

Confronting your Materialistic heart

Introduction

1500 Illustrations for Biblical Preaching Money, Deceitfulness

One day a certain old, rich man of a miserable disposition visited a rabbi, who took the rich man by the hand and led him to a window. "Look out there," he said. The rich man looked into the street, "What do you see?" asked the rabbi.

"I see men, women, and children," answered the rich man.

Again the rabbi took him by the hand and this time led him to a mirror. "Now what do you see?"

"Now I see myself," the rich man replied.

Then the rabbi said, "Behold, in the window there is glass, and in the mirror there is glass. But the glass of the mirror is covered with a little silver, and no sooner is the silver added than you cease to see others, but you see only yourself

One of the most insidious temptations to believers in Christ is the temptation to love money and possessions.

We tend to hoard it seeing only ourselves as the goal.

Sadly a heart that pursues riches is an idolatrous heart that is self centered at its core.

Our passage this morning confronts the danger of materialism.

Historical Background

Passage

Matthew 6:19–24 LSB

¹⁹ "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

²⁰ "But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;

²¹ for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

²² "The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light.

²³ "But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

²⁴ "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

Proposition

3 Keys to overcome a materialistic heart

1. Save up in heaven vs 19-21
2. Selfless giving vs 22-23
3. Single master vs 24

1. Save up in heaven vs 19-21

Matthew 6:19–21 LSB

¹⁹ "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

²⁰ "But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;

²¹ for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

"19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth,

The Grammar: Not store up is a command that you should as a lifestyle or a habit apply.

Do not store is in the emphatic

Store =thesauriso=treaure, to lay, store BDAG =to keepe some material things safe by storing them MOUNCE = to collect, heap up SENSE = to store away for future use

Its the idea of stockpiling or hoarding

Treasures=Thesaurus= treasures, riches BDAG that which is stored up, Moulton =

granary, storehouse

In Ancient times without a banking system people would store their wealth by:

- Investing money with money changes
- deposit it in in the temple for safe keeping(most robbers balked at robbing gods)
- kept their wealth in the form of hard currency or in material goods
- burying it in the ground or in caves
- purchasing expensive clothing. (some even weaved golden threads into their clothing)
- Or store it in the form of grain in graneries or store houses.

Accumulating possessions simply for your sake, hoarding it is selfish and may become idolatrous.

The first key to overcoming materialism is to ask where are you investing or saving your treasures in.

Jesus gave the reason why storing your wealth up on earth is not good.

It does not last.

where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

The term **where** is repeated emphasizing the location of the stored treasures

The grammar reveals that the destruction of these treasures on earth is a timeless fact.

Its where thieves steal as a lifestyle.

Its where moths live and never stop eating your clothes.

I recall grandma placing moth balls in her linen cupboard to ward of the moth's destructive appetites.

The term rust = brosis = to eat, eating BDAG = the process of causing deterioration by consuming, Mounce, rust LOUW Nida = tarnishing , oxidation

destroy = aphanizo = hidden, to remove from sight BEDAG destroy or ruin Moulton disfigure VINES = to cause to disappear.

Break in diorosso = to dig or break through a wall

Thieves would:

- break into storerooms

- or dig up the ground searching for personal treasures

Rust would literally eat up precious metals

Consider an item you purchased then years ago, maybe a clothing piece or cell phone. What has happened to it? Or do you still use it? Why not? Maybe cracked, outdated, stolen, broken.

That is the destiny of your earthly treasures.

The point Jesus made.

Hoarded treasures on earth are subject to loss maybe through moth, rust and thieves.

An excessive pursuit of material possessions is Materialism.

Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Bible Doctrine B. Creation Is Distinct from God Yet Always Dependent on God

... materialism ... is the most common philosophy of unbelievers today, and which denies the existence of God altogether. Materialism would say that the material universe is all there is

Materialism, open or disguised, is the logical result of thinking that above and beyond this world there is nothing else.

Stephen Olford

Materialism:

- enslaves the heart, the mind and the will.
- entraps people in debt
- Their stuff become their idols.

That shirt, dress, cell phone, laptop, car, that yacht, that luxury home you so desire.

The day you buy it is the day you need to pay it or start paying for it.

If you can't afford it, you incur debt.

