

#35 “How To Invest in Heaven”

Matt. 6:19–24; Luke 12:33-34; 11:34-36; 16:13

Jesus now turns His teaching to storing up treasures in heaven, and not serving two masters.

1. Heaven or Earth? (6:19-21)

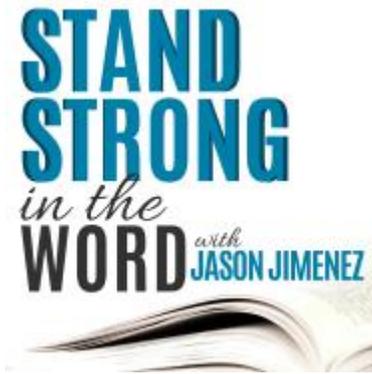
A. *Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth (v. 19)*—The Greek puts it this way, *Do not treasure for yourself treasures on earth*. Jesus isn't saying that you can't have belongings on earth; He's saying don't belong to your belongings. The word *treasure* is “storehouse,” so don't just store up riches for yourself.

1) Example of the Rich Young Ruler: **Matt. 19:16-30**

B. *Moth and rust destroy (v. 20)*—Moths eat away at clothes, and rust destroys metal. Things on earth perish. You can't take them with you when you die.

1) Example of the rich man in **James 5:2-6**, “Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. ³ Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure in the last days. ⁴ Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.

⁵ You have lived on the earth in luxury and in self-



indulgence. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. ⁶ You have condemned and murdered the righteous person. He does not resist you.”

C. *Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven (v. 20)*—Jesus desires that we have an eternal perspective, and work to “store up” or to “invest” in heavenly riches that far outweigh things on earth.

1) **Luke 12:33**, “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.”

2) **Jim Elliot**, “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”

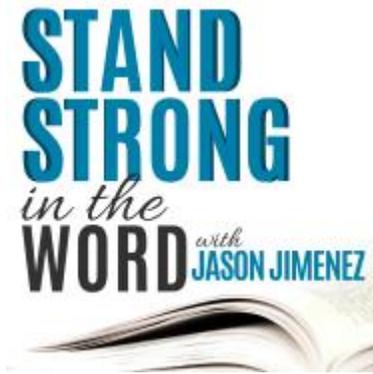
D. *Where your treasure is there your heart will be also (v. 21)*—The heart, to a Jew, is the center of intelligence, passion and will.

1) **Martin Luther**, “What a man loves, that is his God. For he carries it in his heart, he goes about with it night and day, he sleeps and wakes with it; be it what it may—wealth or self, pleasure or renown.”

2. Light or Darkness? (6:22-23)

A. *The eye is the lamp of the body (v. 22)*—The concept of the “eye” denotes singleness of purpose; to look right at your object. What Jesus is saying is if all you do is fixate on wealth, it will corrupt your entire body.

1) “Verses 22-23 may seem out of place here, but they depend on a subtle word-play. The word which the NIV translates as *good* is lit. ‘single’, but it also denotes



generosity, and the *bad eye* of v 23 is a metaphor for stinginess and jealousy. These verses, therefore, also attack a preoccupation with selfish materialism and call for wholehearted devotion to God.”¹

2) **Proverbs 4:25-27**, “Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you. Ponder the path of your feet; then all your ways will be sure. Do not swerve to the right or to the left; turn your foot away from evil.”

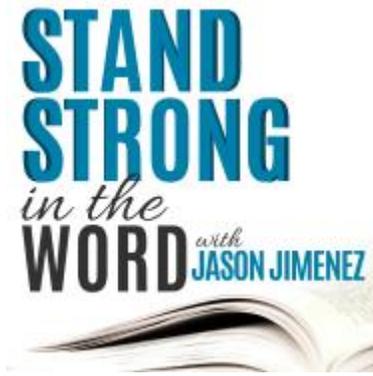
B. *If your eye is healthy your whole body will be full of light (v. 23)*—When you fixate on Jesus, and His kingdom, your spiritual life will be healthy. If you look outward, and allow the temptations of the world to blind you, then you will be filled with darkness. (see 1 Tim. 6:9)

3. God or Gold? (6:24)

A. *No one can serve two masters (v. 24)*—The choice is either you love God or the world. You cannot love both, because ultimately one will take you from the other. Point being, you cannot look in two directions at the same time (go back to the metaphor of the eye). You are either looking to things on earth, or setting your sights upward.

B. *You cannot serve God and money (v. 24)*—the term for *money* is “mammon,” which is the Aramaic word for “wealth or property.” Jesus is pointing out not to let earthly possessions consume you.

¹Richard T. France, “Matthew,” in *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*, ed. D. A. Carson et al., 4th ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 913.



- 1) **Heb. 13:5**, “Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”