this how utterly essential it is that we respond to this command of verse 20, we are to lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven. It makes sense, G. Campbell Morgan says, "You are to remember with the passion burning within you that you are not the child of today, you are not of the earth, you are more than dust, you are the child of tomorrow, you are of the eternities, you are the offspring of deity, the measurement of your life cannot be circumscribed by the point where blue sky touches green earth." He goes on to say, "All the fact of your life cannot be compassed in the one small sphere upon which you live, you belong to the infinite. If you make your fortune on the earth poor, sorry, silly soul. You have made a fortune and stored it in a place where you cannot hold it." Then he says, "Make your fortune, but store it where it will greet you in the dawning of the new morning." We cannot lay up our treasure on earth, that is not characteristic of those in His kingdom. That was characteristic of the Pharisees and in a sense He was saying to them, it's another indicator like all the rest that I've talked about that you're not in My kingdom no matter what you claim. People in My kingdom don't lay up treasure on earth.

Now when the Lord said this, treasures on earth and treasures in heaven, those words and those terms were very familiar to the Jews. They had many sayings about alms giving, piling treasure in heaven, they used those terms so Jesus was speaking in a vernacular they understood. They believed that deeds of mercy and deeds of kindness to people in distress were tantamount to storing up riches in heaven. For example, the rabbis told a rather famous story about a certain King Monobaz, and the story of this certain king was that when he became king he inherited incredible riches from his forefathers, the previous kings. But during the time of his reign he gave all of his fortune to the poor and the needy and the suffering and the afflicted. His brothers sent to him and said this, "Thy fathers gathered treasure, and added to those of their fathers, but thou hast dispersed that treasure." He said this to them, "My fathers gathered treasures for below, I have gathered treasures for above; they stored treasures in a place over which the hand of man can rule, I have stored treasures in a place over which the hand of man cannot rule; my fathers collected treasures which bear no interest; I have gathered treasures which eternally bear interest; my fathers gathered treasures of money, I have gathered treasures in souls; my fathers gathered treasures in this world, and I have gathered treasures in the world to come." And this was a familiar story told by the rabbis. So they understood the concept to which our Lord spoke. Invest in His kingdom.

Now the early church had this commitment. The early church was not interested in piling up its own wealth, you find for example in Acts chapter 2 that when the day of Pentecost came there were thousands of pilgrims gathered in Jerusalem, and we know from history that they would move in and live within the homes of the people who lived in the city, the city would literally swell with population and there were not enough inns to care for them and so they would move into the homes. Many of these people became believers in the great day of Pentecost when Peter preached and three thousand were redeemed and many thousand more in the next few chapters. And now they were there and they were believers and they didn't want to return, because they were in the church and it had been born there and there was excitement and joy, and so the believers had to absorb them, and I'm sure that many of them were poor and without any resource so that the early church had to give to them to meet their needs, and they were busy selling what they possessed, right? As all men had need and meeting those needs. That's always been the way with the church. Even during the time of the Decian persecution in Rome, when the Roman authorities broke into a certain church. They, they broke into churches thinking they could loot their treasures and the Roman who was in charge, the prefect stepped up to one saint named Laurentius and he said, "Show me your treasures at once." Laurentius pointed to a group of widows and orphans who happened to be eating a meal and he said, "There are the treasures of the church." We have invested all we have in them. That's treasure in heaven. Beloved remember that what we keep we lose and what we invest with God we gain eternally.

Let me show you the principle, Proverbs chapter 3 verse 9 it says this, "Honor the LORD with your substance, and with the first fruits of all your increase." Alright? "Honor the Lord with your substance, "that's everything you have, all of it, "and with the first fruits of all your increase." Give Him the first

part. You don't want it to be the Lord's cow that died, give Him the first. As a result verse 10, "So shall your barns be filled with plenty, and your presses shall burst out with new wine." You will never be able to invest with God without getting a dividend; you'll get all the investment back and more. In Proverbs chapter 11 verse 24, "There is he that scattereth, and yet increaseth;" isn't that interesting? "There is he that scattereth, and yet increaseth." Amazing, well that's not so amazing that's what a farmer does, isn't it? He throws away a little seed and gets a whole crop. And that's what He's saying. "There is he that withholds and becomes poor. The liberal soul shall be made fat." The more you scatter the more you receive. Paul said in Second Corinthians 9, "Sow sparingly, reap sparingly; sow bountifully, (what?) reap bountifully." Look at Luke chapter 6 for a moment and verse 38, this is the word of the Lord Himself in Luke 6:38 He says this, "Give, and it shall be given unto you;" in other words you give to God and God returns to you, not just a little bit but "good measure, pressed down, shaken together." In other words it's all compacted and squished in and squashed down and pressed together, so that it's packed and running over. And notice this, "For with the very same measure that you measure it shall be measured to you again." God only gives you the return on what you've invested. All our spiritual life long we fight the battle of where we put our treasure, our luxury, our wealth. Put it in heaven, receive an eternal dividend.

