

## Where Is Your Heart, On Earth Or In Heaven?

Text: Matt 6:19-23

1) Is your heart on earth?

Suggested Hymns:

2) Or is your heart in heaven?

150, 157, 433ALHBT357, 283, 155

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is Matthew 6:19–23, <sup>19</sup> *“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!” (NKJV)*

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

To succeed in life, secularly, you must devote your efforts to one thing.<sup>1</sup> In 99 cases out of 100 the old adage is true that the *Jack of all trades is master of none.*

The successful person in any calling, whether literary, scientific, or business, is the person who can say with Paul, *“but [this] one thing I do.”*<sup>2</sup> Paul, however, said this not of his secular, but of his Christian calling. *“But one thing I do, ... <sup>14</sup> I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

The Christian calling also demands devotion, the whole heart, the single eye. And because of the eternal values at stake it is supremely more important to pursue our Christian calling successfully than to win success in our secular calling.

God says in Proverbs 23:26, <sup>26</sup> *My son, give me your heart, And let your eyes observe my ways.* We cannot set our hearts both on the things of earth and on the things above, for as Scripture says, *“If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”*<sup>3</sup>

If our spiritual eye is fixed on the things of earth and time, then we are spiritually near-sighted and blind to eternal and heavenly things. This is what our Lord emphasises in the text.

In order that amid the many changes and distractions of this world our hearts may be fixed where true joys are to be found, let us ponder the question: *Where Is Your Heart, on Earth or in Heaven?* May the Lord bless our meditation.

### 1. Is Your Heart On Earth?

Is your heart on earth? Yes, that is where it is, if your treasure is on earth. Tell me where your treasure is, and I will tell you where your heart is. Our text says, <sup>21</sup> *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

Your treasure and your heart are inseparable. The body may be separated from your treasure, but not your heart. You may travel over land and sea to distant shores, but your heart is always where your treasure is.

So also in a spiritual sense. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. And that our hearts may not be on earth, Jesus says to His disciples, <sup>19</sup> *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth”* and shows us the folly of it; for the things of the earth are uncertain, corruptible, and fading.

<sup>19</sup> *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal.* Among the ancients, treasures, or wealth, consisted in clothing and garments as well as in gold, silver, gems, wine, land, sheep, and oil. Beautiful and richly ornamented articles of apparel were deemed exceedingly precious.

Joseph gave his brothers changes of garments.<sup>4</sup> Achan coveted a beautiful Babylonian garment.<sup>5</sup> This accounts for the use of the word *moth*. The precious articles of apparel were subject to destruction by moth.

Silver and gold were perishable, and everything was subject to *theft*. All the riches of this world are uncertain, corruptible, and fading. Hence the folly of setting one’s heart on the things upon earth.

Jesus illustrates this folly in the parable of the Rich Fool. We read in Luke 12:15–16, *“Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”* <sup>16</sup> *Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully.*

*<sup>17</sup>And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ <sup>18</sup>So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. <sup>19</sup>And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.””*

*<sup>20</sup>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?’*

Jesus concludes with these pertinent words, <sup>21</sup>*“So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”*

Solomon exclaims in Ecclesiastes 1:2b and 3a, *“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity,”* and *What profit has a man from all his labor.* Proverbs 23:4 tells us, <sup>4</sup>*Do not overwork to be rich.*

Paul says in 1 Timothy 6:9–10, <sup>9</sup> *But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. <sup>10</sup>For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

Our text says, <sup>19</sup> *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth.”* In the Greek, the verb and the noun are the same word; literally: *“Treasure not treasure on earth.”* Do not set your heart on them, for you will be disappointed. Do not deem them to be the highest good, for they are perishing.

You would not put your hard-earned savings into a bank if you knew that the bank was doomed to failure. Why, then, bank on the things of this world when you know they are doomed to final failure and dire disaster ?

Where is your heart? It is where your treasure is. On earth? What folly and what blindness!