As an old Roman proverb suggests, the pursuit of material wealth is like drinking seawater—the more one acquires, the more insatiable the thirst becomes, leading people to constantly compete and go into debt to maintain appearances

Now you need two jobs or higher positions in job to pay for your great debt.

There you have less time for :

- Your Family
- God's kingdom

And the bible is clear.

Ephesians 5:15–16 LSB

¹⁵ Therefore look carefully how you walk, not as unwise but as wise,

¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

You are a steward also of the time God has given for you.

Dont waste it on earthly pursuits but on heavenly matters.

The love of money or even possessions is a slippery slope that easily leads you away from honoring God like you should.

How many times have I heard missionaries tell me the moment they decided to serve God in a full time capacity, they were offered lucrative earthly jobs.

Its asif God tests your resolve whether you will plan to pursue Him whole heartedly or your stuff.

I have one question.

How much of the stuff you pursue can you take with you the day you die?

Thats why traditionally burial clothes purposely had no pockets.

How much of the things you so deeply love will simply be ash when God eventually destroys this earth.

Are you pursuing a great ash heap?

What is Jesus's perspective on possessions?

Jesus said

Luke 14:33 LSB

³³ "So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.

Principle no 1

- **Relinquish ownership of your posessesions.**
- **Embrace stewardship of God's possessions for His glory.**

Macarthur stated:

transfer ownership of your money,time and possessions and earning power to God.

Its a Rom 12:1 Moment , its a point of dedication.

Jesus did not advocate poverty as a means of spirituality.

The bible recognizes the right to material possessions.

Paul addressed the rich and did not denounce owning possessions, but denounced them placing their hope in their riches.

God is the supplier of possessions, you are to enjoy God's blessings.

1 Timothy 6:17 LSB

¹⁷ Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty or to set their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, **who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.**

Enjoy them but trust in God not your stuff.

20 "But

But reveals a contrast to the previous statement.

Jesus was calling for a reorientation from one type of acquisition to another.

Its good to have a financial plan, but dont place your faith on the material world.

store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;

The grammar reveals that you are commanded as a lifestyle to store up treasures in heaven.

Here the grammar is simmlar to vs 19 which indicates that moth and rust donot destroy and thieves donot dig and steal as a timeless fact in heaven.

Principle 2

Aim in life to advance God's kingdom and God's character.

Matthew 6:33 LSB

³³ "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you

Prioritize Kingdom matters and righteousness in their pursuits.

Why invest in eternal matters?

Heaven is a safe investment.

Thieves, moth and rust cannot access heaven.

Application

Use what God entrusted to you with for His glory.

- Provide for your household. 1 Tim 5:8

- Make reasonable plans for the future.
- Earn Money
- Save Money
- Give wisely for kingdom matters
- Be generous.

Jesus gave another reason why you should focus on storing up in heaven.

21 for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

The grammar reveals this is a declaration of a timeless fact

Jesus did not say if you put your treasure in the right place , your heart will be in the right place.

The location of your treasure reveals the location of your heart.

Where you invested in reveals the condition of your heart.

Where your treasures are is a diagnostic tool unveiling your hearts goals.

Application

Take your treasures, your money, possessions time and abilities and use them to advance God's kingdom.

MacArthur was asked what would he do when he retires. His answer...play a harp.

If the goal of your life is heavenly then retiring of your job, is simply freeing up more time to advance the kingdom of God.

Is all your thinking how can I advance God's kingdom, or is it how can I buy more stuff for me on earth?

2. Self less giving vs 22-23

Matthew 6:22-23 LSB

²² "The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light.

²³ "But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

22 "The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is

clear, your whole body will be full of light.

Many of the Western commentators struggle to explain this .

But in this case going to Messianic commentaries helps.

Here we find a Hebrew Idiom “having a good eye” (ayin tovah) .

This has nothing todo with sight.

It has everything to do with your attitude towards material wealth.

Having a good eye means to be **generous**.

Proverbs 22:9 LSB

⁹ He who is generous will be blessed, For he gives from his food to the poor.

The rabbinical literature states that the person with a good eye gives a generous sacrifice.

3rd principle

Be a generous giver.

Here we find the true key:

- to overcoming materialism.
- to store up treasures in heaven.

You overcome materialism, when:

- you relinquish ownership and embrace stewardship for God’s glory.
- You become a generous giver emulating God’s character of mercy and being a giving God.

