

# Extreme MAKEOVER

## **Matthew 6:19-24: Searching for Hidden Treasure**

**19** “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, **20** but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. **21** For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

**22** “The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, 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 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 the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

In 1914, Howard Carter, began his quest to find King Tut's tomb. Over a series of unsuccessful digs, and a World War I interruption, Carter eventually discovered a stair in 1922 that changed that changed the course of Treasure hunting history. After he summoned his chief financier, Lord, Carnarvon, to witness the occasion, he dug through the rubble, clearing sixteen stairs that led to a sealed door. Then, Carter drilled a hole in the top left corner of the door and with a candle, peered inside and discovered the first remnants of the incredible treasure, beautifully handcrafted golden furniture. It was the most well preserved Egyptian tomb the modern world had ever seen from the period of the Pharaohs.

That event happened in 1922 and it was monumental as far as treasure hunting went. However, Carter was not the only one concerned with finding treasure, some two thousand years earlier the topic was also on the mind of Jesus. So, as we talk about treasure, I want you to imagine for the remainder of our time that Jesus has discovered what your heart treasures. Think of him for a moment as a treasure hunter. Of course, the prevailing question is this: What would he find. As we look at this passage, Jesus discusses three areas pertaining to what he finds important when it comes to what we treasure. The first one revolves around investment purposes, namely, how long will it last. We see this in verses 19-21.

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- 1. What do you Value:** So what kind of treasure would Jesus discover? One way to answer that question is to honestly ask yourself what are the things you value most in life. If Jesus searched your heart, what would he discover? What kind of treasures?
  - a. Your Family:** Loving your family is an excellent treasure. Devoting yourselves to your parents, or kids, or grandkids is a great and gratifying investment that is a good thing. He would be delighted—yet he would be looking for something else, namely, your spiritual investment towards your family. What would he discover? You see the reality is that family members will eventually die, everyone will, so investing in them from a spiritual perspective is an eternal investment if you want to see them again.

- b. Material Possessions:** Now providing for your loved ones is very important from God's perspective. In fact, *1 Timothy 5:8* states that anyone who does not provide for their relatives or immediate family is worse than an unbeliever in God's eyes. They essentially have denied the faith.

So fundamentally, God commands us to provide for our family, which entails making money and spending it for the necessities of life. However, if we are honest, some bills we have are not really necessities, are they? For example, financing a brand new car, or an elaborate vacation, or buying a ton of clothes, or high tech cell phones, or even buying more food than needed for you. Now of course, there is nothing inherently evil about those material possessions, but if we are honest with ourselves, these expenses are personal preferences, right?

Now it is not a sin of course, to have those things in life, but what Jesus would seek to discover is whether you also invest sacrificially toward God's kingdom. Do you tithe sacrificially toward your local church, or give to missionaries who aim to spread the gospel locally and afar, or to relief agencies, like World Missions, who assist people both physically and spiritually in the midst of natural disasters.

In other words, Jesus would want to know whether all your money after basic expenses, goes toward your personal preferences or if you have made it a point to first invest much for kingdom purposes. If it all goes toward personal preferences, you are investing in treasures that will rot and decay.

Last week, Korban had his first experience at the movie theater, where we watched *Cars 2*. One of the central characters in the movie is a truck named, Tow Mater. What intrigues us about Mater is he is pretty much covered with rust. However, Mater was not always a rust bucket. In 1955, he used to look like this. (show PowerPoint). Nevertheless, eventually, the Second Law of Thermodynamics led him to look like this in the movie (show PowerPoint).

- c. Your Free Time:** Another treasure we value is free time. How do you spend it? Jesus, as a treasure hunter, would also seek to discover this. Are you spending your time finding opportunities to grow in your relationship with God and to love on people, or do you spend it primarily on your own hobbies and interests, which are not eternal in nature. Now everyone does things that are not eternal in nature, that is not the issue, what is important to Jesus is if all your spare time is devoted to non-eternal treasures.

How much time you devote to television, or the internet, or playing video games, or listening to music, or crocheting, or reading romance novels, etc., etc. Statistics say the average person watches over 4 hours of television daily, and if you combined that with other media portals like video games, internet, cell phones, that number raises to a whopping 7.5 hours a day. Be honest, what would Jesus discover?

- 2. What Standards do You Live By?** In addition, to discovering what you treasure, Jesus would also want to know what kind of lifestyle you are living as a follower of Christ when it comes to godly standards vs. sinful practices. We see this in this next section, verses 22-23

**22 "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, 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 in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!"**

There is a common expression in American culture that states, the eyes are the windows of the soul. This is one reason I do not particularly like clowns, but that is another story. Regardless, you can often tell what is going on with a person by looking in their eyes. Even before I met Christ, I knew this as an unbeliever. One poem I wrote B.C. read like this.