Jesus further illustrates what He has said by referring to the eye. He says, <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!”*

The eye is used figuratively for person’s outlook on life; for the way in which he sees things affects the way in which he acts and therefore affects the very nature and character of the person. If a man has an evil eye, an eye for evil, nothing but evil acts can be expected of him.

One has said that the evil eye is of three kinds. First there is the red eye, the eye of lust and passion. Our Lord had this in mind in Matthew 5:28, <sup>28</sup> *But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

The second of these evil eyes is green. It is the eye of envy. The Saviour referred to this kind of eye in Matthew 20:15, <sup>15</sup> *Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?’*

The third kind of evil eye is yellow. It is the eye of greed and covetousness. The Saviour refers to this kind of eye in our text. Covetousness blinds the heart, perverts the judgement, obscures the view, and brings over the soul a dreadful and gloomy night. Covetousness makes man spiritually near-sighted, so that he sees, and gloats over, only the sordid and perishing things of the earth and is blind to eternal and heavenly things. What blindness!

Where is your heart? It is where your treasure is. On earth? What folly! What blindness!

## **2. Or Is Your Heart In Heaven?**

Or is your heart in heaven? Yes, if your treasure is in heaven. <sup>21</sup> *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.* Jesus says, *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, ... <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.”*

Heavenly treasures are not uncertain, corruptible, and fading like earthly treasures. They are safe, incorruptible, abiding, and eternal. Eternity stamps them with a value above all the jewels and riches of this world.

Therefore “*lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.*” Set your affections on the things above. “*Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.*”<sup>6</sup> Let your chief anxiety be to prepare for eternity. We are warned in Mark 8:36, <sup>36</sup> *For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?*

Make provision for your eternal happiness. Make your salvation and election sure. Be and remain a child of God and a joint heir with Christ of the *inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away.*<sup>7</sup>

Do not neglect your salvation. Set the highest value on your soul. Trust and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, your Saviour, and you shall have a treasure in heaven, according to His promise, as we read in John 3:16, <sup>16</sup> *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

Through His shed blood and His meritorious life He won for you heavenly treasures, forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. Treasure the Word of God, the precious Gospel and the Sacraments, the means by which these heavenly treasures are offered, conveyed, and sealed to you.

Follow Jesus, keep His Word, and you shall have a treasure in heaven. Lay up for yourself treasures in heaven by promoting His cause, participating in the work of your own congregation and in the work of the Church at large.

Give to the poor, and you shall have a treasure in heaven.<sup>8</sup> Invest in God’s bank. That is proof against the crash of the Judgement and will stand to all eternity.

Where is your heart? In heaven? How wise you are and how far-sighted! The lamp of the body is the eye. “*If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light.*” The good eye is the eye that is fixed on one object and never loses sight of it. The good eye is fixed on heaven and heavenly things.

The good eye is far-seeing. It sees beyond time into eternity. And with the good eye nothing but good results. It is well when our soul can take a far view and see the grand perspective which the Book of Revelation unfolds, the immortal joys that await our arrival at the city of the blessed.

May the Lord keep us good-eyed and far-seeing! Let us not be like the man with the muck-rake whom Bunyan pictures to us, the man with the downward look, content simply to rake up the muck of earth, but paying no heed to the glittering crown all ablaze with gold and jewels held above his head.

Where is your heart? On earth? What folly! What blindness! In heaven? How wise! How far-sighted!

Let us conclude with the words of the hymnist. May this be the hymn in our hearts,<sup>9</sup>

What is the world to me!  
It rapidly must vanish;  
With all its gorgeous pomp  
Pale death it cannot banish;  
Its riches pass away,  
And all its joys must flee,  
But Jesus doth abide —  
What is the world to me! Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. 49:4a

<sup>2</sup> Philippians 3:13

<sup>3</sup> 1 John 2:15

<sup>4</sup> Genesis 45:22

<sup>5</sup> Joshua 7:21

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 6:33

<sup>7</sup> 1 Peter 1:4

<sup>8</sup> Matt. 19:21; 1 Tim. 6:17—19

<sup>9</sup> ALHB 433 v 7