Now what is our treasure? What is He really talking about here? What is this treasure in heaven? Well we could talk about it on a very broad base; we could talk about the fact that our treasure in heaven is an "incorruptible, undefiled, inheritance laid away for us." As Peter calls it. We could say that our treasure in heaven is "Christ more than anything else." Our treasure in heaven is a faithfulness that will never be removed, a life that will never end, a love that will never cease, a spring of water that never runs dry, a gift that is never lost, a chain that is never broken, and we could say, all that in links us to eternity is our treasure, and we could talk in generalities. But let's talk in very, very specific terms. What is He talking about here? Simply stated folks, money, luxury, wealth.

Let me show you this, First Timothy chapter 6 is a comparative passage which essentially indicates to us the very same thing. First Timothy chapter 6 verse 17, verse 17, "Charge them that are rich in this age," that's us by the way, we're all in that category, "that they be not highminded," in other words don't let your riches make you proud, "nor trust in uncertain riches," don't trust in the riches, "but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.." Now we have the wealth, we're not to be proud about it, we're not to trust in it, what are we to do with it? Verse 18 now watch, "Do good," how do you do good? Why "be rich in good works," well what good works? "Ready to distribute, willing to share." Did you get that?

The call of God upon our lives regarding our luxuries and our wealth is that we distribute and we share as opposed to hoarding it, stockpiling it. Verse 19 says, as a result, "Laying up," and it's the very same verb thesaurizo, "treasuring up treasure for themselves." Very same word. What does it mean then to put treasure in heaven? It means to distribute and to share the riches God has given to us, In that way He says, "We put together a good foundation against the time to come, and we lay

hold on all of the fullness of the meaning of our eternal life."

In other words we then expose ourselves to the full potentiality of all that eternal life can mean. The more I send ahead into glory the greater the glory when I get there, the greater the investment, the greater the reward. And thus when we see the concept of treasure in Matthew 6 we are specifically talking about wealth. In Mark 10:21 the Bible says, "Sell what you have, give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven." Now it's the same principle, he had more than he needed, He didn't say sell what you need, He said, sell what you have, what's just stockpiled. And in his case I guess because of his own spiritual problems it could have been everything he possessed because it stood between him and God. But for us what is beyond the necessity we should be willing to give to one who has a need. Look at Luke for a moment, chapter 12 verse 33, Luke 12:33 and I think it's as simply stated here as in Matthew, almost parallel, "Sell what you have, and give alms;" that means give to poor people, "provide yourselves bags which grow not old," He says, don't just stick your money in bags that are going to rot and decay, put your money in bags that will never grow old, watch, "a treasure in the heavens that faileth not." See? That's where our investment is to be.

In Luke chapter 16 1 come to a verse that just speaks to my heart so much, Luke 16 verse 9, "And I say unto you, (verse 9) make to yourselves friends by means of the unrighteous money, that, when it is gone, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." Now money is basically an unrighteous commodity, that's not despairing it or, or damning it that's just stating that it money has no righteous virtue. So He says this, as long you've got an, an unrighteous commodity to start with, something that has no righteous virtue use it to make yourself friends who will receive you into everlasting habitations. You know what that means? That means invest your money in the souls of people who someday will greet you in thanksgiving when you step on the shore of heaven. What a fabulous thought, what an incredible anticipation. He says, make friends with your money who will receive you into an everlasting habitation, what a promise. Homer sang, How many are the souls, how many are the chained that I have freed. How many in whose lives I have invested will be standing there to greet me when I enter into His presence? What are you going to do with your treasure? Whatever you keep here you lose, whatever you send ahead by investment in the lives and the souls of those around you you gain forever. What a glorious promise. Listen, Proverbs 19:17 says this, "He that hath pity on the poor," listen now, "lendeth to the LORD,"

Now what is the basic principle of a loan, what is the one thing a loan implies? You're going to get paid back. And so says Proverbs, you have pity on the poor and you lend to the Lord, and the rest of the verse says, and that which he hath given will he pay back again." Eternal dividends, don't be earth bound, don't put treasure in this world, don't stockpile your stuff here, invest it in forever. That's the heart of the matter.

