

Eternal treasure and temporal provision

How many wealthy people come to the end of their lives and realise that in the face of death they actually have nothing. Many live with regrets that they could have done a lot more for other people rather than just hoarding their wealth to be spent on their personal luxuries. Let's take cars for example. When a new car comes out, we all stare at it and think our wonderful that new car is. A mere ten years later that car is out of date and no one even glances at it anymore. The greatest of cities have been torn down throughout history. Babylon the great, boasted about by King Nebuchadnezzar, was destroyed. But God is eternal and whatever He gives can never be taken away from us. He does give us temporal provision in this world, but don't mistake that for the eternal treasure.

Matthew 6: 19 – 34

1) Who or what is our master?

- The Greek word kurios translated as master is the same word that is translated mostly as lord in the New Testament.
 - It denotes someone who is in supreme authority.
 - If someone is our Lord or master it means that they have complete authority over us and we need to submit to them in every way.
 - In Jesus' times this concept would have been clearly understood due to slavery being rampant at the time.
 - Slaves had no rights. They weren't free to get up and leave any time they wanted. They were in bondage to their owners – their masters.
- It is with this concept in mind that Jesus makes the statement:
 - Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.
 - Although it may seem that we are serving both, our hearts can't be devoted to both.
 - We're either a bond slave of Christ or a slave to the world.
 - We're either dedicated to God and His eternal values, or to the world and its temporal values
- Jesus didn't give an option to serve both - either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other.
 - Who are you serving?
 - Who is your master?
- How do we determine who or what our master is – who we're serving?
 - Are we chasing after things that are seen that will eventually pass away, or are we chasing after things unseen that we're still hoping to receive?
 - Are we chasing after things and activities that only give us pleasure, or are we chasing after things and activities that give God pleasure?
 - Do we invest our finances in what will reap eternal fruit, or do we invest in things that will wear out and soon be no more?
 - What are your dreams? Are they God's dreams with eternal significance, or your own dreams according to worldly achievements?
 - What are our conversations focused on? God, His purposes and works, or on us and everything about us?
 - What are we focused on in general?
 - Matthew 6:22-23 "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

2) The security of the eternal and the fragility of the temporal

- He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose. (**Jim Elliot**)
- Matthew 6:19-20 Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.
- The fragility of the temporal
 - They can be destroyed
 - They can be stolen
 - It's here today and gone tomorrow
 - Matthew 6:30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire
 - Not only our possessions, but even our lives are fragile and temporal
 - James 4:14 Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.
- The security of the eternal
 - It cannot be destroyed or stolen
 - Unlike the grass that flourish for a moment and then is gone in a gust of the wind, the eternal is secure and endures forever.
 - John 10:28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.

3) The assurance of eternal treasure and temporal provision

- Jesus assures us that when God is our master, we are assured of both our eternal treasure as well as our temporal provision.
- God knows that we need eternal security that is found through faith in Jesus Christ, but He also knows that we need temporal provision while we live in this world.
- The assurance of our eternal treasure
 - John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.
 - 1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.
- The assurance of temporal provision
 - Matthew 6:25-30 Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? ²⁸ "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?
 - Philippians 4:19 And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.
- Knowing that we have the assurance of our eternal treasure as well as our temporal provision being met by God we won't have worry and anxiety in life.
- What then are we to do?
 - Matthew 6:33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
 - Seek first his kingdom – acknowledge and submit to God as your Lord and master for Him to run your life as He pleases and not as you please.
 - In this way you will store up your treasure in heaven, but, as citizens of His heavenly kingdom, He will supply all you needs according to His riches in glory.