

## Money Managers Pt. 2- Matthew 6:19-24, 9/18/2017

Recap:

Started 5 Week series on Money and Possessions. Last week- God owns it. We Manage it. We are responsible for how we manage it. God's Word is filled with Scripture about money and possessions, If I talked about money and possessions as much as Jesus I probably won't have a church. Why? Temperature illustration.

Jesus is going to take the spiritual temperature of our hearts today...This is going to challenge every single one of us in the room, including the preacher. But remember, the reason he's taking our temperature is because he doesn't want us to be sick...he wants us to be healed, healthy!

Matthew 6:19-24

<sup>19</sup> "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

<sup>22</sup> "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. <sup>23</sup> But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

<sup>24</sup> "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

Taking our Spiritual Temperature by asking, "Are you pursuing, accumulating, living for earthly treasure or heavenly treasure?" In other words, "Where is your money going?" If it's going toward earth- it's dangerous...

### The Danger of Earthly Treasure

#### 1) It is Fleeting v.19

*Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.*

Not only do possessions wear out, rust out, burn out...not only is it true that money is so easily spent or lost... but it's fleeting in light of eternity. I hope this isn't breaking news, but we can't take it with us when we die can we? The security that we think it provides is only ever temporary.

Addison Leitch, married to Elizabeth Elliot, professor...a few women he was teaching became Christians and wanted to become missionaries. Each one of them went to their parents and told them that they became Christians and they want to be missionaries. Each parent said- "ugh- OK you had a religious experience, how nice.

Before you become missionaries- Get some security first. Get masters degrees, take a couple jobs so you get an employment record, money in the bank..." and they went and told Addison- and he said, "Go back and tell your parents that we live on a little bald rock, spinning through space, who knows if we will run into something even if we don't, under every one of us is a trap door that will open up one day. Everyone will fall off this little bald rock and we will either fall into the everlasting arms of Jesus or nothing at all..." You think a masters degree will give me security? You think accumulating wealth, money, savings will give us security? It is fleeting.

## **2) It is Blinding v.22-23**

*The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. <sup>23</sup> But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!*

Gives this little illustration to say that an unhealthy relationship with money will blind us to our materialism and greed.

Ill- dating someone that is shady...and you are thinking, what do they see in that guy or girl? Love is blind. Not until after they break it off do they say...what was I thinking? That was such an unhealthy relationship! The danger of accumulating money is that it can blind us, inoculate us to our unhealthy relationship to it. Here's the proof, I would venture to guess that very few people would say they struggle with greed. We might say lust, anxiety, doubt, laziness or a host of other sins...but rarely greed. Why? All it takes is for us to know someone that is more greedy and materialistic than you and you don't think you are greedy. This is a subtle sin that blinds us:

### **Blinds us from seeing how truly wealthy we are.**

-One of the challenges of affluence is that we don't feel rich. We all know people and hang out with people that make much more than us, have nicer things than us, go on more vacations than we do.

-70% of wealth is in the hands of 5% of people, basically the West.

-40% lives on less than \$2 a day. If you have a household income of \$50,000 or more you are in the top 4% of wage earners in the world.

-If you ever stood in front of a closet full of clothes and said you don't have anything to wear... you're rich. If you ever stood in line at an Apple store scrolling on your iPhone6 to buy an iPhone7...you are rich.

### **Blinds us from asking hard questions about our relationship with money and possessions.**

-A question like, What standard of living would honor the Lord most? The conventional wisdom of the day tells us that our standard of living should match our income. So the more we make the bigger the house, more luxurious the car, more expensive the clothes. Do we stop and ask these questions?

## **1 Timothy 6:9**

*Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.*

It is not wrong to make lots of money. There were wealthy people in the early church. But make no mistake it is dangerous to keep a lot of money and possessions. Because of its subtle, blinding allure.

### **3) It is Enslaving v.21, 24**

*For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

Money is a temperature gauge of our hearts. Jesus is saying, you want to know where Nate's heart is? Don't look at his preaching, that is a skill and gift God has given, don't be deceived into thinking that tells you about what I treasure, Don't look at the notes in my Bible... look at my bank statement, look at how he is using his possessions, look at what he is giving toward. That's convicting.

Now you may say, can't I do both? Can't I store up treasures in heaven and earth? American's love both/and...not either or don't we? Win/Win scenario... Jesus doesn't seem to think so..v.24 no one can serve two masters. Jesus says that money and possessions have an enslaving effect. The more we have, the more we need, the more it owns us...where our lives begin to revolve around it. They get our attention, our time, we have to in order to justify buying or having it...they get our heart. Whatever gets our money gets our heart. Randy Alcorn Treasure Principle, *"The more things we own- the greater their total mass- the more they grip us, setting us into orbit around them. Finally, like a black hole, they suck us in."*

How do we break from the orbit of our hearts around our money and possessions? Store up heavenly treasure...Jesus contrasts the dangers of earthly treasure with the delight of heavenly treasure.