Now there's a reason for this, let's go back to our text and see what it is. Two treasuries, why should we choose the heavenly one? Because in the earthly one "moth and rust corrupt, and thieves break

through and steal." Verse 19 says. But in the heavenly one there's no moth, rust, and thieves don't break through and steal.

Now listen to this, in the Orient in Bible times wealth was basically kept in three ways, all right? Basically wealth was kept in three ways, there was no paper, there were no ah, bank books, there, there was not the kind of system we have, wealth was identified in literal commodities, and basically there were three, garments, grain, and gold or precious metal. Garments, grain, and gold. Take for example garments, in biblical times garments were a very, very important commodity. You will remember for example that Gehazi the servant of Elisha wished to make some forbidden profit out of Naaman's curing of leprosy, and so he asked for a talent of silver and two changes of garments because that was substantial wealth. Wealth had to be in a commodity, and wealth was expressed in fancy, rich, extravagant garments. Do you remember Achan?

In Joshua chapter 7 said, I, I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment and I coveted and I took it. You will remember that Joseph when he bestowed upon Benjamin his affection gave him five changes of garments. You will remember that Samson said, if you can answer the riddle I promise you thirty garments and thirty changes. You see garments were always an expression of wealth because they were a commodity of great value, very often there was gold woven into the garment, the dying processes could be unique, the material was so hard to make and some of it was very fancy and people literally possessed their wealth in a garment. But there's a problem with garments, do you see it there in verse 19? Moths, get to garments, you noticed. We have moth balls, don't we? To prevent that. But have you ever noticed that moths don't eat what you have on? Have you not noticed that? Never said, moth! They only eat what you store. You go back three years later, we've all got that, closet's fuum, you know and because we change our sizes so often we hang onto stuff, figuring we'll get back to it sooner or later, right? We tend to hoard and we know that we have a lot of our treasure invested in our garments, don't we? And a lot of it's sitting around for moths, moths will corrupt it, they will consume it it literally means.

Another way they stored their wealth was in grain. Do you remember the rich fool said, I will tear down my barns and I will build what? Bigger barns, to hold more of my wealth. And his wealth was in grain, and you notice the word rust? In verses 19 and 20, actually the word means eating, eating. -No where is it used to mean rust, no where in the Bible at all, in fact I don't think there's anyone who's ever found a place where it's used to mean rust. What it basically means is eating, brosis. And you know what the problem with grain is? Mice, rats, worms, vermin, they eat it. I told you a few months ago that 15% of all of the stored grain of India is eaten by rats and mice, even today. And the problem if you have all your money in grain is that the little things that get in there can eat it. There was a third commodity that they put their treasure into and that was gold or precious metal, you know what the problem with that is? How are you going to hide it? Well you might keep it in your house, but a thief could break in and steal it or as was most common they would find a place in their field that only they knew, in the dark of night, go out dig a big hole in the field and bury it, that's why in Matthew 13 you

have the treasure stored in a field, remember that? The parable. Because that's where they put their wealth, they put it in bags and stuck it in the ground and covered it over, and thieves would lurk around at night and watch where they did that and they'd go and dig it up. And not only that when a thief broke into a house the word literally means to dig through, mud diggers, thieves were mud diggers, why? They would literally dig through the wall of a house, or dig through the dirt in the ground to get it. So your garments would be eaten by moths, your grain would be eaten by whatever kind of animal or insect or vermin got in it, and your gold would be taken by mud diggers. The point is this, you hoard it you lose it, it's unsafe and insecure. And what do we do today? Boy, we got our moth balls and we got our rat poison and we got our burglar alarms. Penny's, the other day out on the Northridge Mall had the most sophisticated burglar system imaginable, in ten minutes some thieves came in and the first estimate they think they got forty thousand dollars worth of gold in ten minutes, it could be as high as eighty thousand. None of that stuff is really very safe, is it? I guess you'd be better off to send it into the kingdom and reap its rewards forever, wouldn't you? People say, well I have mine in a bank, haah, those of you who went through the depression are beginning to get a little bit itchy about now. There is no place of security in this life, and even if you kept it all till you died when you left here like the man I said about last week when someone said he died, he said, what did he leave? And he said, everything. You're going to leave it anyway. Where's your heart? There are many millionaires who will be paupers in eternity and there are paupers in this life who will be millionaires forever, where's your treasure? Is it always the Lord's cow that dies or do you invest in His kingdom? Two treasuries, where's yours?

