

Laying Up Treasures in the Kingdom

Kingdom Living #10 - Pastor Jonathan Combs - June 1, 2025 - Matthew 6:19-24

INTRO: Good morning church! We're continuing our sermon series today entitled, KINGDOM LIVING. It's an expositional study of Christ's Sermon On the Mount found in Matthew 5-7. Many have described it as the greatest sermon ever preached by the greatest preacher who ever lived. This week, Christ places eternal meaning on the goals we have set for ourselves at work, in relationship, with our time and stuff.

Need: You see in our culture, the American culture, there are many things that compete with the culture that God intends for His people in the Kingdom. There is a battle going on within you for your allegiance to the one of these cultures. We will discuss today the battle between two masters: God and money. The pursuit of money is one of the greatest adversaries to the Kingship of God in our lives. But as we will see, the word money (*mamōnas*) is transliterated *mammon* in some translations to clarify that this is a personification of money and riches that act as a rival false deity against God.

Mammon represents all the things that direct our attention away from God and His Kingdom plan for us. Wealth, security, success, comfort can all take the form of mammon in our lives. We have this thing in our culture called the American Dream and look its not bad in and of itself. White picket fences, two kids and a dog, well groomed lawn ... none of that stuff is innately evil. But the American Dream, left unchecked, becomes Mammon's dream: climb higher, earn more, consume constantly, you deserve it. Mammon never says, 'You have enough.' It only whispers, 'Just a little more.'

Trans: Yet many have discovered the emptiness in that pursuit and God did not create us for the rat race. He created us to pursue Him and nothing can substitute the peace, joy and purpose we find in that pursuit. In today's text we will see our savior Jesus offering a better pursuit in the Kingdom of God.

BODY: In Matthew 6, Jesus continued the Sermon on the Mount by teaching that those whose heart is on God, His Kingdom citizens, will lay up treasures in heaven. We can lay up treasures in heaven as God's Kingdom citizens. How do we lay up treasures in heaven? The text gives three ways to lay up treasures in heaven.

Read text: Matthew 6:19-24 (ESV) 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.

We Can Lay Up Treasures as God's Kingdom Citizens by ...

1. Realigning our hearts on heavenly things.

EXP: (v.19-21) Jesus begins with what not to do as He often has in the Sermon on the Mount. We will see that Christ is not opposed to laying up treasures but is concerned with their destination.

"Lay up" (19) (θησαυρίζω, *thēsaurizō*) - to gather and lay up, to heap up, store up, to accumulate riches, to keep in store, store up, reserve.

"Treasures" (19) (θησαυρός, *thēsaurus*) - the place in which good and precious things are collected and laid up, a casket, coffer, or other receptacle, in which valuables are kept, a treasury, storehouse.

"Earth" (19) (γῆ, *gē*) - the inhabited earth, the abode of men and animals.

"Moths and rust destroy" (19) (ἀφανίζω, *aphanizō*) - to snatch out of sight, to put out of view, to make unseen; to cause to vanish away, to destroy, consume. The things of this earth are often destroyed by its creatures or its elements.

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“Thieves break in and steal” (19) (κλέπτης, *kleptēs*) - thief, an embezzler, pilferer.

“Heaven” (20) (οὐρανός, *ouranos*) - the region above the sidereal heavens, the seat of order of things eternal and consummately perfect where God dwells and other heavenly beings.

“Heart” (21) (καρδία, *kardia*) - denotes the centre of all physical and spiritual life: the vigour and sense of physical life; the centre and seat of spiritual life

ARG: Our hearts should be fully given over to Jesus for He has ransomed us with His life:

“One of the basic and fundamental truths of the Christian faith is that our heart (who we really are on the inside) should belong to God. He created us, and he has redeemed us in Christ, purchasing us with the precious blood of his Son. To love anyone or anything or to treasure anyone or anything more than Jesus is spiritual adultery. It is adultery of the heart.” (Daniel L. Akin, Christ-Centered Exposition)

Seek true treasure that lasts, Kingdom of heaven treasure where Christ is:

Matthew 13:44 (ESV) The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

Colossians 3:1-2 (ESV) If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

ILL: Tell the parable in Luke 12:16-21 (ESV) and finish with Luke 12:21 “So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”

APP: Are you building bigger and bigger barns or pursuing heavenly eternal things? If someone looked at your calendar or budget, what would they say you value most? If you lost everything tomorrow, would Christ still be enough? Are you teaching your kids/family/friends what it means to treasure heaven?

