



## World Christian Fellowship

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### Where is your Master?

#### Matthew 6:19-24

**Matthew 6:19-24**, *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;<sup>20</sup> but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys 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 lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. <sup>23</sup>But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness! <sup>24</sup>“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.*

**Matthew 6:1-18**, He says you must have the right view of religious issues.

**Matthew 6:1-18** Jesus deals with the theme about Hypocrisy.

**Matthew 6:1-4**, deals about Hypocrisy on giving.

**Matthew 6:5-15**, deals with Hypocrisy in prayer.

**Matthew 6:16-18**, deals with Hypocrisy in fasting.

The whole sermon is set in contrast to the system of religion of the day dominated by the thinking of the Pharisees and the scribes.

Jesus is saying God's standard exceeds their standard, and it is His standard required for being in His kingdom.

**Matthew 6:19-24**, Jesus says you must also have the right view toward wealth, luxury.

**Matthew 6:25-36**, Jesus says you must have the right view of necessities.

First luxuries and then necessities.

False religion motive is money.

So, in our text in **Matthew 6:19-24** we have three alternatives.

- Two treasuries.
- Two visions.
- Two masters.

In each of those three alternatives, you have the very same principle hit from a different angle.

### **V 19-20- Lay up the treasures.**

- Heaven or
- Earth.

### **V 22-23 -Living choice**

- Light
- Darkness

### **V 24 – Master**

- God
- Money

There are three questions arise out of this text which we will look at it.

- 1. Where is your heart?**
- 2. Where is your focus?**
- 3. Who are you serving?**

- By answering where is your heart you will come to know where your treasure is.
- By answering where is your focus you will come to know whether you are heaven bound or earth bound.
- By answering who you are serving you will come to know who your master is!

## Where is your heart?

Two treasures:

Where is your treasure?

### 2. Where is your focus?

**V 22-23**, *“The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. <sup>23</sup>But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!*

Gathering up riches here on the earth blurs our vision.

It causes us not to see the truth, the will of God, correctly.

It distorts our vision, causing us to not see God as clearly as maybe we once did.

#### **Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11).**

In this incident, a man and his wife sold a possession, brought the money to the apostles, and laid it at their feet. This occurred a lot in the early church.

**Acts 4:34-35**, *Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were*

*sold, <sup>35</sup>and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.*

When they brought their money to the apostles, Ananias and Sapphira lied, saying they had brought all the money they had made from selling this possession.

But in fact, they had kept back some for themselves. Peter accuses Ananias of lying to God, and at that moment, Ananias falls to his death.

The same thing happens to his wife, who also lies to God about how much they had received for the possession. Ananias and Sapphira had seen earlier the praise and acceptance others had received for selling their property. Therefore, they sold this great possession for the sole purpose of being noticed, accepted, and looked upon as spiritual. Because of this, they lied to the Holy Spirit, and their lives ended as a result.

The early church was not interested in piling up its own wealth.

**Acts chapter 2** that when the day of Pentecost came there were thousands of pilgrims gathered in Jerusalem. 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. 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.

They were there and they didn't want to return, because they were in the church full of excitement and joy. So, the believers had to absorb them, and many of them were poor without any resource.

The early church had to give to them to meet their needs. They were busy selling what they possessed. 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 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.

Beloveds remember that what we keep we lose and what we invest with God we gain eternally.

**Acts 3:4-6**, *And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us."<sup>5</sup> So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. <sup>6</sup> Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."*

### **The Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:13-21).**

In this parable, Jesus makes a profound statement we all should listen to very carefully.

**Luke 12:15**, *And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."*

The parable of the rich fool suggests this very thing.

This parable tells of a rich man who has yielded a great crop.

He decides to tear down his old barns and build newer, bigger barns. Then after he is done, he decides to retire, so to speak, thinking that he has enough stored up to last many years. Now he can sit back, relax, and take it easy.

## **What happens?**

God calls him a fool!

**Luke 12:20-21**, *But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' <sup>21</sup>"So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."*

So many of us long for the day we can sit back and enjoy our fortune we have been saving up for retirement and take the path of easiness.

This man was ruled by his wealth, thinking of all he had accumulated, only to die that night and see his wealth squandered and split up. He was unable to take it with him.

This next section, addressing the same issue but stating it differently, uses the illustration of the eye.

When riches are the focus of our lives, our vision becomes distorted.

When the things we can see outweigh the eternal things that are unseen, we have spiritual near-sightedness.

The eye is the pathway through which light enters the body. It illuminates what is going on around us. It allows colours, scenery, and faces to come to light when we look at them.

The idea behind this passage is one of childlike simplicity.

The eye is regarded as the window by which the light gets into the whole body. The colour and state of a window decide what light gets into a room.