Second, two visions. And this just expands our thought from the first few verses, two visions, this is fascinating, verse 22, "The lamp of the body is the eye; if, therefore, thine eye be healthy, thy whole body shall be full of light. If thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness." And we'll stop there for a minute.

Now, He's been talking about your heart and He wants us to have our heart fixed single mindedly and totally devoted on the kingdom of God, so that our treasure is there, our heart is there, our love is there, our passion is there, our burden is there, our investment is there, our all is there, and we're to have that single minded heart. And then He illustrates that with the eye, the eye then becomes the illustration of the heart. And the eye is like the lamp of the body. When we can see with our eyes, sighted people their body is filled with the light that comes in from the world by which they perceive, and understand what's in their vision. But if your eye is dark it is black, there's no light that comes in you perceive nothing. And that's the way it is with the heart, if your heart is toward God it lights your entire spiritual being, if your heart is toward the material things, toward the treasure of the world the blinds come down of your spiritual perception and you do not see, spiritually as you ought.

Tremendous principle. He takes a physical illustration and He says that the eye is like a window, if that window is clean and clear the light floods the body, if the window is blacked out no light enters. This is a spiritual metaphor. But there's a richness in here that I don't want you to miss. Look at the word healthy or single; I don't know what your version says in verse 22. It says, "The lamp of the body

is the eye; and if, therefore, thine eye be (single or) healthy," I want you to see something that I think is fascinating about that word. The word is literally from the root of haplous which means generous, okay, it means generous. It is used that way many, many times, just give you three illustrations, James 1:5, "God who gives liberally." Or generously. Romans 12:8 Paul urges us to "give liberally." Or generously. Second Corinthians 9 he talks about the liberality or the generosity of the Macedonians. It is a word that means generous or liberal. He is saying then, if your eye or your heart, because the eye is illustrating the heart, if your heart is generous your whole spiritual life will be flooded with spiritual understanding. Isn't that a great truth?

You know there are people who come to church and leave church, don't seem to change and they never grow and never seem to love the Word and never seem to be a witness to others and never seem to be productive in their life and they just stay the same way all the time, and when I see somebody like that they never seem to understand what's going on, they never perceive spiritual realities, I wonder to myself so very often if it isn't because they are so focused on the earth and so earthbound and so oriented toward treasures here that the blinds are down and they have no spiritual perception at all. To put it another way, until you take care of the view of money in your life you will never be able to deal with spiritual realities. That's exactly Luke 16:11. If you don't know how to take care of money why would God commit to you the true riches, right? See, what I'm saying here and what our Lord is saying is that this issue is bigger than we think, it may be blinding us in spiritual perception. Verse 23, "If your eye is evil, your whole body's full of darkness." And there you're introduced to the evil eye, you've heard that phrase, haven't you? Gave 'em an evil eye.

You know what the evil eye is? That's a Jewish colloquialism, to mean grudgingly. For example in Deuteronomy 15:9 it talks about when you have a slave and it's coming to the Jubilee Year and he is to be freed, that you have an evil eye toward him. That is you are ungenerous, stingy and you grudge him that freedom. In Proverbs 23:6 it says, "Eat not the bread of him who has an evil eye."

In other words don't eat a bite of somebody's food if they grudge you every bite. How about Proverbs 28:22, this is a tremendous statement, it says, "He that hastens to be rich has an evil eye, and considers not the poverty that shall come upon him." You hurry to be rich and you will be ungenerous, grudging and selfish, that's the contrast. All right He says, you have two treasuries in heaven or in earth. Wherever you put your treasure that's where your heart will be, and if your heart is in heaven where your treasure is you're going to have a generous spirit and that generous spirit is like a seeing eye that floods your spiritual life with perception. If your treasure is in earth you're going to see nothing because the blinds come down in the darkness of your greed and covetousness and you will see nothing, and if that's the case the end of 23 says, "If the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!" It's just an exclamation where our Lord is saying, how total or how great is the darkness of one who should see spiritually but pulls the blinds through his own covetousness. The call then is to exclusive heavenly mindedness, devotion to God, an undivided laying up of treasure in heaven. Let me simplify the whole thing, one statement, how you handle your money is the key to

your spiritual perception. That's the message of verses 22 and 23. And so you have two visions potentially, two treasuries and you make a choice.