- **Reassess your spending** – Create margin to give more toward Gospel causes.
- **Practice sacrificial generosity** – Give in a way that stretches your faith, not just your leftovers.
- **Keep a “Heaven Ledger”** – Track spiritual investments: time in prayer, giving, serving, discipling.

2. Refocusing our vision on Christ.

EXP: (v.22-23) Jesus then moves into a curious phrase which many scholars believe was an idiom of that day. Having a “single eye” or “good eye” will prove to be an essential piece of laying up eternal treasures.

“Eye” (22) (ὀφθαλμός, *ophthalmos*) - the eye, vision, sight; the eyes of the mind, the faculty of knowing.

“Lamp” (22) (λύχνος, *luchnos*) - a lamp, candle, that is placed on a stand or candlestick.

“Body” (22) (σῶμα, *sōma*) - the body both of men or animals, the living body. Alright, simple enough phrase here, the eye lets light into the body and illuminates the world ahead. This feels random at first until we unpack the next phrase, “If your eyes are healthy ...”

“Eye is healthy” (22) (ἁπλοῦς, *haplous*) - simple, single; whole. The KJV translates healthy as single: “if therefore thine eye be single (*haplous*).” Singleness has to do with being sincere or genuine or single minded and is often translated in the New Testament as generous. Here are a few examples:

2 Corinthians 8:2 (ESV) ... their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity (*haplous*) on their part.

2 Corinthians 9:11 (ESV) You will be enriched in every way to be generous (*haplous*) in every way ...

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Now, let's chase this phrase from Jesus a little more because there is richness in what Jesus is teaching. Check out the Bible Project article on this verse as it was quite helpful in my research. In the Hebrew, Jesus is contrasting the *tov 'ayin* (good eye) against the *ra' ayin* (bad eye). The *tov 'ayin* (good eye) is seen throughout the Old Testament as those who are generous as seen here:

Proverbs 22:9 (NASB) One who is generous (*tov 'ayin*) will be blessed, because he gives some of his food to the poor.

Whereas the *ra' ayin* (bad eye) are the selfish and self-centered as seen here:

Proverbs 23:6-7 (NASB) Do not eat the bread of a selfish (*ra' ayin*) person; or desire his delicacies; For as he thinks within himself, so he is. He says to you, "Eat and drink!" But his heart is not with you.

Jesus is communicating something so rich here. Kingdom citizens have a "good eye," a heart set on generosity and a singlemindedness that is fully devoted to God. This is opposed to the world with the "bad eye," self absorbed hearts and double minded people who pretend to care for others while staying self-obsessed; publicly posturing as generous when their true agenda is all about personal gain.

"Eye is bad" (23) (πονηρός, *ponēros*) - bad, of a bad nature or condition: in a physical sense: diseased or blind; in an ethical sense: evil wicked, bad.

"Full of darkness" (23) (σκοτεινός, *skoteinos*) - full of darkness, covered with darkness; benighted: in a state of pitiful or contemptible intellectual or moral ignorance, typically owing to a lack of opportunity.

Ephesians 4:18 (NLT) Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him.

"When greed forces out any trace of inner good and only evil remains, the inner person is indescribably evil. The greedy person's corruption is complete. No room remains for love for God or pursuit of the kingdom and its righteousness." (Charles Quarles, Sermon On The Mount)

ARG: Set your eyes on things above, make the vision for your life be Christ and Him alone:

2 Corinthians 4:18 (ESV) As we **look** not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

Hebrews 12:2 (NIV) **Fixing our eyes** on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

ILL: You know the place where I hear the words "Good eye" most in our modern life is behind the backstop of a baseball game. When the pitcher throws the pitch that's outside the strike zone and the batter doesn't swing, you'll hear people saying, "Good eye!" Others might be shouting, "Come on blue ... that was a strike." People can get real rowdy about this simple thing: balls and strikes. At the end of the day, the fans and even the players don't call balls and strikes, no its the umpires and its determined by the rules.