## **The Delight of Heavenly Treasure**

### **1) It is Lasting v.20**

*But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.*

Sometimes we think that it is wrong to be motivated by reward. Jesus motivates us by future treasure. I don't think we are going to be swimming in giant vats of gold coins like Scrooge McDuck. I believe the treasure will be far more profoundly satisfying, filled with deep meaning, exhilarating... Singing worship songs together and you hear all the voices and the beauty of the instruments...that feeling, or if you shared your faith with someone and you witnessed them come to Christ...that feeling. Or how about one less spiritual- when your team wins the championship- that moment! Or after you get done painting the house all day and you sit down with a big...ice tea. That moment. That's just scratching the surface of the soul-satisfying delight of eternal reward...wave after wave.

So Jesus is saying, If you have \$1000 that you can either use to put in more flowers and bushes around your house, or you can use that to give to a work of the Lord- missions project, etc. Jesus is saying- you will never regret giving it to the Lord.

## **2) It is Life Giving v.22-23**

Our eyes are healthy- our body filled with life. Fullness of Life. In contrast to the blinding effects of a focus on earthly treasure, when we have our eye on heavenly treasure, it opens our eyes to an acute awareness of the needs of the people and mission around us, and the joy of generosity. Generous people are the happiest, most fulfilled people you will meet!

Ill- Dickens- A Christmas Carol- Ebenezer Scrooge is wealthy and miserable. Then one night he encounters three spirits- past, present and future. On that Christmas Day he was given a second chance at life. It was gaining an eternal perspective that opened his eyes to see his pursuit of wealth and the acute awareness of those who have need. Scrooge leaped for joy on the streets of London because he'd discovered the life-giving antidote to the greed that blinded him for so long...generosity! This leads us to...

## **3) It is Freeing v.21,24**

When we are investing treasure in heaven it breaks the power of money and stuff. Why? Where our treasure is that's where our hearts are also. God will have our hearts. And then we will be freed from the demands of this world that we have to have this to be happy, or we have to live in this kind of neighborhood or drive this kind of car...

Randy Alcorn- Treasure Principle talking about investing in heavenly treasure, "It breaks us out of orbit around our possessions. We escape their gravity, entering a new orbit around our treasures in heaven."

Jesus came to free us from the dangerous orbit of our lives around earthly treasure that so many in this world are gripped by...**How do we break free** from the orbit of our lives around earthly treasure so that our lives orbit around heavenly treasure?

**1) Look to Jesus as our greatest treasure, example and motivation.** Think about what Jesus did- Jesus gave up all his heavenly treasure to come to earth. The cross is a portrait of Jesus, stripped of all his wealth and possessions...and he died. Why? You only give up everything...you will only die for something you treasure! Hebrews says, for the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame...Joy is us! Jesus said- If I have them...it will all be worth it. 1 Peter 2:9 *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's purchased possession...*we are his treasure! And He is our treasure...that will be the greatest part of heaven...with Jesus! If you really know that he gave up all his treasure so that you can be his treasure, that has the power to free you from the allure and orbit of materialism. That motivates us, that fills our hearts with love and generosity, that sets the example for us.

## 2) Reinvest your treasures toward eternity.

Jesus tells us here that there are two ways to live. One of the ways to live is to invest and accumulate things on earth...more security, more stock-piling assets, more house, more furniture...more, more, more... The other is to invest in heaven. To invest more and more in things of eternal value. The more we invest in things of eternity, the more God will have our heart.

Practical:

**-Tithing-** before you do anything else with you money, set aside the first fruits...the first 10%. What this says to God is "I am orienting the first of my treasures to you." Now for some of us that will be a sacrifice. There are things you will have to cut out of your life in order to do that. That's a good thing! We will talk more about that in a couple of weeks... For some of us- 10% doesn't change anything about our lifestyle. That's just scratching the surface.

### **-Paying off Debt**

Paying off debt can be a spirit act of worship, if it is for the right motives...Bible is very clear that debt is not a good thing...enslaves us. God wants you to be free to be generous, spontaneous even with your giving... debt holds us back. Go to FPU...

### **-Downsizing**

**Luke 12:33 *Sell your possessions and give to the poor.***

For some of us- repentance looks like having a yard sale. For others, it might mean having some prayer filled conversations with our spouse and family members about what standard of living you think would honor the Lord...it might mean beginning to think about down-sizing...getting serious about paying off debt so that you can be free to give.

Is that scary? Doesn't all this sound extreme Nate? What does Jesus say? **Luke 12:30-31 *For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. <sup>31</sup> But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.*** Life is short. Eternity is long... The kingdom is yours! What do we have to loose?

Pray.