

LIVING IN A MATERIAL WORLD

I. The Scripture: Treasures in Heaven

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

22"The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light 23But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

24"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money."

Matthew 6:19-24

II. Looking at the Scripture

1. Make God Your Treasure

What do you think Jesus meant when He said, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"?

What do these Scriptures say about wealth and money?

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Proverbs 11:4

1 Timothy 6:9,10

2. Making God the Focus of Your Life

According to Matthew 6:22,23 what could be the result of keeping your eyes focused on sinful things?

How does the story of David and Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11) prove these words of Jesus to be true?

3. Make God Your Master

Why do you think Jesus refers to money or riches as a "master"?

Read 1John 2:15-17. What three worldly sins does John mention?

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How do these sins relate to the words of Jesus in Matthew 6:19-24?

III. The Scripture and You

1. Money and You

Think of it this way:

Money can buy medicine, but not health. Money can buy a house, but not a home.

Money can buy companionship, but not friends.

Money can buy entertainment, but not happiness.

Money can buy food, but not an appetite.

Money can buy a bed, but not sleep.

Money can buy a crucifix, but not a Savior.

Money can buy the good life, but not eternal life.¹

¹. Charles Swindoll, *Strengthening Your Grip* (Waco: Word Books, 1982), pp. 84,85.

How do these words and the words of Jesus influence your view on money and things of this world?

Read Matthew 6:21,24. How are these words the opposite of what our society preaches?

Practically Speaking ...

One of the most powerful influences in the world is television. The average American home has the TV on over eight hours a day. Read verses 22 and 23 and comment how TV can be a negative influence in your life.

George Gerbner, the dean of Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania, outlines five functions that religion formerly provided for society and that the secular electronic media now provides:

1. Television is ritual—most people watch TV not by the program but by the clock.
2. Television is institutionalized—a group of about 100 people in Hollywood produce more than 95 percent of the programs.
3. Television is uniting—most children watch what adults watch.
4. TV is compelling—most people watch religiously because it provides for them a reward. It makes people feel good.
5. Television is primarily a socializing factor—it teaches children and adults certain assumptions about life.

². *Youthworker Update* (El Cajon: Youth Specialties, 1982), pp. 1,2.

How do these five functions help you understand the importance of what Jesus was teaching in Matthew 6:22,23?

Complete this sentence: For me to have better control of my spiritual walk in regard to TV's influence on my life, I need to...

2. What Will It Take?

Read this entire section of Scripture [Matthew 6:19-24] again. In your own words, write out what it will take to...

Make your spiritual treasure first priority:

Keep your eyes on the light:

Serve God and not money:

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