Some of us would like to determine what is a "good eye" in this life. We would like to call the balls and strikes, but we didn't invent the game and we aren't its umpires. It's God's creation and He is it's judge. He determines what is a good eye. Friends, God calls generosity and wholehearted devotion to Him a good eye. I love how D.A. Carson summarizes this:

"The good eye is the one fixed on God, unwavering in its gaze, constant in its fixation. ... The individual with a single eye toward kingdom values is the person characterized by maximum understanding of divinely revealed truth and by unabashedly pure behavior. This person's eye is on the prize of one treasure, one kingdom, and one Master, and they will not be distracted by anything this world has to offer." (D.A. Carson)

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APP: What distracts you from focusing on Jesus? How much of your mental bandwidth is spent on things that pull you toward Christ vs. away from Him? Are you seeing the world through the lens of Jesus? Is my vision so set on Jesus that I am sincere in my devotion to Him and generous because of Him?

- **Reset your mornings** – Start your day with God’s Word before anything else.
- **Fast with your eyes** – Take a break from social media, Netflix, or online shopping for a week.
- **Refocus your vision** – Fix your gaze on Jesus with your Time, Talent and Treasure.

3. Recommitting our service to God alone.

EXP: (v.24) Jesus concludes this section with the statement that we cannot serve both God and money. Citizens of God’s Kingdom serve Him only and everything else is subject to Him.

“**Serve**” (24) (δουλεύω, *douleuō*) - to be a slave, serve, do service; to obey, submit to

“**Two masters**” (24) (δύο, *duo*) - two; as opposed to single (*haplous*). Double service isn’t ever even, one will always supersede the other. (κύριος, *kurios*) - he to whom a person or thing belongs, about which he has power of deciding; master, lord.

God and the world will never agree, and however much we may attempt it, we shall never be able to serve both.... You can live for this world, or you can live for the next; but to live equally for both is impossible. - Charles Spurgeon, An Exposition Of The Gospel According To Matthew

“**Hate**” (24) (μισέω, *miseō*) - to hate, pursue with hatred, detest. “**Love**” (24) (ἀγαπάω, *agapaō*) - love unconditionally

“**Be devoted**” (24) - adhere to; by extension to care for:—hold fast, hold to, support. “**Despise**” (24) (καταφρονέω, *kataphroneō*) - to condemn, despise, disdain, think little or nothing of.

“**God and money**” (24) (μαμωνᾶς, *mamōnas*) - mammon, treasure; riches (where it is personified and opposed to God). Many of the Church Fathers described Mammon as a rival deity, opposing Christ for lordship over the heart. So Mammon becomes anything that steals our devotion to God.

Either you are mastered by money and therefore ignore God or make him a bellhop for your business, or you are mastered by God and make money a servant of the kingdom. (Daniel L. Akin)

ARG: **Church, I urge you to understand: the King of the Universe does not share allegiance, the Creator does not share worship with His creation:**

“Anybody who divides his or her allegiance between God and money has already given it to money, since God can be served only with an entire and exclusive devotion. To try to share him with other loyalties is to have opted for idolatry. And when the choice is seen for what it is - a choice between Creator and creature, between the glorious personal God and a miserable thing called money, between worship and idolatry - it seems inconceivable that anybody could make the wrong choice.” (John Stott, The Message Of The Sermon On The Mount)

Colossians 3:5 (NLT) Don’t be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world.

ILL: The throne only fits one... “The god you trust to provide is the god you truly serve.”

APP: Who or what gets your best time, energy, and attention? Are you obeying God when it’s inconvenient or costly? Are you *using* God to serve your goals—or are you serving Him regardless of outcomes? If I had to choose between faithfulness and financial security, which would I pick? In what areas of life am I tempted to compartmentalize my service to God?

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- **Recommit to a ministry** – Serve regularly in your church, home, or community as a joyful servant, not a reluctant volunteer.
- **Take a Sabbath seriously** – Rest as an act of trust in God's provision and rule.

CONCLUSION: Friends, Christ has called us to a better way of life, the only true way; that we would store up treasures that have eternal value. We can join in the purpose of God for our lives and in our generation when we lay up treasures in heaven. By the power of the Holy Spirit we can:

- Realign our hearts on heavenly things
- Refocus our vision on Christ
- Recommit our service to God alone.

Let's pray!