A God who gave His only Son unselfishly.

John 3:16 LSB

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that He **gave** His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

The ultimate demonstration of God having a good eye is His generous Gift of Jesus as Savior on the cross.

If Jesus gave Himself, how much more should you and I be willing to be generous with God’s blessings of stuff for His kingdom purposes.

23 “But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!”

The Hebrew Idiom “having a bad eye” (Ayin raah) means being stingy.

Proverbs 23:6 LSB

⁶ Do not eat the bread of a selfish man, And do not desire his delicacies;
If your heart is a stingy(tight fisted, penny pinching) heart, then its a dark heart.
Its heart that:
is self dependent instead of God dependence
is self loving instead of loving God
is self willed instead of in subjection to God's will
is self seeking instead of self denial and other focussed
Its a heart that leads to you being a hoarder instead of a blessing others.
Its a heart that sees itself as the owner and not God of your stuff.
Jesus confronted a rich young ruler who had a stingy heart.

Matthew 19:21–24 LSB

²¹ Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go *and* sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."
²² But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving; for he was one who **owned** much property.
²³ And Jesus said to His disciples, "Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.
²⁴ "And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

Materialism will hinder salvation.

A stingy heart is an unbelieving heart unwilling to trust Jesus to meet your needs.

We all tend to have stingy hearts.

Thats why we need a Savior.

Thats why you need God to do whats impossible for you to do.

To save you

To change your heart.

Matthew 19:25–26 LSB

²⁵ And when the disciples heard *this*, they were very astonished and said, "Then who can be saved?"
²⁶ And looking at *them* Jesus said to them, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Application

If you have been trusting in your money and stuff only.

If your pursuit in life is only having lots of money and stuff

Repent and trust in Jesus .

Trust in His death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins.

Trust Him enough to yield to Him as Lord.

Relinquish yourself, your stuff, your time, your abilities to Him.

Seek to advance His kingdom

Be generous in giving to God.

To do so

1. Get out of debt.
2. What if God called you into the mission field now, but you have 100K in clothing debt or other debts. (that will prevent you from entering the mission field)
3. Seek to spend less than you earn
4. Make an inventory of all your expenses .
 - a. List the in priority. (food, shelter etc.
 - b. Eliminate non essentials
5. Sell large items , take the cash and pay of your bills or debts
6. When you buy do so on a cash basis.
7. Consider additional work to get out of debt
8. Allow God the opportunity to provide an item before you buy it
9. Don't borrow money for depreciating items or luxuries
10. Stay out of the shops
11. Stop reading catalogues
12. Save at least 3 month equivalent salary in short term investments, and 6 months in LT investments

Another principle is realize that all your giving is to God.

You don't give to the church, to a minister, to an evangelist, to a missionary. Your giving is to God.

When you put your offering in the bag, it's not to the church your giving.

Your giving to the Lord.

Your a steward of His money is directed to Him

Hebrews 13:16 LSB

¹⁶ And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

Give joyfully, sacrificially, generously, lovingly

The only thing you can take with you is if you invest in heavenly matters.

3. Single master vs 24

Matthew 6:24 LSB

²⁴ "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

"24 "No one can serve two masters;

4th principle

Submit only to one master...Jesus

The term can=dunamai= to be able, to have power, to be capable, to possess capability for experiencing or doing something.

Serve = douleuo=servant, in the position of servant, to be subject to serve in subjection or bondage, means to make someone a slave BDAG = to act or conduct oneself as one in total service to another, **perform the duties of a slave, serve, obey**

Masters is the Greek term "kurios" = Owner, Lord or master SENSE a person who has general authority over others(slaves or subjects)

The grammar reveals this as a timeless reality that you cannot serve two masters

The idea is that of a slave owner.

A slave owner had total control of their slaves

Slaves were owned, controlled and in complete service to their master.

There was nothing left for another master.

It's impossible to serve both and to be fully devoted to the one as obedient slave.

Paul revealed that as an unbeliever you are a slave to sin.

At salvation you became a slave of Christ and of righteousness.(Rom 6:16-22)

A disciple of Christ cannot have divided loyalties.

You either conduct yourself as a slave of Christ or the other.