Finally you have two masters, verse 24, "You can't serve them both; you'll hate one, and love the other; or else you'll hold to one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money." Now anytime you get into this verse people always say, well I don't agree with that, you can't serve two masters, I work two jobs. Or uhm, my wife, I have my wife and her mother living with me, I can serve two masters. I mean that's not a pro ... I don't see what he's saying. You see the reason people say that basically is because they don't understand the word serve there, it doesn't talk about being an employee in an 8 to 5 job it's the word douleuo from which we get doulos which is the word for bond slave. You can't be a slave to two masters, why? Because slavery by definition means single ownership and full time service. A slave was not a person a slave was a thing, a slave had no rights, a master could beat a slave, kill a slave, sell a slave. A slave was a living tool, no different than a plow or a cow or anything else. A slave was a thing. To be a bond slave, to be the property of a master was to be constantly, totally, entirely, 100% devoted to obedience to that one master, it would be utterly impossible to express that to two different masters.

That's the illustration used in Romans 6 when it says, "Now that we have come to Christ, we must yield ourselves servants to him." Because we are His slaves, we are no longer the slave of sin. God can only be served beloved with entire and exclusive devotion, He can only be served with single mindedness and if you try to split it with money you will either hate one or the other. Let me illustrate, some of you may be sitting here today and you've been hoarding your money, and you've been selfish about it and you haven't been investing it in God's causes, and you haven't been giving it to those in need and you've just been piling it on for yourself, and so while I'm preaching this and you're hearing God's Word and the Lord's saying do this and do this, you're beginning to resent God's claim on your life. You're fighting that. Because you can't serve those two things. And you're, you're starting to justify yourself, right? And worm out of the deal, and say, well I mean this is a little ridiculous, Lord. And you begin to resist and despise. On the other hand, if everything you have you want to give to God, if every treasure you own in this world you want to pour out to Him, you despise the system that takes so much of it away from you, and it bothers you that gas prices keep going up and for the right reason. Because maybe you feel it's infringing on what you want to invest eternally. You see you can't have both of those things. Single mindedness, you've got to choose your master. The orders of these two masters are diametrically opposed. The one commands you to walk by faith the other to walk by sight. The one calls you to be humble the other to be proud, the one to set your affections on things above and the other to set them on the things of the earth, the one to look at the things unseen and eternal, the other to look at the things seen and temporal. One of these masters calls on you to have your conversation in heaven the other to cleave to the dust. One calls for you to be careful for nothing the other for you to be all anxious and concerned. And so they're diametrically opposed, can't serve them both. Bishop Rile said a statement that I think sticks in my mind as much as any at this point, he said this, "Single ness of purpose," mark it now, "Singleness of purpose is the greatest secret of

spiritual prosperity." "Singleness of purpose is the greatest secret of spiritual prosperity." It's that absolute focus that makes you spiritually rich.

Caleb, in the Bible put it this way, "I wholly (who11y) followed the LORD my God." David put it this way in Psalm 16, "I have set theLORD always before me." Where's the safest place then to put your treasure? Well, where, where you're going to have the clearest spiritual sight, right? And where you're going to be able to serve the right Master. The possession of wealth beloved is not a sin, but it is a great responsibility, isn't it? Sometimes I wish I was poor, so I could be on the other end of this whole deal. But poor people have their problems too.

John Calvin said this, "Where riches hold the dominion of the heart God has lost His authority." That's the issue, plain and simple. If I have my choice I want to take the money I have and I want to give it to friends who someday will meet me when I enter the eternal habitation.

M.E. Burns said this, "Riches I heed not nor man's empty praise, Thou my inheritance now and always." A great thought. Let's pray together.

Father, every baby born into the world comes into the world with its little fists clenched tightly as if grasping, clutching what is his. Some of us never open that grasp until it's opened in death. Father help us to learn to give, for how else can we respond to one who has given all for us? I think of the words of the poet who said, "Go break to the needy sweet charities bread, forgiving is living the angel said. And must I be giving again and again; my peevish and pitiless answer ran. Oh no said the angel, piercing me through, just give till the Lord stops giving to you." And that shall never be. Help us to lay up treasure in heaven. We thank You for such a privilege that we should know the fullness of eternal glory as dividends of our investment. Bless every life here Father. Apply these things to us all. In Christ's name, amen.

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