## The Conductor

*Inside the eyes is a conductor whose name is reality*

*And if you gaze into its stare, you can feel the highs and lows of its piercing melody*

*Ferociously playing with such honest intention*

*There is no camouflage for the expressions of common face*

*Since existing inside the eyes is that score conceived from within the soul.*

In Scripture, God uses the metaphor of light to represent Jesus, and darkness to denote a sinful and depraved humanity. Fundamentally then, followers of Christ are supposed to project light. Jesus tells his followers to let their light shine in such a way that men and women will see our good works so they will glorify the father who is in heaven (Matthew 5:16).

But the reality is that there are Christians who do not live for Jesus, they live in darkness. Some deny the Scriptures and are involved in sexual sin, like homosexuality, adultery, sex outside marriage, and pornography. Others are just mean spirited people in general and use their tongue as a weapon to step on and hurt other people. Typically these folks do not want other Christians to get to know them well because they don't want outsiders to discover they are living in darkness.

If this is you, or someone else you know, I recommend extended alone time in prayer where you can talk to God about where your heart is at in your Christian walk. The best remedy for darkness is to spend extended time with the light. Not just five or fifteen minute prayers scattered throughout the day, but extended times of prayer. Ultimately, extended prayer means sacrificing some of your free time. It means turning off *The Bachelor* or *Two and a Half Men* (It is sad how popular these shows are among God's people). It means putting down that joystick for those video games, or that can of beer.

I recommend going somewhere for a walk, where you can be in private, surrounded by God's creation. Extended prayer allows you to share your praises with God, but more importantly, for your growth, it allows you to share your frustrations with Him. It allows you to take personal inventory and also confess and repent. Extended prayer entails speaking, listening, meditating, and contemplating. I find nothing brings me into a deeper appreciation for God than extended prayer time alone. I also have discovered that when I am stressed, irritable, and eating terrible, it is usually correlated with neglecting daily times of extended prayer.

So what would Jesus discover looking in your eyes? Would he see radiant light, indicative of a person who commits to living by God's standards, or would he see a person whose eyes reveal darkness and turmoil, indicating an ensnarement in sin. Jesus wants your eyes to refract light from the outside inward.

**3. Where is your Allegiance?** Finally, Jesus would want to discover where your allegiance lies in life. We can see this in verse 24.

**24 "No one can serve two masters, for 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 God and money.**

Now Jesus concludes that in life we cannot serve two masters, we love either God or money. Now when you tie this whole discourse together, pretty much everything we do revolves around money. Money determines what kind of lifestyle you and your family live by. Money determines how we spend our free time. Money determines what kind of material possessions revolve around our life.

About 15 percent of the teachings of Jesus revolves around money, which seek to uncover its influence in our life.

"One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me" (Mark 10:21).

"Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (Matthew 6:33).

"Sell your possessions and give alms; provide yourselves with purses in heaven" (Luke 12:33).

"But God said to [the man who built even bigger barns], 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God." (Luke 12:20-21).

Luke 12:32-33, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys."

Timothy Keller, author of the book, *Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power, and the Only Hope That Matters*, refers to money as a functional God. He states, "money can be a surface idol that serves to satisfy more foundational impulses. Some people want lots of money as a way to control their world and life. Such people usually do not spend much money and live modestly. They keep it all safely saved and invested, so they can feel completely secure in the world. Others want money for access to social circles and to make themselves beautiful and attractive. These people do spend their money on themselves in lavish ways. Other people want money because it gives them so much power over others. In every case, money functions as an idol and yet, because of various deep idols, it results in very different patterns of behavior."

Now you do not have to make a lot of money for it to be your counterfeit god. I had a friend who would tell me that money makes him and his wife happy and they love new things. Unfortunately, when money was scarce, which often was the case, the opposite was true. They are no longer married.

The hard thing about money is that you need it to survive. To pay your bills. To put food on the table. The question Jesus wants to discover is whether you really serve money or God. You have to be willing to honestly answer these questions.

1. Do you use money for your own purposes?
2. Is money honestly the thing that makes you happiest?
3. Do you purposely neglect to give generously to that which is important to God?
4. Do you spend more time thinking about money than God?
5. Is the lack of money responsible for the way you treat those closest to you?
6. Does the lack of money make you angry with God?

If you answered yes to most, if not all, of those questions, even though you may not have been aware of it, money has become your counterfeit God. You are serving money more than you are serving God. Money is the most important thing in your life. Keep in mind, Jesus does not bring this up to condemn you, but rather to make you realize where your allegiance truly lies at this point in your life.

Ultimately, Jesus says you cannot serve both.

So how did you do? What kind of treasure would Jesus discover in you? What we he see you value most? How would he evaluate your lifestyle, darkness or light? Who would he discover represents your true allegiance? I encourage you to take inventory and to be honest with yourself and God. And when you do this, please remember this if you remember nothing else. God finds value in you as a follower of Christ. You were worth the sacrificial death of your son. He wants a right relationship with you and He wants to use you to make a difference in the lives of others. It is just that often we need to hear the bad news first before we can be good news to others. In the end, God wants your heart. All of it! One hundred percent devotion to Him, nothing less.

The question you must answer is this: Will I give it to Him? I hope you do. Be a difference maker for God's kingdom.