Jesus is to be Lord of all, which includes all your material possessions.

| Calvin wrote:

| Where riches hold the dominion of the heart, God has lost His authority.

for

For provides a reason.

The cause for your inability to serve two masters

Jesus gave two contrasts.

The first.

either he will hate the one and love the other,

The grammar reveals these are all declared predictions.

Hate and love are all actions you will do.

The term hate = miseso = to hate, BDAG = detest, to be disinclined to , disfavor, disregard MOUNCE love less, esteem less SENSE = dislike intensely, feel an aversion towards

Love = agapao = esteem, to love, includes the idea of duty, respect, serve with faithfulness BDAG = to have a warm regard for, interest in another, Cherish, have affection for Sense =to have a great affection or care for or loyalty towards

You will either hate(detest, have a strong aversion to) God and love(have a strong affection for) Money and possessions

Or

You will have an aversion for for material possessions and money and love, have a strong affection for God.

the second contrast

or he will be devoted to one and despise the other.

The grammar reveals these are all declared predictions.

But to be devoted grammatically means the person is acting devoted and also receive the action of devotion.

It would appear that your devotion to your master is reciprocal in the masters devotion to you.

Where as to despise , you do the action.

Devoted = anthecho = to hold firmly to, cleave , BDAG = have a strong attachment to someone, hold fast to, devoted, Mounce adhere SENSE = to give oneself entirely to a specific person , activity or cause.

Despise = kataphroneo = against + to think = to hold contempt BDAG = to look down on someone, aversion to , consider the object of little value, look down on, scorn

What Jesus contrasted here is you will either have a reciprocal devotion(giving yourself entirely to) God and He to you, and despise money and material possessions, or

You you will have a devotion to money and it to you and you despise (look down , hold in contempt God)

The reality is that the marching orders of the two masters are polar opposites

The one commands:

- You to walk by faith, the other demands you walk by sight.
- The one demands you to be humble, the other proud
- The one demands you to set your mind on the things above, the other on the things below.
- The one commands you to love light, the other darkness
- The one says you have to eat and drink and act all for the glory of God(1 Cor 10:31) the other wants you to do it for your own glory.

The final statement reveals the diametrical opposites .

You cannot serve God and wealth.”

The grammar reveals that as a matter of lifestyle, you cannot(are unable to, incapable of) serving both God and Mammon.

You cannot mount two horses and stretch two bows.

You either the slave of God or the slave of your own inclination(affections, attractions).

The fact that wealth could exercise an overwhelming power over people was well known among the Greeks and Romans .

The Greek term for wealth here is Mamonas = Mounce = riches SENSE = abundance of material possessions and resources.

The origin of the term, Mamon comes from the root Mn which means to put your trust in money. It was a term connected with the sinful aspects relating to money or wealth.

Some scholars believe Mammon was the name of the Syrian and Chaldean god

similar to the Greek god of wealth Plutus.

But in this text Mammon is personified an evil superhuman power that stands in competition to God and by possessing people, can keep them from being devoted to God and make them hate God.

We see an example of this hatred with the Pharisees.

Luke 16:14–15 LSB

¹⁴ Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things and were scoffing at Him.

¹⁵ And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts, for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.

Over coming materialism is a worship issue.

Whatever I put my trust in, I worship. Materialism is the true religion of thousands of confessing Christians today.

R. Kent Hughes

Who will I truly worship in my heart.

Remember God looks intently at your heart.

God is there

God will never forsake you

Hebrews 13:5 LSB

⁵ *Make sure that your way of life* is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,"

John warned.

1 John 2:15 LSB

¹⁵ Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, **the love of the Father** is not in him.

Paul warned

1 Timothy 6:9 LSB

⁹ But those who want to get rich **fall into temptation** and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.

Application

In the end of the day, submit to Jesus as Lord of your life and your stuff.

Use what has been given to you for His glory and His Kingdom

Trust Him for your needs.

Confess and repent of any materialistic desires in your heart.

Ask Him to change your heart, to reflect His generous heart.

Conclusion

Materialism can exert such a powerful influence on us as believers that the Lord will sometimes subject us to trials just so He can remove us from the grip of the world's devices and riches.

John F. MacArthur

Those who have no hope in God naturally put their hope and expectations in things they can enjoy now. They have nothing to live for but the present, and their materialism is perfectly consistent with their religion.

John F. MacArthur