- If the window is clear, clean, and undistorted, the light will come flooding into the room, and will illuminate every corner of it.
- If the glass of the window is coloured or frosted, distorted, dirty, or obscure, the light will be hindered, and the room will not be lit up.

Jesus says that the light which gets into any man's heart and soul and being depends on the spiritual state of the eye through which it has to pass, for the eye is the window of the whole body.

**1 Peter 1:6-9**, *In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,<sup>7</sup> that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honour, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,<sup>8</sup> whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,<sup>9</sup> receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.*

The eye that is full of light is a life lived by faith in the eternal promises of God.

We may not be able to see the physical manifestation of those things, but we believe by faith in the truth that one day we will be with Christ – the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls.

When our focus is on earthly, temporal things, our sight is all blurred and messed up.

**Hebrews 11:17-18**, *By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,<sup>18</sup> of whom it was said, “In Isaac your seed shall be called,”*

**Hebrews 11:24-26**, *By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter,<sup>25</sup> choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,<sup>26</sup> esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.*

Here are two prime examples of men who had good eternal vision.

- They saw clearly,

- They saw eternity,
- They saw the passing of temporary things, and
- They saw the reward.

Because of this faith, God used them in mighty ways.

### **Where is your focus?**

Do you see spiritual things clearly?

Or is your vision of God and his will for your life clouded by spiritual cataracts or near-sightedness brought on by an unhealthy preoccupation with things?

I am convinced that this is true for many Christians, particularly those living in the midst of Western affluence.

### **Have you ever tried on someone else's glasses and noticed how it affects your vision?**

We can all relate in some way to this parable of the eye that Jesus brings forth. If the eye of our heart and mind is focused on earthly treasures, our vision will be blurred and distorted, and we will not be able to rightly distinguish God's will for our life, or we may not be able to see God as clearly as we once did.

If your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness.

### **What happens in the dark?**

You stumble around the room trying to find some source of light so that you can find your way and see things, so you don't trip and fall or stub your toe.

When our eyes are focused on the things of this world, our eyes are bad, our bodies are full of darkness, and we have a very difficult time seeing the truth.

If the eyes of our heart and mind are focused on the Father, then we will be in right standing with Him and see Him clearly to know what He is asking of us at that point in time.

How is your Focus/ vision?

What are your eyes focused upon?

### **3. Who Are You Serving?**

This verse is the climax of the Sermon on the Mount.

This passage asks the all-important question, "Who are you serving?"

People often think they can have the best of both worlds – both here on earth serving themselves with riches and living it up, and later down the road in the future, which would be heaven.

**V 24**, *“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon”*

Jesus tells us here that we cannot serve two masters.

- We cannot serve money and God.
- We cannot serve popularity and God.
- We cannot serve ourselves and God.
- We cannot serve our families and God.

We can have only one master.

Jesus is once again challenging us to look at the whole Sermon on the Mount, challenging us to repent, to change our minds about earthly treasures, about the things that we formerly served, and to serve Him only.

You cannot do it no matter how hard you try.

One or the other will lose out, and in most cases, it will be God.

It is always the Lord's calf that dies!

The word serve here, 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 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 plough or a cow or anything else.

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.

### **Paul**

**Philippians 3:7-8**, *But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. <sup>8</sup>Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ*

The Apostle Paul was in the religious sense a man who had it all.

He was circumcised the eighth day.

He was of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews.

- Concerning the law, he was a Pharisee.
- Concerning zeal, he persecuted the church.
- Concerning righteousness, which is in the law, he was blameless.

Paul had it all, but he gave all that up because he saw all this as rubbish, as “dung,” so that he might know Christ and the power of His resurrection.

He was serving one Master, and that Master was Jesus Christ, and Him alone.

The things of this world and the things this world had to offer did not appeal to him anymore because the Father had changed his heart and made him a new man.

In his life, Paul had a change of mind. He repented and until his death, Paul followed Christ. He saw the significance of laying up treasure in heaven.

He laid aside those things that might have appealed to his flesh so that he might live by faith in the unseen and lay hold of the reward at the end of his life the salvation of his soul.

### **What is Christ asking of us?**

We are not to serve two masters, but to serve Christ and Christ alone.

We are to count the cost, because it is either Him or self in our personal pursuits, whatever those might be.

### **Take up your Cross and Follow Me.**

**Mark 8:34-38**, *When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. <sup>35</sup>For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. <sup>36</sup>For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? <sup>37</sup>Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? <sup>38</sup>For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."*

**Luke 14:25-33**, *Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, <sup>26</sup>"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and*

*sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. <sup>27</sup>And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. <sup>28</sup>For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it— <sup>29</sup>lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, <sup>30</sup>saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish'? <sup>31</sup>Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? <sup>32</sup>Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. <sup>33</sup>So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.*

God is calling us to a radical life of service to Him as our Master.

Huge importance in realizing that God is our Father, and we are His children. God will take care of us and provide for all our needs as He sees fit.

But the temptation to hold onto earthly things weighs heavy on us and tempts us to trust our riches instead of our heavenly Father.

If you don't hate your father and mother, etc., you cannot be My disciple.

This call is radical in that we are called to give up ourselves completely and to place our complete trust in our Father and to follow Him.

We are called to deny ourselves, which means that self no longer has any rights. We are called to take up our cross, which means that we are to take the same path Jesus took, being willing to lay down our lives for His sake and His gospel.

We are called to follow Him.

We are called to imitate Jesus in all that He did and to follow His example.

Jesus wants all our heart.

He desires that we have an intimate relationship with the Father as He does. We cannot serve God and the riches on this earth.

Just does not work.

One is either despised or hated, while the other one is loved and followed.

Whichever one you serve is the one that is your master.

If it is riches, those riches are your master, and they have control over you.

If it is the Father, He is your Master, and He has control over you.

**John Kenneth Galbraith**, a well-known economist of 20<sup>th</sup> Century, he had housekeeper **Mrs. Emily Gloria Wilson**.

One afternoon John went to take a nap in the afternoon and asked his housekeeper to take care of the telephone calls.

American President Lyndon Johnson called to speak to John. Her reply simply sorry he is taking rest.

President was angry and said to her wake him up I am telling you I am the president of USA. She simply replied I work for Mr. John not for you.

**Who is your Master?**

## **Conclusion**

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 when the wall was completed a great event took place, a revival.

The revival was initiated in chapter 8.

**Nehemiah 8:1-3 &5-6,** *Now all the people gathered together as one man in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded Israel. <sup>2</sup>So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly of men and women and all who could hear with understanding on the first day of the seventh month. <sup>3</sup>Then he read from it in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate from morning until midday, before the men and women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law.*

*<sup>5</sup>And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. <sup>6</sup>And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. Then all the people answered, "Amen, Amen!" while lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with *their* faces to the ground.*

**Nehemiah 8:8,** *So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading.*

Now they read the law of God, and the law of God generated a heart response.

When we read chapter 9 we find that basically there were four things that came out of the reading of the law.

1. Conviction of Sin. (They began to confess their sin.)
2. Desire for obedience.
3. Praising God.
4. Make a covenant to God.

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.

**Nehemiah 9:38**, *“And because of all this, We make a sure covenant and write it; Our leaders, our Levites, and our priests seal 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.

### **What does a revival produce?**

It will produce conviction of sin, desire for obedience, praise and 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.

### **What was their covenant?**

**Nehemiah 10:32**, *Also we made ordinances for ourselves, to exact from ourselves yearly one-third 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.

**Nehemiah 10:33-39**, *for the showbread, for the regular grain offering, for the regular burnt offering of the Sabbaths, the New Moons, and the set feasts; for the holy things, for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, and all the work of the house of our God. <sup>34</sup>We cast lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, for bringing the wood offering into the house of our God, according to our fathers' houses, at the appointed times year by year, to burn on the altar of the Lord our God as it is written in the Law. <sup>35</sup>And we made ordinances to bring the firstfruits of our ground and the firstfruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, to the house of the Lord; <sup>36</sup>to bring the firstborn of our sons and our cattle, as it is written in the Law, and the firstborn of our herds and our flocks, to the house of our God, to the priests who minister in the house of our God; <sup>37</sup>to bring the firstfruits of our dough, our offerings, the fruit from all kinds of trees, the new wine and oil, to the priests, to the storerooms of the house of our God; and to bring the tithes of our land to the Levites, for the Levites should receive the tithes in all our farming communities. <sup>38</sup>And the priest, the*

*descendant of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive tithes; and the Levites shall bring up a tenth of the tithes to the house of our God, to the rooms of the storehouse.  
39 For the children of Israel and the children of Levi shall bring the offering of the grain, of the new wine and the oil, to the storerooms where the articles of the sanctuary are, where the priests who minister and the gatekeepers and the singers are; and we will not neglect the house of our God.*

**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.

When the heart is right the treasure is poured toward God.

**David:**

**Psalms 16:8**, *I have set the Lord always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.*

**Caleb:**

**God testifies about Caleb.**

**Numbers 14:24**, *But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it.*

**Joshua testifies about Caleb.**

**Joshua 14:14**, *Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel.*

**Caleb testifies about himself!**

**Joshua 14:8**, *Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt, but I wholly followed the Lord my God.*

Where is your treasure? How is your vision? And who are you serving? I pray that you are serving the Father and Him alone.

*Where riches hold the dominion of the heart God has lost His authority.* **John Calvin.**